



Special Town Meeting Warrant – Monday, January 29, 2024, 6:00PM

Town of Chester

A True Copy, Attest

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Teresa Donovan

Hampden, SS:

To any of the Constables in the Town of Chester in the County of Hampden, **Town Clerk**

Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Chester qualified to vote in Elections and town affairs to meet in the Chester Town Hall Auditorium, 15 Middlefield Road, in said Town on Monday, January 29, 2024, at 6:00 in the evening, then and there to act on the following articles:

Article 1:

BILLS FROM A PRIOR FISCAL YEAR

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate by transfer from Free Cash the following sums of money needed to pay the following bills incurred in FY2023; or take any other action relative thereto:

Meadow Farm Equipment	\$227.99	Highway Supplies & Repairs	20423.02
Meadow Farm Equipment	\$362.97	Highway Supplies & Repairs	20423.02
Westfield Auto Parts	\$15.99	Highway Supplies & Repairs	20423.02
Westfield Auto Parts	\$12.63	Highway Supplies & Repairs	20423.02
E-ZPass MA	\$6.95	Highway Supplies & Repairs	20423.02
Teresa Donovan	\$160.49	Town Clerk Expenses	10161.02
Teresa Donovan	\$35.00	Town Clerk Expenses	10161.02
Berkshire Springs	\$12.50	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$21.70	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$12.50	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$12.50	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$3.00	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$12.50	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$12.35	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Berkshire Springs	\$3.00	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Chester Water Dept	\$32.60	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00
Chester Water Dept	\$136.96	Town Hall Expenses	90192.00

Bolduc Mechanical Services	\$111.55	Shared Police Expenses	54680.58
Atty. Ronald Berenson	<u>\$172.80</u>	Tax Taking Expenses	10146.03
Total:	\$1,365.98		

9/10 vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Brian Forgue seconded.

Frank Pero questioned why the town hall is buying water if it is safe to drink. Brian Forgue said it was leftover from the water main break.

0-No Votes 37-Yes Votes 37- Registered Voters Present Article approved unanimously

Article 2: CORNERSTONE CHURCH

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept as a gift for general municipal purposes the so-called Cornerstone Church property located at 1 Middlefield Road, Chester; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action deemed appropriate in relation to such acquisition; or take any other action relative thereto.

Majority vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Andy Sutton seconded.

Andy Myers discussed article, Cornerstone church is closing and the town has the right of first refusal to purchase the church for not more than \$500.00 , the church is willing to donate it n/c at this point.

Rick Stone asked about the septic that is shared with the old bank. Veronica Mara asked about cost of upkeep.

Andy Myers recommended to suspend this article until the Annual Town Meeting in June.

John Baldasaro made a motion to amend the article to the ATM, Andy Sutton seconded, All in favor.

0- No Votes 37- Yes Votes 37 -Registered Voters Present Amended article approved
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Tom M. Dan

Article 3: STARKWEATHER PASTURE

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to convey a certain ~~land~~ ^{undisposed} property located off South Worthington Road, known as Starkweather Pasture (about 50 acres), to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, as described in a deed

Town Clerk

recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 1610, page 482, on such terms and conditions, and for such consideration, as the Board of Selectmen deems in the best interest of the Town; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action deemed appropriate in relation thereto; or take any other action relative thereto.

2/3 vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Andy Sutton seconded

Discussion followed: Joe Simonowicz asked how is it in the best interest of the town? Did we check with abutters?

R Duane Pease suggested consulting a forester for the timber value and harvest the timber before selling to state.

Frank Pero wants article amended to investigate possible timber harvest before selling to state.

Frank Pero made a motion to amend article to state above, R Duane seconded.

14-Yes Votes 34-No Votes Amended article does not pass.

Vote on original article as read

3- No Votes 33- Yes Votes 48-Registered Voters Present

Article is approved.

Article 4:

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate by transfer from Free Cash the sum of no more than \$29,000 to undertake the process of updating the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan; or take any other action relative thereto.

Majority Vote Required

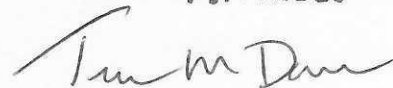
Brian Forgue accepted the article as read, John Baldasaro seconded

Mary Ann Pease asked what would be left in free cash after all these deductions? Andy Myers said \$241,429.23 left in free cash

0-No Votes 48- Yes Votes 48 Registered Voters present

Article is approved

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Town Clerk

Article 5:

TOWN CLERK COMPUTER

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate by transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$1,337.54 to replace the Town Clerk computer; or take any other action relative thereto.

