



**TOWN OF CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN
WATER COMMISSIONERS & ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
15 MIDDLEFIELD RD
CHESTER MA 01011**

Monday, February 10, 2020 at 6:00pm

Select Board members present: John Baldasaro, Barbara Huntoon

Selectmen recorded the meeting.

Opened meeting in Board of Selectmen's office. Signed meeting minutes and warrants.

John opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

New Business

Comcast Cable Agreement. Matt Skeen representing Eileen Lahey. Only changes will be to the density requirements and standard drop distance as discussed in a previous meeting and both of those have been updated in the latest version. Matt has the document with him and if the board is comfortable, they can execute it tonight and he will bring it back to be signed by the appropriate Comcast party. Barbara asked how long the contract was for and Matt stated it is from February 24, 2020 to February 23, 2025. Selectboard voted to sign document. Will receive an executed copy sent to us.

Old Business

Henry Utzinger, Chester Commons:

1st item - Tom Soars and bed bugs and the registered letter sent to Henry to attend the meeting about the issue. Henry did not attend meeting because he did not pick up the letter until the day after the meeting. Henry stated that he has 14 days to pick up a registered letter and the meeting was held before the 14th day.

2nd item - Tom Soars brought him to emergency housing court and the judge gave Tom a hard time for not following the exterminator rules. No more bed bugs and the Board of Health has given the building a clean bill of health.

3rd item - Saw in the paper about selling and he read in the paper and he has accumulated \$30000-\$40000 in fines from building inspector. John not sure of the figure, but yes there are fines attached. All repairs required were done by May 23, 2019. Henry said did not call the Building Inspector to tell him that repairs were done because in the last 17 years he has never had to do that. Always was told if there was a problem the Inspector would get back to him. Henry showed pictures of repairs to the Selectboard. Henry the said he did call Inspector on cell and office phone. On August 17th Inspector sent a letter saying the library door was not



repaired. Henry says the door was working fine. All Selectboard can go by is the paperwork they have received. Henry said he called the Building Inspector three times and says he has not heard back. Henry also asked Librarian to let him know when there was a problem. On 10/14/2019 the Inspector has noteⁱ in his file stating repairs was made and building is in suitable condition. Barbara asked if Henry reached out to the Building Inspector when he received the registered letters. He said he called to say he had fixed the buckling floor.

Defective boiler in the library and Henry wants to know what is happening with it and states that in 1986 the selectboard agreed the tenant is responsible for all non-structural repairs and a boiler is non-structural. One boiler is down. Henry suggested that we buy a used boiler. Basically, the library is responsible for replacing or repairing boiler. Henry has signed an option to sell with Hilltown Community Development Corporation. There are two boilers in the building. Last year the one in the library broke so Henry suggested they use the boiler that is in the museum and cross the pipes and that is what was done. The issue will be taken up during HCDC meetings about purchase.

Henry briefly explained how the option to purchase is working with HCDC as far as deposits and dates.

Erica Johnson, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, RE: Community Development Block Grant:

Review and possible vote on social service funding recommendation from Erica. Have Erica's letter. Voted on total money last time so no vote necessary. Update is that Council On Aging cannot be funded by this because it is a community grant and can never fund a town board. The only item removed from previous meeting was COA funding.

Jason Fogue, Building Inspector:

Jason prepared a packet on abandoned properties and Kathe W. will put this item on the next agenda. Kathe W. to give Jason the pictures and info that Henry Utzinger supplied.

Jason came to meeting later with a good proposal for abandoned properties. There is a list and will be addressed next meeting.

Financial update cancelled till the next meeting

Frost Farms:

Received an email from Matt Hoey of Frost Farms, came in last year to see if the town is willing to work with them on a grow operation. Barbara asked if they had made any changes. If no changes the board is not in favor of moving forward with it as they stated at last meeting. If



there was a new plan or new location they would reconsider. Since there were no changes, discussion did not continue.

