

**Town of Chester Board of Selectmen
Water Commissioners and Zoning Board of Appeals
Monday, July 8 at 6:00 p.m.
Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Rd Chester MA**

Barbara opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Town Administrator and Country Journal recorded the meeting. Meeting minutes of April 1, 2019, May 20,2019, June 17, 2019 and June 24, 2019 were signed. Warrants were discussed and signed.

Barbara welcomed James Higby to the Select Board.

New Business

Appointments - Barbara made a motion to reappoint John Baldasaro to the Police Dept; James seconded. John abstained and Barbara and James voted aye.

John made a motion to reappoint R. Duane Pease to the Conservation Commission; James seconded. Barbara abstained and John and James voted aye.

Art Lindberg discussion with Select Board – Art gave the Selectmen his resignation effective immediately. He turned over the 911 maps that had been in his possession. He asked if the Highway Dept could be train someone to install the water meters. Matt Drenen can no longer do the job. Art said he would assist in the training and would get John the dates he was able to train. John said he was sure one of his crew would take over the responsibility.

Discussion with Assessors – Kathe told the Selectmen that Heather was unable to make tonight's meeting.

Discussion with RRG and the services they offer. – Harald Sheid and Jeff Reynolds came to discuss the services that Regional Resource Group could offer the Town. Harald said his company is based out of Leominster MA. They currently service 8 communities in this area - Becket, Blandford, Otis, West Stockbridge, Richmond, Egremont, Greenfield, and Leverett. They can provide all levels of needs in an Assessor's office, including specialists in Chapter Land, Energy projects, Commercial properties, and a full team for town revaluations. John explained his concerns that the housing valuations seem to be on the low side compared to the other towns in the communities. Harald explained that until there is a review of the properties in town there is no way to determine if that is the case. He stated if the properties are undervalued, the town needs to proceed with caution in raising values. John is also concerned about the rising costs for this type of service. Harald said that there is never more than 2 ½ to 3 percent increase in fees. Each town makes the final decision in how funds are spent and what the services will be. John would like Harald and Jeff to meet with Assessor's Assitant Laura Lafreniere and Assessor Gene Watters to review which services would be needed for the Town.

Old Business

None at this time

Dept & Committee Updates –

Board of Health - BOH member Elizabeth Massa said that the HRMC (Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative) meeting will be next Monday night and BOH member Nic Chiusano will be attending with resident Anne Daley. Liz said the many issues that HRMC brought up at the meeting to inspect the Transfer Station had been taken care. She expressed concerns over commercial dumping and if contractors should be allowed to dump. She will be working on updating the fees list to give to the Selectmen for review. She said some people had issues over what can be recycled and would like to get out more information on allowed recyclables.

Highway – John Baldasaro said the crew is working on blacktop on Blandford Road. East River Road will be fixed over the next three weeks and the crew will be cleaning the water filters in the next week. James said he missed the meeting that Richard Gullick of RCap Solutions had with John regarding the Town’s water. James would like to form a citizens committee to review Richard’s proposals and better understand why the Town has issues at certain times. John and Barbara agreed this is a great idea and John stated the more people to understand and see what is developing the better. James will come to the next meeting with a format for the committee.

Town Administrator update:

Employment review – Kathe read what she considered to be the positives and negatives of the first six months of her employment. She shared with the Selectmen what the upcoming fiscal year is looking like for FY2020. Barbara said it is a pleasure working with Kathe and that she knows the position well. John said he appreciates all the information that is being relayed to the Selectmen. He feels she has good interpersonal skills with the other Town employees. Kathe would like the Selectmen to fund the Administrative Assistant position again, potentially just 10 hours. There is more work than can be done in the 30 hours that her position was posted for. She wants to keep up with things as well as help the Town move forward.

Kathe said she would be posting all the vacancies in Town departments and committees on the Town website for anyone interested in applying.

Green Community Solar Project on Town buildings is scheduled to start on August 1. Ace Solar will be doing in the installation.

Citizens Comments

Bob Daley shared that the next meeting of the East West Rail would be at the Sheraton Springfield on July 23 at 1:00pm. The argument for a stop in Chester is that there is a demand for it. He shared that the Huntington Town Clerk was resigning as of October 1. He asked if the Personnel Committee had been finalized and Kathe said that she was talking with some employees about it. He asked for a copy of the COA Formula Grant for FY19. He said the COA Advisory Committee made a motion of a cap on a matching \$2000 to be given to the Hilltown

Outreach and that Huntington and Blandford were supposed to match the amount. Bob said that the funding for Historic Route 20 will not come through this year.

Jason Forgue asked about Emery Street. Kathe said that legal counsel was drafting a letter to be sent out.

James made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 PM, John seconded the motion. All voted aye.

Respectfully Submitted

Katherine Warden

Barbara P. Huntoon – Chair

John Baldasaro - Vice

James Higby -Clerk

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