

# TOWN OF CHESTER

## Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

### Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2018

Attendance: Vice-Chairman Barbara Huntoon, Clerk Rene Senecal, Town Administrator Patricia Carlino, Administrative Assistant Rosanne McClafin, Highway Superintendent John Murray, Steve Cooper, Gene Watters, Bob Daly, John Foley, Wilma Foley, Dave Christopolis (Hilltown CDC) Craig Willis (White Wolf) Adrienne Johnson, Dennis LeCourse

- I. **Vice-Chairman Huntoon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on May 21, 2018**
- II. **Minutes from BOS meeting date 5/14/2018 were not approved. Corrections to be made and minutes resubmitted for approval at next BOS meeting.**
- III. **Warrants were approved and signed.**
- IV. **Highway Department -John Murray:**
  - **Clerk Senecal noted that the proposed minutes of the BOS meeting held 5/14/18 erroneously indicated that Chairman Baldasaro wanted the Highway Department to install the culverts on Johnson Hill Road. He noted that the Chairman had wanted Murray to enforce the request for the logger to install the culverts. Clerk Senecal questioned if the person logging on Johnson Hill had pulled a driveway or curb cut permit. Superintendent Murray said no but that he had met with the gentleman and had verbally reviewed and authorized the “driveway”. Clerk Senecal pointed out that without a signed authorization and contact information the Town would have no recourse in the event of a problem. Senecal also stated that Murray can place a cease and desist notice if the logger does not comply. Murray to resolve.**
  - **Murray introduced Craig Willis, the owner of White Wolf Trucking to discuss grader operations. Willis can provide a grader with operator for \$720.00 per day. Currently the Highway Department plans to rent a grader for \$5250.00 for one month; a town employee would operate the equipment. When questioned how long Willis thought it would take to grade Chester’s dirt roads, he estimated 20 days, at an approximate cost of \$14,400.00. Additional discussion followed noting the advantages of utilizing a qualified operator and keeping Highway Department employees concentrated on “normal” work, and budget restrictions regarding the possible cost. Clerk Senecal asked Murray if he had adequate funding in his budget to hire White Wolf, and Murray said he did not. The Board thanked Mr. Willis for coming in.**
  - **Town Administrator Carlino questioned if Murray had made a determination of what to do with the Town’s grader stating she had information regarding the possible auction of it. Clerk Senecal stated that he felt that would be a “bad move” as auctions usually do not generate bids equal to actual worth.**

Clerk Senecal to provide Murray with information regarding an equipment appraiser. Murray to get an estimated value for the grader and determine best option.

- Murray informed the BOS that Chris Galipeau from Nutmeg International would be attending the June 4 BOS meeting to discuss the International. Clerk Senecal questioned Murray if he had contacted the Hartford office to request a regional manager address the issues and Murray stated he had called but received no response. Senecal asked Murray to request the general manager from West Springfield accompany Galipeau at the June 4, 2018 meeting.
  - Murray relayed that he received a quote of \$850.00 for a 16' new Christmas Tree or \$1050.00 for an 18'-20' tree. Clerk Senecal recommended having the tree installed by an outside contractor to eliminate liability if the tree does not 'take'. John Foley suggested "Greeneau", a company that transplants full size trees. Murray to gather more information regarding installation.
  - Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked if the department had started mowing yet, Murray said that CMELD was currently using the mower.
  - Murray informed the BOS that representatives from Lane Construction and Maximillian were coming out to do a "walk-through" of the East River Road project.
  - Senecal also questioned overtime for Highway when it had been noted that the salary budget will be in deficit following the next two payroll periods. Murray noted that the Department had to perform burial tasks and did not have an option. An extensive discussion followed regarding the budget, causes of current highway budget shortfall, budget development, and whether or not winter Highway Department salaries should be posted to the snow and ice salary and snow removal accounts. Clerk Senecal stated they should not be and Administrator Carlino stated they could be. Carlino to follow-up on the practice and additional discussion tabled until Chairman Baldasaro is available for discussion.
  - Clerk Senecal questioned if Highway Administrative Assistant McClafin had been working at the garage. McClafin explained that she had gone to the garage as requested but that it was not effective for her to be there. She explained that the work she does as Assistant to the Town Administrator is not "static" and cannot be put into a "block of time". She also stated that interruptions at the garage are not generally related to her function as Highway Administrative Assistant but that as Assistant to the Town Administrator, handling the interruptions in the office are part of what she does as the assistant. Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that it would seem that the position had "evolved" and would need to be "revisited". Additional discussion was tabled until the Chairman is available.
- V. Dave Christopolis-Hilltown Community Development Corporation: Christopolis explained that Chairman Baldasaro has contacted him to come and share information regarding the CDC. The CDC has been researching properties in Chester in consideration for Senior Housing. He noted that the 65 and older resident population continued to grow, and that housing is an issue. He stated that they were looking at both vacant land and existing properties, and that new construction was preferable as seniors generally need single level accommodations. He noted that those factors can be taken into