Update on Chester Federal Census. Southern Hilltown Adult Education Center (SHAEC) has offered help with it for anyone who needs it. If someone does need help, they can go to SHAEC at the Village Enterprise Center in downtown Chester and get help or use computer to complete the census. SHAEC has set up four different times for the public to get their census done. There are two Saturdays and two Fridays from 9-1. Census runs from March 1 till end of March. Beginning May 1st, the Census Bureau will send out workers to follow up and with the goal of wrapping up by June 1st.

Received letter from DEP RE: Disaster Degree Management, reaching out to communities that had trouble after a flood with debris etc.; they are willing to help with set it all up. Need a site to hold the debris before it is disposed of. Site cannot be in flood zone. Kathe W. suggested the Highway Department for storage. John says there is no room up there. Could potentially do a joint deal with another town. A discussion about a potential location ensued. John says in the past the Transfer Station was the location but one year we got in trouble for using that location. Kathe W. to call to see if Transfer Station is acceptable.

Senior Work-off Question: A woman in town caring for her Father has asked if she can do the Senior Work-Off for tax purposes on behalf of her Father. The Town of Chester needs to update their statute to agree that this can happen. Will be on next article to make it acceptable.

Comcast was charging us for cable and Eileen is having an audit done on accounts and it looks like we will be getting money back.

Dan Kramer, Chester Theater Company: Construction on new bathroom in Town Hall will be starting in three weeks. Dan asked if the can theater extend the contract from yearly to a five-year contract? With all the improvements they have made they want to secure this location. The Town of Chester will draw up new contract extending it to the five years.

Emery Street Property: Barbara asked status of the land sale and Kathe W. stated that everything has been resolved and we're just waiting for closing date.

Special Legislation: Any update on legislation about elected vs appointed? An email is being sent to legislators.

Railroad Ties: Barbara asked about railroad ties still at end of Main Street. Is a fire hazard and when are they going to be removed? Fire Chief is actual contact with CSX. A contractor is supposed to get rid of them. Kathe W. will follow up with Fire Chief.

RRG: Barbara asked for update on RRG. Laura is working with them.



Citizens Comments

Rich Holzman made comment about how important the census will be for the little towns. He wants to make sure we are on top of it. Suggests blitzing the town as to how important this is.

Bob Daley updated the board on Rich Holtman hosting a greet and meet at the Train Station with the people buying 11 & 14 Johnson Hill. PVPC made a comment that they provide 22 free hours of planning. Selectboard states we use that and then some.

East West Rail meeting and the Consortium group attended. An interview given to Boston Globe didn't have good ridership numbers. They will attend next public meeting. Aggressively disputing numbers. The Consortium will continue to fight for the Chester to be part of the East West Rail. Selectboard told them how much they appreciate all their work.

Second Fin Com meeting, dog software that was approved and purchased and it cost \$2000 and it will never be used. Try to return it or swap it. The software has never been used and Barbara thought it was being returned. This is being worked on.

Chester Water Improvement Committee meeting with RCAP is this Thursday. Will bring an update next meeting.

Matt Hoey from Frost Farm, said he understands that board is not willing to move forward with their grow plan. Explained would be a fixed structure. John says the same concerns as before, too far out and police could not get there in a timely fashion. Too many negatives to accept proposal. A new location and they would be willing to look again at the plan.

Kathy Engwer want to talk about Senior Work-Off applying to the volunteer Fire Department towards a tax credit. Kathe W. will ask other communities what they do. Commented on the progress on purchasing the Emery Street property. The Mill on Middlefield is on the market.

Sister Judith, Town Clerk said that the census is slowly coming back. Another mailing will go next week. She will be working on the DBA's. They are \$40 each.

Meeting adjourned 7:05:52

Respectfully Submitted



Kathleen A Engwer

John Baldasaro – Chair

Barbara P. Huntoon - Vice

There are 5 pages for February 10,2020 Select Board meeting minutes

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