

Town of Chester Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners and

Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda

Monday, June 24, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Rd Chester MA

Barbara Huntoon opened the meeting at 6:00pm. The meeting minutes of 6/14/2019 were signed. Discussion and signing of warrants.

New Business

Opening of Vocational Transportation Bids – possible vote to award

Kathe said the only bid received was from Lecrenski Bus Company. Barbara opened up the bid, which Chester's part for three years was \$120,900.00. The total bid for all participating towns was \$895,114.90. John made a motion to accept the bid, Barbara seconded the motion, all voted aye.

Darlene McVeigh – Updates from MARS meetings (Massachusetts Assoc. of Regional Schools)

Darlene said she has visited all the Gateway towns to update the Select Boards on the new five-year intermunicipal agreement for Gateway Regional School. With the exception of Russell and Montgomery all of the other towns (Chester, Blandford, Middlefield, and Huntington) have already accepted the agreement. Russell Selectmen want to review the agreement before they put it to a vote and Montgomery Select Board wants to review the last two years of meeting minutes before they agree to put it to a vote. Darlene said at the next MARS meeting (Thursday, June 27) there will be a discussion about continuing with the MARS Team for one more year, including what the agenda will be. Darlene thinks all of the six towns will participate next year, and one of the major issues for next year is the decreasing population of the high school. Darlene said the other issue to start thinking about is the creation of a search committee for a new Superintendent. John said he definitely feels it would be good for the Towns to continue the discussions for another year. He said that the MARS Team has been helpful with the language for the new agreement. John made a motion to continue with the MARS Team for one year, Barbara seconds the motion, all voted aye.

Appointments / Reappointments for FY2020

John said the Selectmen don't reappoint the Finance Committee and the DPW are hire at will, so they don't need to be reappointed. John and Barbara review the following list

TOWN OF CHESTER APPOINTMENT LIST FY2020

Animal Control Officer -

Theresa Donovan

Board of Registrars -

William Burnett

Susan Kucharski

Board of Health Agent -

Jerry Zebrowski

Cemetery Commissioner -

Vacancy

Conservation Commission -

Vacancy

will be reappointed when the third Selectman is sworn in

R.Duane Pease

Council on Aging Director -

Ben Vanheynigan

Council on Aging Board of Directors -

John Vanheynigan

Margaret Graveline

Ann Daley

Ellen Mary Colson

Elaine Gilmore

John Foley

Wilma Foley

Susan Kucharski

Marguerite Laurie

Jean McCaul

Vacancy

Cultural Council -

Paula Beck

Hollie Jacobs

Susan Kucharski

Annette LaMountain

Vacancy

Economic Development Director -

Jeanne LeClair

Fire Chief & Emergency Mgt. Dir. -

Richard Small

Highway Superintendent -

John Baldasaro

Will be reappointed when the third Selectman is sworn in

Historical Commission -

Janice Brown

Annette LaMountain

	Fay Piergiovanni
	<i>Vacancy</i>
HRMC Liason -	Ann Daley
Inspector of Animals -	Theresa Donovan
Inspector – Building -	Jason Forgue
Inspector – Electric -	John Vanheygnigan
Inspector – Plumbing -	William Clark
Inspector - Assistant Plumbing -	Nicholas Chiusano
Jacob’s Ladder Trail Scenic Bylaw Comm. -	Elizabeth Massa
Parks and Trails -	Elizabeth Massa
Pioneer Valley Planning Commissioner -	Richard Holzman
	Lyle Snide, <i>Alternate</i>
Planning Board -	Richard Holzman
	Colleen O’Conner
	Harry Sanner
	Lyle Snide
	<i>Vacancy</i>
Police Chief -	Daniel Illnicky
Police Officers -	Todd Allman
	John Baldasaro
	<i>John Baldasaro’s appointment postponed until the third Selectman is sworn in.</i>
	James Grzela
	Philip Lanier
	Gary O’Brien
Recreation Committee -	Kathy Engwer
	Jason Forgue
	Kathy Bodendorf
Town Accountant -	Paula Beck
Town Administrator -	Katherine Warden

Town Counsel -	Thomas Mullen, P.C.
Transfer Station Attendant -	<i>Vacancy</i>
Transfer Station 2 nd Attendant -	Joan Stalcup
Water Department -	Bernard St Martin
Water Department Assistant -	Noreen St Martin
Westfield River Wild & Scenic -	David Pierce

John made the motion to reappoint everyone with the exception of himself and R. Duane Pease until the third Selectmen was sworn in. Barbara seconded the motion; all voted aye

Old Business

Barbara wanted to update everyone about the certification of the Election by the State. Barbara said that both Adam Hinds and Natalie Blais were receptive in helping the Town. The bill had passed through the Senate and was currently in the House.