consideration during the development of the project. Christopolis will return “at a better time” when the Chairman is present and when additional information is available to share with the Board.

- VI. At this time Vice-Chairman Huntoon moved ahead on the agenda to allow Adrienne Johnson to speak about her proposed Farmer’s Market. Johnson stated that she had spoken with Chairman Baldasaro and that he felt there was no issue with the use of the “old” elementary school parking lot as a location for the market. Johnson explained that she had been unsuccessful in locating enough actual farmers with produce and that she was shifting to more of an “Open Market” with crafters and other vendors. She stated it would not include “tag sale” type items. Town Administrator Carlino suggested Johnson speak to the Board of Health if prepared food was to be sold as there are restrictions and inspections required regarding food items. Carlino also note that in the previous meeting, Johnson had mentioned having animals on site. Johnson stated that there would not be animals there and that she had considered the option of having a “petting zoo” when locating the Market on private property on Bay State Drive was an option. (She determined the Baystate Drive property needed “a lot of work”.) Discussion followed regarding space size, cost to book a space, parking limitations, possible conflict with the Chester Theater Group schedule. Johnson suggested \$20.00 for a 12’x12’ space and that proceeds from the “sale” of the space rentals would be donated to the Recreation Committee. The donations would be earmarked for bleachers or other improvements to the Emery Street ball lot or an improved play space for younger children. Additional discussion followed regarding the town-owned lot behind the Baptist church, parking, advertising, proposed hours and dates for the market. Vice-Chairman Huntoon mentioned the process the Chester Foundation does their Chester on Track craft/vendor fair to give some insight. Johnson is hoping to “open” on June 3, 2018 and to have the market open every other Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. until September 3, 2018. Vice-Chairman Huntoon suggested Johnson reach out to William Ivey Long regarding the additional use of the lawn areas at the former elementary school and asked Johnson to return when the Chairman would be present for additional discussion. Johnson to attend June 4, 2018 BOS meeting. Johnson also shared that The Country Journal was preparing a press release to promote participation and awareness.
- VII. Huntoon addressed meeting attendee Dennis LaCourse and Carlino informed the BOS that the BOH had unanimously voted to hire Mr. LaCourse at the “new” Health Agent. He will be responsible to witness perc tests and septic installations. Carlino to prepare related contract documents.
- VIII. Town Administrator-Pat Carlino:
- Proposed Host Agreement for Recreational Marijuana facility tabled until the Chairman is present.
  - Carlino shared that Elm Electric would not attend a BOS meeting to discuss the Water Treatment Plant computer concerns as they were not the vendor that installed it. Carlino explained that the monitor screen for the treatment plant computer is failing and that without the screen, the plant cannot be properly monitored and operated. Additional discussion regarding computer support, software, upgrades, and DEP certified vendors. Clerk

Senecal motioned that Chester pursue a water plant computer upgrade with Elm Electric at the \$10474.00 quoted price, Vice-Chairman Huntoon seconded, motion passed.

