

Town of Chester Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Minutes

October 29, 2018

In attendance: Board Members, Town Administrator, Katherine Warden, and various members of the public

1. Chairman Huntoon opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Warrants signed. Minutes of 10/15 and 10/22 signed.
2. Discussion held on Rene Senecal's resignation, which was to have been November 1, 2018 due to his pending moving out of town. At this time the board moved not to accept it until Rene knows exactly when he will be moving. John B. 2nd. Unanimous.
3. Assessors Tax Classification Hearing;

Chairman Heather Hannigan attended to explain that as in the past, the Assessors were recommending a class of 1, which means a single tax rate. Questions were raised by the board about our values, and what makes values go up and down. Heather explained that many factors go into the tax rate, and many factors also go into establishing values, most notably, sales. Chester has not had a lot of sales to go by, but what there is, has been used. Pat asked to gather information from the Assessors about what improvements increase the value. Also, the Assessors cannot just go into someone's home without their permission, nor do they know if someone has improved their property unless they are notified. This usually happens through the Building Inspector's office, through the approval of building permits.

John B. moved that the board accept the Classification 1, as recommended by the Board of Assessors. Rene S. 2nd. Unanimous.

Chairman Huntoon read notification from the State that Chester had been awarded an additional \$46,663 in chapter 90 money for this fiscal year.

Chairman Huntoon read a note from a resident on Taft Rd. (a private road) about his road conditions and had a question as to whether the town would be willing to take over ownership. John B. explained that this could not be done by the Board acting alone. It would need to be a question for town meeting vote. John explained that currently we do not maintain or plow this road, and wasn't sure the town would want to take on another road. We will explore the process more fully.

Barbara had some questions

1. Who is maintaining watering the new Tree? Pat explained it did not need watering at this point. She had talked to the people who put it in, who gave her instructions. If and when it is needed she would ask Donald Gauthier.

2. What is the status of the "Slocum Property" that Fish and Game wishes to purchase?
John B. is concerned that we might be selling someone else's property without a proper survey of the property. Pat to call appraiser that did appraisal to come up with price.
3. End of William St. turn around proposal? Where does that stand. Are we still waiting for Steve Salvini? Pat to reach out to Steve.

John B. gave an overview of work on Middlefield Rd., work in progress around ditches where undermining of the road is taking place. Then going on to Johnson Rd. where the same is starting to happen.

John reported that Doug drove the grader. Brakes are fine. International is back. Nutmeg reported they found the problem and repaired it.

East River Rd. is moving right along. Maybe one or two more days for paving. John reported he spoke to Ray, from Palmer Paving, who said he expects the job to come in pretty close to what was estimated.

Rene suggested that John and he make a trip of the District 1 Highway at some time so that Rene could introduce him to various contacts there.

Bob Daley asked about the condition of the International? It appears to have been in the wiring. John mentioned his pleasure with one of the new guys having a very experienced background in mechanics and believes that will be very helpful.

Barbara announced that the Ccountry Journal would be closing its Chester office and operating out of Palmer.

John B. went over the meeting that he attended with the Town of Blandford, Jim Mazik, from PVPC, and Josh Garcia, Dan Inicky, regarding the proposal to combine Police Departments. The feasibility study will be taking place soon, and should be done before December. Barbara mentioned that Dan had given her a call to keep her in the loop.

Question about COA feasibility study? Pat will call Erica.

Pat also to call Green Community and see what's up with the work to be done at the Fire Station.

What's up with the Library plan to buy from William Ivy Long? Pat to find out.

Hampden St. It's a mess. Also concern as to whether sanitary testing is being done, as spelled out in the contract.

Citizens Comments:

John F. Suggestion to John B. to come up on hill and look at trying new and different approaches to problems. John B. said he would. Culvert policy? John B. and Rene explained that the policy has always been if someone put a driveway in that required to have a culvert put in that the culvert was the owner's responsibility. If the Town puts one in on a road because it is needed, then it's the town's responsibility. Rene also stated that the size of culverts has now changed, a minimum of 15' is needed.

Barbara asked Pat to put an ad in the Country Journal for the Tree Lighting ceremony, as well as a request for baked goods from residents, who can call this office to let us know.
Bob Daley asked if any plans had been submitted for moving the monuments? Not as yet.

Pat to check with BOH for next week's meeting with HRMRC.

There being no other business, John B. moved to adjourn. Rene S. 2nd Unanimous to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Carlino

Barbara Huntoon, Chairman

John Baldasaro, Vice Chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk