

# TOWN OF CHESTER

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

### Meeting Minutes

June 18, 2018

Attendance: BOS-Chairman John Baldasaro, Vice-Chairman Barbara Huntoon, Clerk Rene Senecal, Town Administrator Patricia Carlino, Administrative Assistant Rosanne McClafin, Highway Superintendent John Murray, Bob Daly, John Foley, Wilma Foley, Jason Forgue, Steve Cooper, Mary Ann Pease, Jeanne Leclair, Andy Myers, Pat Gambrini and Dillon Sussman (PVPC) Peter Spotts (Country Journal)

- I. **Chairman Baldasaro called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. on June 18, 2018**
- II. **Minutes from meeting date 6/4/2018 were approved and signed.**
- III. **No warrants.**
- IV. As Andy Myers/PVPC representatives were not yet present, the Chairman asked Town Administrator Carlino for an update regarding the Town Accountant position. Carlino noted that Kathy Borden, interim accountant, had come in to prepare warrants. Carlino stated that as the Treasurer was not present, Borden was unable to access the Treasurer/Accountant computer, and therefore were no warrants prepared. Borden to return June 25, 2018 to prepare warrants. Borden to remain through August to provide accountant services. Carlino noted that the fee to utilize PVPC shared accounting services would be \$40,000.00. Chairman Baldasaro offered that Blandford currently utilized PVPC's accounting services. Vice-Chairman Huntoon stated that Blandford Select board Chairman Cara Letendre requested a joint meeting with Chester BOS to discuss shared service options. Meeting to be held June 25, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town of Chester's Council on Aging room.
- V. **Andy Myers/PVPC Chester Village Walking Tour grant:** Discussion of possible Complete Streets funding for improved sidewalks and safety features and connecting existing trails. Dillon Sussman noted they are just providing some early information and requesting the Board's support. He also asked permission to "put together a group" suggesting representatives from the Highway Department, Keystone Bridges Assoc and Historical Society to develop plans. The Board was in favor and offered support for the project. Chairman Baldasaro went on the record to thank Andy Myers for all the work and support regarding the passing of the GRSD Alternative Assessment plan.

VI. **Mary Ann Pease-Tax Collector:** Pease noted that as Library Trustee she would like to notify the BOS that William Ivey Long was willing to sell land to the Library Board for use as a new library location.

Pease (as Tax Collector) shared with the Board that in 2002 a property that had been redeemed from tax title had never been properly released. She also noted that payments had not been posted correctly to the tax arrears resulting in \$26,000.00+ in fees and interest. Pease requested the Board support a decision to “forgive” the erroneous interest and fees. Chairman Baldasaro noted that “we have to admit our mistake”. All Board members agreed and instructed Pease to move forward.

VII. **Discussion of Accountant Position:** Town Administrator Carlino offered that interim accountant Kathy Borden is a certified accountant and is familiar with the software utilized by the Town of Chester. Carlino noted that the accountant’s computer was not working, and that Borden was unable to access the Treasurer’s computer to prepare warrants. Carlino explained that Borden would return the following Monday to prepare warrants. Discussion followed regarding computer issues and IT solutions. It was determined that a new computer should be purchased to replace the accountant computer. Additional discussion regarding the advertising of the accountant (and other) position(s) in multiple venues as well as job descriptions. Carlino noted that she “planned on getting them out there” but wanted the Board’s direction due to recent discussion of shared services.

Chairman Baldasaro asked Superintendent Murray for a Highway Department update, Murray noted the Department was currently working on adding materials, grading and rolling roads as well as mowing. The Chairman asked what Chapter 90 projects Murray was considering. Murray stated his plan for additional asphalt on Johnson Hill. Additional discussion followed regarding Chapter 90 projects, Highway Department to calculate project cost for line painting. Chairman Baldasaro questioned Murray about his submission for pay for meeting attendance. Murray noted that as an hourly employee he must be paid for mandatory attendance, the BOS instructed him to leave early or come in late to avoid going over 40 hours when he (Murray) knows he will be attending meetings.

VIII. **Discussion of Highway Department/Town Administrator Administrative Assistant position.** Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that the position had “evolved”. After discussion, the BOS determined that they did not want Administrative Assistant McClafin present to take minutes on Monday nights, that Town Administrator Carlino should be present and further that the Selectmen’s office should be open five (5) days a week. The BOS restructured the Administrative Assistant’s position hours to Monday – Friday 9-2. Vice-Chairman Huntoon motioned to change Town Hall hours to 9-2 Monday through Friday, Clerk Senecal seconded,

unanimous. Carlino's hours to remain Monday to Wednesday 9 – 3, and coverage of Select board meetings.

**IX. Town Administrator:** items already discussed.

Chairman Baldasaro offered that he had received a voice mail from the Quinn brothers and would try again to contact them.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon requested status of NEFF property tax issue. Carlino noted that the Assessors were "giving up" and would not pursue the issue further.

Huntoon also question Superintendent Murray as to the mowing done by Donald Gauthier, Murray stated that Gauthier would now be reporting to him at the Highway garage. He also noted that in addition to the Emery Street ball field, Gauthier was responsible for mowing and weed whacking all Town cemeteries, the empty lots owned by the Town on Middlefield Street as well as the "old" elementary school lawn as agreed upon by lease with William Ivey Long. Murray noted that he would utilize summer help to assist Gauthier.

**X. Citizen Comments:**

- John Foley referenced recent power outage and noted line charges on CMELD electric bills, Chairman Baldasaro suggested Foley attend a CMELD commissioner meeting to voice his concerns. Foley also informed the BOS that the tree that was to be donated would not be suitable.
- Bob Daley asked the Tax Collector if there would be an indemnification related to the "tax forgiveness". Chairman Baldasaro noted that the Town needed to correct the issue as soon as possible and that the DOR should be contacted to clarify the process. Daley asked if a "transfer station permit viewer" had been hired. Vice-Chairman Huntoon stated that the transfer station attendant Peter Stroganow felt he would be able to "handle it" by himself. Clerk Senecal noted that Peter had questioned if the Board had agreed upon the fee schedule he (Stroganow) had submitted. The BOS noted they had no issue with any of the fees. Senecal also shared that Carl ?? has volunteered his time assisting in sorting the recyclables, Vice-Chairman Huntoon motioned to provide Carl ?? with a transfer station permit, Clerk Senecal seconded, unanimous. Daley asked if the new Summer Market's first date had been successful, Baldasaro noted that Johnson had reported 14 customers. He also offered that being Father's Day weekend may have influenced turn out.

- Jason Forgue asked for more specific information on the purchase of the new accountant computer. Carlino note that our IT vendor would be asked for recommendations for new equipment. Forgue also noted that he had moved the final (baseball) games to Pettis Field in Huntington due to his concern that the ball lot on Emery Street would not be mowed properly. He also asked for permission to demolish the old shed at the ball field, the BOS offered no objection. Forgue also noted that the Recreation Committee wanted to make the “old elementary school” playground “somewhat usable for the summer”. Forgue also reiterated his opinion that the Highway Department/Town Administrator Administrative Assistant position “is a waste”, that a non-benefited position would cost the Town less. He also questioned when the Board would talk to applicants applying for reappointment or appointment. Discussion followed regarding advertising of positions. Chairman Baldasaro noted that appointments were “at the will” of the BOS and that appointments run until reappointed or replaced. Forgue questioned if the Town had passed the warrant item at the annual Town meeting to change elected positions to appointed, Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that the item always passes on Town meeting floor but is never passed on the election ballot.

**There being no further discussion Chairman Baldasaro adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.**

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING 6/25/2018 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