IX. Finalization of the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting-Carlino noted that the Warrant must be approved and posted by 6/2/2018. Clerk Senecal questioned if the recalculation for Highway Department salaries had been updated. Carlino noted that additional adjustments to the budget request will be needed based on tonight's discussion of Highway salaries and expenses. Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked for clarification of the Town Hall IT expense amount of \$11,600.00, Carlino noted internet expense, and website support were included in the line item. Huntoon question the increase in the County Retirement expense line. Carlino explained that in the past, the expense had been split equally between CMELD and the Town, but that upon careful review, it was determined that the Town had not been paying their "fair share" as the actual cost did not equal an even split. Huntoon asked if Carlino had drafted a letter to the State asking for relief from the monitoring expense of the "new" elementary school/landfill site. Carlino noted that she had not and that she had made phone calls but with no result. Clerk Senecal questioned why the Highway Administrative Assistant salary expense had been combined with the Town Administrator's Administrative Assistant's. Carlino noted that the decision had been made at the time that the position was created. Senecal feels it is "not a true picture" of the expense. Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that we need to "revisit the whole job". Huntoon question a \$1000.00-line entry 'COA Administrative Project'. Carlino stated that the Town Clerk had spoken with the Finance Committee regarding the budget requests. Huntoon asked Carlino to provide documentation explaining the request. Huntoon questioned the increase in the health insurance cost. Carlino advised the BOS that the same situation as the County Retirement applied, that no one was keeping track of the actual cost to each department and that the expense had previously just been divided equally. Huntoon aske who was responsible to "keep track", Carlino stated that it was normally the Treasurer's responsibility. Carlino stated that we were still waiting for Town Counsel to approve verbiage for Article 8 regarding the Alternative assessment plan. Huntoon noted that all towns must be in favor in order for the plan to be implemented. Regarding Article 25, Carlino explained that the Clerk had added a line item in anticipation of a federal law that is likely to pass regarding election software. Article 27 is to establish funds for the "new Christmas Tree". Article 28 was added to allow \$2250.00 annually for the Recreation Committee. Carlino to provide updated warrant for signatures.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked if anyone was planning on attending the PVPC annual meeting: no

Clerk Senecal questioned if the list of 2019 appointments had been put on the Town website, Carlino to update.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon reviewed an exhibit relating to junk/unregistered vehicles but explained that the concern she had was that the vehicles in question were stored on someone else's property. Clerk Senecal wondered if the person had permission. No further discussion at this time.

Huntoon read a memo from the exhibit folder from Pam Anderson noting that the BOS did not have the authority to advertise her position as being "appointed and available" without approval from the Board of Assessors.

Huntoon noted the Green Community contract information for the \$130,170.00 grant award, and that the first disbursement has been requested.

**X. Citizen Comments:**

**John Foley offered that he had provided Adrienne Johnson with the contact information for a farmer’s market manager that he knows, and that regarding the market, he feels that if people stop and see the same items 2 or 3 times they will not keep coming. He also noted that he was present when Chairman Baldasaro stated that he wanted “McClaflin at the garage” and commented that she had complied, but it seemed that it did not work as well. He suggested the BOS speak directly to Carlino and McClafin regarding their work flow and that the BOS should not micro-manage. Foley also voiced agreement with Superintendent Murray that one of the culverts noted on Johnson Hill was not necessary.**

**Bob Daley questioned shared services for accounting and Carlino stated that additional research was needed. Daley also asked if there was a contingency plan in place if the Economic Director position was not voted in favor by all towns. Carlino noted that each Town’s portion is different and if not approved may result in cutting hours or go to Special Town Meeting to appropriate.**

**Clerk Senecal stated that he received a text from Chairman Baldasaro noting that “Montgomery passed everything”.**

**Carlino noted that Blandford and Middlefield had also passed the Alternative Assessment plan.**

**There being no further discussion, Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked for a motion to adjourn, motion made by Clerk Senecal to adjourn, Vice-Chairman Huntoon seconded, meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.**

**NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING 6/4/2018 6:00 P.M.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Rosanne McClafin

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John Baldasaro – Chairman

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Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

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Rene Senecal - Clerk