



TOWN OF CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
15 MIDDLEFIELD RD.
CHESTER MA 01011

Monday, December 19th, 2022

Open Meeting: This meeting is held in the Chester Town Hall auditorium with a virtual option.

Selectmen John Baldasaro and Andy Sutton were present, Jason Forgue was absent. Town Hall staff present included Town Administrator Don Humason, Administrative Assistant Jill Strong, Tax Collector Mary Ann Pease, and Town Clerk Terry Donovan. Chief Jen Dubiel was present along with Water Commissioners Bob Daley, Tom Bean, and Lyle Snide, as well as Finance Committee member Andy Myers, Library Trustee Jane Sutton, and Lora Wade from the Conservation Committee. Elizabeth, Liz, Massa, and Nick Chiusano from the Board of Health participated remotely along with a few residents.

John opened the meeting at 6:00 PM, warrants, minutes, and any correspondence was signed.

- **Citation of Appreciation for State Representative Natalie Blais:**

Don invited Natalie to join us this evening however when he spoke with her office today, she explained she would be unable to attend. John wanted to publicly thank her from the Board for all the work she has done and her help to Chester. He commented that she was one of the few Representatives that we have had that has reached out to us about our needs over the years rather than wait to hear from us. Bob reiterated John's words stating that Natalie has been a crucial ally in the West East rail authority and thanked her for a job well done.

- **Police Chief Dubiel report:**

Chief Dubiel had a handout for the Board to review which was a report for the first quarter and the number of calls Chester Blandford has responded to. The total report because of the location included any to the Blandford plaza on the Mass Pike which is taken care of by the State Police not local. The total number of calls was two hundred and ten with the Chester Blandford Police Department responding to one hundred and twenty of those calls. John commented that was great to hear, Chief Dubiel agreed stating that they have been busy lately and expected the report for the next quarter to be even higher.

Chief Dubiel stated that the Police Department needed to purchase tires for her cruiser and was going to get a quote however stated that there was plenty of money to cover them in the revolving fund from details. She went on to explain that all the cruisers are in need of new laptops "tough books," she stated that the ones currently in use are all personal Dell laptops which are not meant to be knocked around in the cruisers the way they are simply from driving. She was able to locate three of them that

are refurbished for \$2,200.00 which she stated was a great deal. In January they will be getting two radar handheld units through a grant and will be of no cost to the towns. They are also currently working on getting cameras both for the cruiser as well as bodycams for the officers also through a grant.

The toy drive that we were apart of along with It Takes a Village in Huntington is finished and was a great success. Chief Dubiel stated that we were able to raise \$1,300.00 in cash as well as loaded the cruiser with toys. She thanked everyone in the communities for their generous donations.

Chief Dubiel then went on to discuss that she would like to promote an officer to Sargeant. She stated that she had someone in mind however wanted to open it up to see what the interest was among the officers. She thought that if she had someone who could oversee the patrol operations, she would be able to focus her time elsewhere. John stated that was fine as the position has existed in the past and asked if she had a time frame in mind. Chief Dubiel answered that she would like this position sooner than later and thought January after the holidays was a good expectation. Before moving on Chief Dubiel also brought to the attention of the Board that on Skyline Trail there is a long stretch without a speed sign that she would like to have one placed. John told her that was fine and to speak with the Highway Department they should have some at the town garage. Andy Myers commented that there may be funds available through an IT grant to assist with the purchase of the tough books and asked if the expense would be shared with Blandford. Chief Dubiel stated that the computers were already factored into the split budget with Blandford, and this was the price for Chester.

- **Discuss Highway Department:**

Andy opened the discussion stating overall things with the Highway Department were going ok, the first two storms there were some roads missed but everything at this point had been cleaned up. John stated that the Board would be meeting with the Highway employees for a private discussion in Executive Session to discuss some things as they felt with no Superintendent, they were lacking some structure. John commented that despite these challenges they did not receive many calls about problems. The Board decided to host an Executive Session with the Highway Department on Thursday this week at 3:00 PM at the town garage. John stated that they will all need to be notified and stated that this is not a disciplinary meeting. Don asked if the notification letters need to be mailed, John answered no they can be hand delivered.

- **MVP Grant:**

Andy explained that he and Don would be joining Blandford and Middlefield tomorrow to discuss the shared MVP grant for dirt road resiliency. With this grant we are looking to create an Advisory Committee as well as create a Liaison position to represent Chester in the grant. Andy stated that this report that will be created about our dirt roads was just done for Huntington, and it was good information however the grant does not get us money to do any of the work on the roads just the report and hoped it would be worth it for us in the end. John stated that after looking at all the information if we do not feel that there is a value to us to get this done, we can pull out of the grant. Lora stated that if we still needed people for the Committee as a member of the Conservation Committee, she would be happy to join. Don said that was great and would get the information to her so that she could join the meeting tomorrow in person or by Zoom.

- **Town Administrator:**

Don stated that on Wednesday when the check is cut for Northeast IT he would go to their office and hand deliver it, so they are not waiting any longer for our payment. John stated that it was

time to start looking at our options as the letter we received from them did not leave anyone feeling like we were in a good place.

