



CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN
and ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
15 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

(413) 354-7760

TownofChester.net

Monday, January 29, 2024

Open meeting—This meeting was held in the Chester Town Hall Auditorium with a virtual option.

Selectboard members present, John Baldasaro, Brian Fogue, and Andy Sutton. Also present Terry Donovan, Andy Myers, Rich Holzman, Bob Daley, Jane Sutton, Mary Ann Pease, Don Humason, Craig Gauthier, See voter list for list of all 50 people attending.

John Baldasaro opened the meeting at 6:30pm, after the Special Town Meeting. Warrants, minutes and all correspondence were signed.

- **Andy Myers- Energy Committee Review of Eversource Proposal re: CMELD**

Eversource has made a proposal to purchase CMELD. It will have to be announced at a public meeting and reviewed by the BOS, CMELD and Electric Light Commissioners. Will be a 6 month to 2 years process to properly vet the proposal. Andy said this is a serious proposal and we should take a look at it before making any decisions.

John said they will release the proposal to the public as soon as Eversource gives their ok. This is the first step in a process, there is no voting today to sell CMELD, requires many meetings to discuss options, there also must be two town meetings for voting on this subject and by a 2/3 vote to pass.

Deryk Savoy discussed how everyone should do their homework and not believe everything the Chester Forum is saying, do the research and ask questions before deciding.

Eileen Dunn wanted more discussion and said she has had no good experiences with large companies.

John said there will be more discussions in the future but just not ready to go over it right now.

There were questions about when and who the Energy Committee is, the Members are Andy Myers, Rich Holzman, Nick Chuisano, Bob Daley and Ed Sourdiff.

Jessica Sakaske wanted to know when the public hearing would be, John said to look for posted meetings, they will be announced.

- **Town Clerk -**

The town clerk asked for the BOS to take a roll call vote to opt out of vote by mail and early voting for the Town Election. Absentee ballots will be available.

John Baldasaro – yes to opt out

Andy Sutton- yes



Brian Forgue- yes

All agree the town will not hold vote by mail or early voting for the town election.

Bob Daley asked what the town election hours were, answer 9-2 Bob said that was not enough for working people, suggestion was given then to use absentee ballots

Hazard Mitigation Plan update-

Two consulting groups were met with via zoom.

Jamie Caplan of Jamie Caplan Consulting –

Located in Northampton, Planning process includes 2 public meetings, possible surveys, would have 3-4 people working on our project, time frame about 7 months, typically remote meetings.

Doreen DeFazio of Commonwealth Consulting Group-

Started in Central Mass, working with many communities in Western Mass now, did Middlefields plan, would do a site visit, surveys, and public meetings, time frame about 9 months, 2-3 people working on the project.

BOS will decide at next selectboard meeting.

Gateway Superintendent Update-

Shout out to Chip Highway Supervisor for his best recommendations on school closings and road conditions, also a big thank you to Chief Fristik for fire watch at the Chester Elementary school.

October census showed a decrease of Chester population by 3.5%

Bar Grant- in the dream phase of the grant , taking people to different schools around the country(staff and students) bringing back bringing back ideas to use here.

• **Town Administrator Report**

- Don to speak with the new TA at Blandford to arrange a meeting with Blandford

-sent copy of the last audit to Roselli, will be ready to begin audit in April, did not give a \$ amount on CMELD audit.

• **Chief Fristik**

-Todd from MEMA suggested joining the Hampshire County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Henry to check into to make sure Chester would be covered.

-there is an opportunity for training with the Hampshire County Fire, it would be Basic 6 Training, 7-8 firefighters want to go, it would be two weekends in March and all April weekends.

Henry would have to rent gear cost for all would be about \$3000.00

Don to check with Andy Myers for access to funds.

-AFT Grant- 3 separate grants for operational, vehicle and regional grants.

Need to hire someone to write the grants, costs about \$1900.00 per grant, Henry will check on costs and time frame and get back to the BOS.

• **Public Comment**

Jack Martin questioned the fines owed on his property, claims it is just a shed and fines should have stopped. John said to contact Jason the Building Inspector the BOS does not reduce fines. Agreed to have Jason come out for an inspection and will set an appointment with him.



John suggested to cancel the Executive session this week due to time constraints.
All parties agreed.

John Baldasaro made a motion to adjourn, Andy seconded. Meeting adjourned 8:28pm.



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Respectfully Submitted

Terry Donovan, Administrative Assistant

Date Signed

John Baldasaro, Chairman

Date Signed

Andy Sutton, Vice Chairman

Date Signed

Brian Fergie, Clerk

Date Signed