Dept. & Committee updates

Discussion with Assessors – Heather couldn't come to the meeting, she wanted to schedule for the next meeting on July 8, 2019. John said the Principal Assessors position won't be funded as of July 1. Kathe said there is a letter drawn up by Legal Counsel explaining same to the Principal Assessor.

Building Inspector -F. Hamilton Library and 8 Emery St update

Jason said 8 Emery St finally got a demolition permit; there had been a Stop Work Order issued to the property owner, who can now go forward with demo.

Jason said he sent a letter to Henry Utzinger, owner of the building where the Library is on May 1, 2019. The owner had 2 weeks to address the issues noted including a door that doesn't open properly and trip hazards on the floor. The letter informed Mr. Utzinger if the issues were not addressed in the time frame listed, a \$100.00 a-day fine will accrue. Jason said the corrections haven't been made and he will be sending Mr. Utzinger an invoice for the fines and informing him there will be a lien placed on the building until the issues are repaired and resolved. Jason wanted the Selectmen aware of what was going on.

Highway Supervisor – John said the grading on the dirt roads had been done with the help of White Wolf. Approximately \$43,000 worth of material was put down.

The potholes are complete.

John is applying to use the Chapter 90 money on Middlefield Rd and Johnson Hill Rd.

There was an issue with the over the rail mower today and 4 bolts snapped off. He is hoping to fix it in-house because the quote he received for repair is \$ 2,700.00.

John will reach out to surveyor Steve Salvini about the drawings of Williams Street cul-de-sac. Barbara has repeatedly asked about the project given it's been over a year since Steve was to complete the survey. At this point, John would like to know the boundaries so he can at least get the emergency turnaround completed. Jason Forgue said he had someone inquire about a property on Middlefield Road that was on the understanding there was a right of way onto Williams St from it. A discussion followed about if it was a possibility there was access and where it could be. It was determined it is not feasible.

Town Administrator Update:

Discussion of creating a Cable Commission Board – Kathe wanted to know if the Selectmen wanted to create a Cable Commission Board to address the upcoming contract renewal. John said there was no need to create a new board; the Selectmen would take care of it. Barbara would like to have a public channel for the Town. John doesn't want to do a ten-year agreement again. Barbara agreed and stated with fast-changing in technology in the cable/internet/TV industry a shorter-term contract makes more sense.

Update on the formation of Personnel Committee - Kathe would like to form a Personnel Committee for reviewing the Personnel Manual and to review applications when there are new positions to be filled. Kathe said Selectman-elect James Higby expressed a desire to be appointed to the Committee; the rest of the Committee would be two town employees and two residents. Kathe would like to see new residents get involved in the Town. There would be monthly meetings to review the manual which needs to be updated. Barbara expressed concerned that someone who applied for a position may not be given consideration due to the specifics of the job description. She pointed out the instance in which a person applied for the Highway Superintendent position and while the person didn't have the specific qualifications for that position, he ended up being hired as a Highway Department worker and is a valued member of the team. Kathe said all applications for a position could be reviewed by the Select Board, this would just make the process a bit easier when there are a large number of candidates for a position. Kathe felt it would give more transparency to the application process if there was a committee. John and Barbara agreed, but John stated there would not be time to wait for the organization and implementation of the Personnel Committee in the matter of the Transfer Station job-opening; that will have to be filled as soon as possible. Barbara agreed.

Discussion of re-keying Town Hall with a master lock system – Kathe said she looked into re-keying the inside doors of Town Hall. She said there have been complaints about the number of keys out for the different offices; there are too many. Barbara and John agreed with the concern and the plan. Kathe said she will do this after July 1.

Chief Inicky request for pay raises for police officers. – Kathe gave the Selectmen the workup from Chief Inicky from FY2020 budget and there is enough money to give the officers raises to \$20.00 per hour. Blandford has already approved the \$20.00 per hour. The officers are currently making \$18.50 per hour. Within the new budget for FY2020 there will be 9.15 hours per day of patrol time and 10 hours per week for the Chief. John said that Chief has done a good job working with both towns and providing of coverage. Barbara agreed and will vote to approve this once the third Selectman has been sworn in since John has to abstain from a vote.