Majority vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Brian Forgue seconded.

0-No Votes 48- Yes Votes Article is approved

Article 6:

WATER DEPARTMENT BILLS FROM A PRIOR FISCAL YEAR

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate by transfer from Water Department Free Cash the following sums of money needed to pay the following bills incurred in FY2023; or take any other action relative thereto:

USA Blue Book	\$ 1,661.52
Hathway Construction Corporation	\$ 192.00
White Wolf Septic & Portables, Inc.	\$ 540.00
Tom Bean 6/23 Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 210.26
Total:	\$ 2,603.78

9/10 vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Brian Forgue seconded

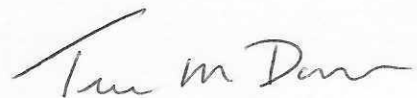
Andy Myers made a motion to amend the article to read “from Water Department Retained Earnings” and not from Free cash

John Baldasaro seconded the motion

Vote on the amended article

0-NoVotes 48- Yes Votes Article is approved

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Town Clerk

Article 7:

RECLASSIFY ACCOUNTS

To see if the Town will vote to reclassify payroll posted in error to CMELD account 96010.99 into Highway Department Salary account 20422.00 in the amount of \$1,866.40 and \$1,703.09 to correct a data entry error; or take any other action relative thereto:

Majority Vote required

John Baldasaro moved to pass over this article on advisement from consul, that this is could be voted on at a BOS meeting, Brian Forgue seconded

0- No Votes 48- Yes Votes Article is passed over

Article 8:

RECLASSIFY ACCOUNTS

To see if the Town will vote to reclassify payroll posted in error to CMELD account 96010.99 into Highway Department Snow Removal account 20422.02 in the amount of \$157.46 and \$174.95 to correct a data entry error; or take any other action relative thereto:

Majority vote required

John Baldasaro moved to pass over this article on advisement from legal consul that this could be voted on at a BOS meeting , Brian Forgue seconded

0-No Votes 48- Yes Votes Article is passed over

Article 9:

TIRES FOR FIRE ENGINE 1

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate by transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$3,590.25 to replace the tires on Fire Engine 1; or take any other action relative thereto:

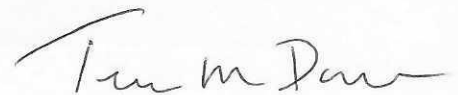
Majority vote required

John Baldasaro accepted the article as read, Andy Sutton seconded

Avril Willimain asked if the truck was the new truck, Flo Bolduc said no the tires are about 15 years old.

0-No Votes 48-Yes Votes Article is approved

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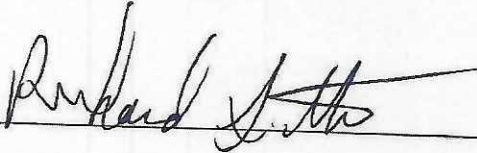


Town Clerk

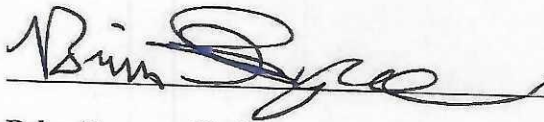
You are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting true and attested copies thereof, in three public places within the Town of Chester, fourteen (14) days at least, before the day and hour of holding said meeting.

Therefore, Fail Not and make due return of said Warrant with your doing thereon to the Town Clerk of the Town of Chester, at or before the day and hour of holding said meeting.

John Baldasaro, Chair

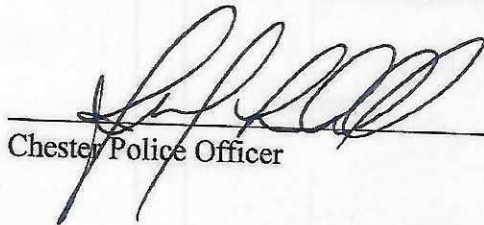


Richard "Andy" Sutton, Vice Chair



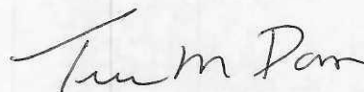
Brian Fogue, Clerk

As per instructions in this Warrant, I have this 12th day of January, 2024, posted same in three public places, Chester Town Hall, Chester Post Office, Chester Center.



Chester Police Officer

A True Copy, Attest



Town Clerk