Don then discussed a problem with the boiler last week which was taken care of by Jeff's Oil Burner. Jill commented that we were delivered biodiesel from Roberts Energy which happened before when the boiler was replaced and believed that Kathe had called and asked them not to deliver that to the Town Hall as it causes problems with our system. Andy Myers stated that someone should make a phone call to them to ensure that it does not happen again, also that because we are not under contract with anyone for oil that we should be shopping around for prices when orders are placed. John agreed stating that Bottom Line and Pay Less For Oil are typically the cheapest around but it does not hurt to call Wheeler in Chester to see if they are competitive with pricing. Mary Ann commented that we need to ensure whoever we order from is ok with billing us before they receive a payment and do not expect cash on delivery.

Don told us that there were some issues with the hot water in the Town Hall this week as well. Nick commented that he had reset the system and it has been fine since. Terry asked the Board in a situation like this with the hot water not working or last week issues with the heat, who should be the point of contact for the Town Hall if Don is not in the office. John answered that Dave Pierce should be the first point of contact because he should have contact information for anyone we would need.

Before moving on Don reminded everyone that Thursday will be the PVPC performance hearing at 5:00 PM in the Town Hall to discuss the CDBG grants. Also, he told the Board that he would be taking Friday off this week and next for the holidays.

- **Public Comments and Questions:**

Andy Sutton stated that they have had someone come look at the roof at the Town Hall to check the wet spots that were reported by the people completing the energy audit projects. Because there is a good amount of snow right now, they were not able to tell much and would be back when the roof is clear to make a better assessment. He also discussed that he has spoken with towns and cities in the surrounding area about their human resources needs. Even Springfield and Pittsfield were stretched with resources and Andy suggested looking at a private company to come in. What he looked into gave a quote of three thousand dollars to look at our system and make recommendations. John stated that our needs are fairly limited to personnel turnover and dealing with insurance enrollment but did have a need for someone with experience in HR. Don commented that it may also be good to have our insurance providers come in to explain what is available to people. Andy stated that he would be talking with Blandford as well as Middlefield about their needs to discuss the possibility of a shared service.

Lyle discussed the site visit from DEP which he explained was very constructive. A public notice has been posted regarding the issue with chlorine treatment and the mailing will go out tomorrow. He explained as we discussed last week that this was a technical issue and never a health concern. The Commissioners are continuing to work on the five grants for making necessary improvements to the treatment plant. John commented that this was all great news and was happy that they have been so on top of progress and identifying long standing issues.

Andy Myers stated that the wire had come in to connect the solar installation at the Pole Barn to the Town Garage. CMELD told him that they planned to have the line up and finished by the end of the year, Northeast Solar will do the rest with connecting it to the system. Energia who is completing the energy audit projects will be putting some insulation on the walls in the boiler room and will also be looking at window treatments, once this is done, we will finally be able to close out the Green Grant.

Tom asked the Board if when they met with the Highway Department this week, they would remind everyone of the importance to have the road to the Water Treatment plant plowed promptly. John answered yes that is an issue they would be discussing.

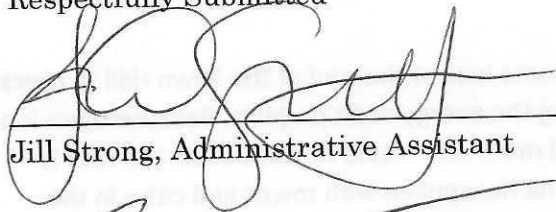
Bob stated that if we are going to be going out to bid for oil, we should do the same for propane as well as the generator service. John said that we should reach out to George Propane about propane for the town and we could also look into the generator service contracts.

Terry let us know that King Information System has finished their work for now and will be coming back on Thursday the 29th to discuss their suggestions and welcomed the Board to join the meeting. We received the new official ballot box that was ordered through the election funds. Terry also asked the Board as the ACO if she could please get her vehicle fixed. Terry stated that she has two thousand dollars that she can put toward the bill. The Board agreed that she should move forward with getting it fixed at BTA in Huntington.

John made the motion to adjourn, Andy seconded, all voted Aye.

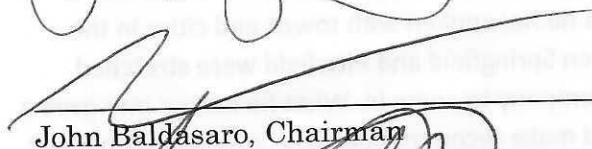
Meeting Adjourned 6:56 PM

Respectfully Submitted



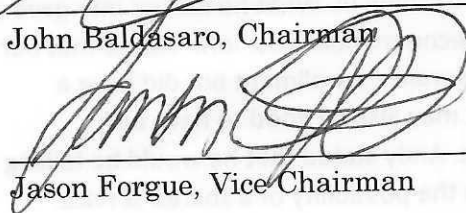
Jill Strong, Administrative Assistant

12/29/22
Date Signed



John Baldasaro, Chairman

Date Signed



Jason Forgue, Vice Chairman

1/20/23
Date Signed

Andy Sutton, Clerk

Date Signed