



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

**Monday March 23, 2020 at 6:00pm**

Open meeting, (not an executive session) closed to the public due to COVID-19.

*Amended 3/20/2020*

Signing of meeting minutes and warrants.

**Selectboard Members Present: John Baldasaro, Rich Holzman**

**Barbara Huntoon (Remotely),**

Selectmen recorded this meeting being held in auditorium due to social distancing related to COVID-19 pandemic. No public presence.

John Baldasaro announced that Barbara Huntoon was attending the meeting remotely.

Signed warrants

John opened meeting at 6PM

**John Baldasaro stated that an emergency meeting held on March 10<sup>th</sup> was about the corona virus in an emergency situation and the developing situation. Minutes of that meeting will be posted.**

**Old Business**

**Review and possible vote on Host Community Agreement with Spencer LLC AKA Chester Grows**

Barbara Huntoon is abstaining from any discussion on this subject.

Changes were made to contracts and all parties received copies of the changes. Heather Anello would like a minute to go review and fact-check that both copies of the contracts are the same. She would like to step out for two minutes and return. Glenn Posey expressed some concern that the meeting wasn't advertised as a community outreach meeting. Town did not do that but with the public notice in the paper and the way the meeting was held, the Town feels that there should be no problem. The concern is if the state will accept or ask for an attestation. Upon Heather's return, all parties agreed to the changes that had been made. Barbara is abstaining from the vote. John made a motion to accept and sign Host Community Agreement with Spencer LLC., AKA Chester Grows. Rich Holzman seconded. Rich and John voted aye. Barbara abstained.



Heather and Glenn spoke about looking forward to helping the town in many ways.

### **New Business**

**Discussion and possible vote to declare a state of emergency for the Town of Chester.** John believes with a state and national emergency declared; it is time for Chester to do the same. Other towns have and it is just a formality but opens Chester up for FEMA and MEMA money or re-imbursement. Rich made a motion and Barbara seconded it. All voted aye.

There is a declaration and was signed by the two selectmen present and Barbara will sign also. The town has officially declared a state of emergency.

**Discussed and possible vote to petition the legislature to postpone the Town Election to June 6, 2020.** It is John's opinion that moving it is not a good idea. According to Town Clerk as of two days ago the only nomination papers taken out are for people running for re-election and there are no contested races on ballot. The amount of people who are going to show up to vote we can accommodate the social distancing and should go forth with the election. Rich asked what the benefit would be to postponing it and the answer was none. Selectboard agreed not to postpone the election, partly because they don't think with what is going on that four weeks will change anything with what is going on in the world. Leave the election on May 2, 2020.

**Rich Holzman invited Chester resident Chris Martenson to give an update on Corona Virus** and his suggestions and views. He feels that Chester will not see peak till June, 6-8 weeks still to go. Masks, gloves, wash hands keep your distance are all vital to getting through this. Concerned about growing your own food, starting your own plants from seed and bringing back Victory gardens, using any open space available to grow food. All walks of life are affected and we need to be vigilant and take care of each other.

### **Town Administrator update**

American Towers called the other day asking for Selectboard thoughts on extending the contract for the cell tower on Old State Road. The current lease is to 2032 and they would like to extend it till 2062. John asked what they were offering and Kathe said they wanted to know that Chester would consider it and then they would get the paperwork together. In order to keep Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile on they would need the lease extended. Selectboard said they would consider extending lease if it was financially in our favor to do so. Kathe will reach out have them start the paperwork.

### **General Discussion Selectboard**



Barbara spoke about Beth Lansing collecting donations to give out to anyone that needs it. Looking to store it at town hall. Only she can come into town hall, she will make a box of what is needed, and give or deliver to appropriate person. Caution that we don't accumulate too much stuff as she has had no requests so far. John thinks we should focus on people need RX picked up or groceries. Ok to store Beth items in town hall but entry only after #PM and all personnel are gone home.

Chester Village Market has a sign on the door that says they will be closing tomorrow at noon. Employee said it had nothing to do with virus. Very concerning as we need that store to be open due to this. Local downtown people with no car rely on this store. Kathe W. is going to stop by there and see what we can do to change their mind and assure them they are considered essential.

Our local restaurants in town are doing take-out with special menus. We should include a mention of this in our daily update to promote and remind people to patronize our restaurants while we can.

Rich asked what the protocol should be in reference to the river wall on Rte. 20 by Maple Street bridge. There was a discussion and the family would be advised to start with their homeowner's insurance.

### **Public Comments and questions**

This portion of the meeting will be suspended till further notice. Please contact the Town Administrator or any of the Selectmen if you have questions.

This will be recorded and there should be a conference number set up for public to listen in on. The best attempt will be made for it to be accessible.

**Meeting adjourned 7:33**