Old computers and disposal of them – Kathe asked if employees could buy the computers that are being replaced. She has talked to Novus guys who are doing the replacement and the computers can be scrubbed at a cost. Kathe said she would have anyone who is interested in a computer pay for the cost of the scrubbing. Barbara asked that Kathe talk to Legal Counsel about this first.

“Life in Chester” – Kathe said she talked to Jeanne Leclair about creating a new space on the Town website called “Life in Chester”. It would be a space to share photos and possible interviews of life in Chester. Kathe would like to see Chester promoted more in a positive outlook. Barbara and John agreed and stated to go ahead with the project.

Webmaster increase in monthly service – Wendy Berman sent Kathe an email that since her average hours have increased with more use of the website, she needs to increase her monthly charge to \$200 from \$125. The original cost was estimated between Wendy and the previous Town Administrator when the website was first created. Kathe said she would review the IT account but there may have to be an article on the next Special Town Meeting to fund the extra cost.

Phone call from Dave Winkles Trucking – Kathe said she received a phone call that the Town’s contract with Dave Winkle will expire July 1, 2019. Kathe wasn’t aware that it was due to expire and Dave’s office apologized they hadn’t contacted the Town earlier. They wanted to propose a -year extended contract and said it was in-line with the pricing that was given for the Towns that are in the Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC). Barbara and John signed the proposal. There was a discussion about in the future after the Town joined HRMC, that all bids for hauling would be handled through HRMC.

Review of Salary sheet for the Treasurer – Kathe asked for a quick review of the Salary sheet for the Treasurer to make sure she hadn’t missed any positions. Barbara noted a couple of vacancies that were open and John said there was no need for a part time Highway Summer position this year. Kathe will make the changes and submit it to the Treasurer.

Public Comments

James Higby asked about the Consumer Confidence Report regarding Chester’s water. Kathe said it will be mailed on Thursday. James had some questions about what was on it; he did not understand some of the data. Kathe said she could email Richard Gullick of RCap Solutions who could answer James’ questions.

Jason Forgue said the water line at the ball field needs to be shut off, cut, and reburied. It is too shallow in the ground. John will help take care of it.

Jason asked about if the process for eminent domain for Emery St had started. Kathe said she had contacted Legal Counsel and they will start after July 1. She had to get the exact address for Counsel.

Jason updated the Select Board about the condemned sign for the Chester Inn. Jason said it cannot be lifted until all violations are addressed.

Liz Massa asked about the sale of transfer station permits; is there a better way to sell them? She would also like to get a copy of the Town's Bylaws. A discussion followed about cash sales at the transfer station and if it should go to check only process. Barbara expressed a strong belief in a "cashless" system at the Transfer Station. Once Liz is sworn into Board of Health, she will get a better grasp of the process and discussion will continue in the future.

Sister Judith said that one of her neighbors blows the grass out onto the street when he mows and she wanted to know if there was a bylaw against that. She is concerned that someone is going to get hurt riding a bike down the street. John said there wasn't a bylaw, but he would check it out and ask the person not to do so if he sees an issue.

Sister Judith also commented she felt that the Annual Town Meeting was a "three-ring circus" and hoped in the future there could be improvements. A discussion followed about how it could be better. Sister Judith also would like a voting machine bought, though it was voted to table to the next year. She went on to state it is time consuming counting and she feels there are some workers who really don't know how to count. Barbara said that there are people who are willing to help count votes and a note asking for help on the website would be a good way to find new people. Barbara also stated she actually emailed the Town Clerk and said she would be willing to work at elections vote-counting. She expressed concern about the cost of the voting machine when there is minimal voter participation at local elections and state and national are two and four years apart respectively. Barbara also said if the Town Election Officer (the Town Clerk) chooses to move forward in the acquisition of a voting machine, the best course would be to bring actual prices for purchase and continued support/maintenance to the Finance Committee.

John Foley said he appreciated in the ad for the DPW laborer position salary based on experience instead of listing a cost per hour.

Joanne Lavertue said she called CSX about the train blowing the whistle at 2:00am over at the crossing by the blueberry farm on Old State Highway. She was told that the trains have to blow the whistle at private crossings but the Town could request a quiet zone from 9:00pm to 6:00am in that area. She gave the contact information to Kathe on who to talk to for the protocol.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn at 8:14, John seconds the motion. All voted aye.

Respectfully Submitted

Katherine Warden

Barbara P. Huntoon – Chair

John Baldasaro - Vice

Clerk – Vacancy

There are 8 pages of meeting minutes June 24, 2019 Select Board meeting including signature page