



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

(413) 354-7760

TownofChester.net

Monday, February 12, 2024

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

Selectboard members present, John Baldasaro, Brian Forgue, and Andy Sutton, remotely . Also present Terry Donovan, Andy Myers, Rich Holzman, Bob Daley, Mary Ann Pease, Don Humason, Craig Gauthier, Liz Massa, Nick Chiusano, Michelle Kinney, Jessica Slatcher, Eileen Dunn, Jason Forgue, Carl Baldasaro, Veronica Marr, Chip Dazelle, and Joe Hagopian from PVPC.

John Baldasaro opened the meeting at 6:00pm. Warrants, minutes and all correspondence were signed.

- **PVPC-Joe Hagopian- Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing**

Joe went over the handout regarding the CDBG in which Chester is the lead town, along with Russell, Middlefield and Huntington.

Michelle Kinney asked when for the start dates for this grant, Joe said July to early fall they are hoping for.

Michelle also pointed out that SHAEC no longer has a partnership with HCC. Joe also stated they are still having issues to be fixed with the 22-23 funding hopefully in the next couple of months.

Rich Holzman asked for date of completion on Prospect Street project, Joe responded 2028 if no cuts in grants.

Bob Daley added that the first phase in Prospect St was a huge improvement, replacing old water pipes and new fire hydrants, all of which was unexpected, but needed.

Joe explained that there were some change orders that extended Phase 1. Reclamation of pavement in the spring will finish it up.

Joe also briefly went over the Housing rehab program. It is available to Chester, Middlefield, Huntington and Russell. Still using the 22-23 funding, and will use the FY24 funds when they become available. There is a waitlist for FY24, Russell-5, Huntington-16, Chester-7, Middlefield-0

Michelle Kinney requested flyers for the Housing Rehab program, Joe would get her some.

At the conclusion of the Public Meeting the BOS voted on the following motions.

Brian Forgue made the motion to authorize PVPC to submit the proposed FY24 Chester/ Southern Hilltowns Community Development Fund grant application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Living Communities in an amount not to exceed \$1,375,000 as detailed in the public hearing and to include infrastructure improvements on Prospect Street, Housing Rehabilitation, and Public Social Services, and to authorize the Chair of the BOS, or his representative, to sign all required



forms, documents and authorizations pertaining to the proposed FY24 Chester Community Development Fund grant application.

Andy Sutton seconded, all in favor.

- **Chipper Dazelle- Highway Supervisor -**

Publicly thanked Rosanne for help with the fuel problem with the first snowstorm.

Chip handed out a list of roads and his thoughts on the conditions of those roads, asked the BOS to review it and asked everyone to give their thoughts on the roads and what ones needed work. Chip also suggest for residents to phone, email directly to the highway dept and he will answer more quickly than calling town hall usually.

Chip asked for the BOS blessing on new hire, Mark Meacham. Mark is given 6 months to obtain his licenses.

Brian Forgue made a motion to hire Mark, Andy Sutton seconded, all in favor.

Chip said he will try to get the streets swept for COT.

- **Liz Massa- Planning Board**

Liz wanted to bring to the attention of the BOS the property at 475 Rte 20, the owners of the property wanted to see if the town would want it for a Public Safety Complex. In the PB opinion it would be good for the town. Other options for use would be a storage unit facility, or 55+ housing, any other ideas.

It is on a flood plain so only about 5 acres are usable, but seeing we are into talks with Blandford about combining the Fire Depts, they thought it would be a good time to think about the land use.

John said he would keep it under advisement, and in talks with Blandford would keep it in mind, would need grant funding for it, sounds like a good spot just not actable right now.

- **Hazard Mitigation Plan update-**

Who to hire for doing the plan, Jamie or Doreen

Brian made a motion to have CMC (Doreen's company) conduct the HMP, Andy Sutton seconded, all in favor.

- **Brian Iadarola –**

Mr Iadarola was asking for a reduction in the amount of fines placed by the building inspector on his property at 118 Round Hill Rd. The fines have stopped but he would like consideration for 158 days between the first notice sent out, that he claims he did not receive to the second notice . \$50 a day for a total of \$7900.00. Jason said he did do what Jason requested and has a permit for a "utility shed"

Brian made a motion to reduce the fines by \$5000.00 at 118 Round Hill Rd

Andy seconded, all in favor

Assessors will be notified to do an abatement.

- **Town Administrator Report**

- Eversource Proposal to purchase CMELD on the website, when to schedule the public meeting?

John would like to meet with CMELD commissioners first and get a list of questions for Eversource.

Don to reach out to CMELD and invite them to next BOS meeting on Feb 26th to discuss. Possible of meeting with Eversource on March 18th meeting.

-Maryann Pease asked if the purchase of CMELD has to go out to bid, Don will check with Legal.

-Gateway open house on March 7, 6-7:30pm



-STAM Legislative Priorities List, would like BOS endorsement to send to legislative delegation. Brian Forgue made a motion to accept and endorse the STAM letter, Andy seconded all in favor.

- Beacon Hill Berkshire Day April 6 9-1 invite from Sen. Paul Mark, very valuable event, Biran is attending.

-No date yet for combined Selectboard meeting with Blandford BOS, possible a Wednesday would work best.

-Annette LaMountain would like to be appointed to the Energy Committee. Andy Myers said the committee was originally a group of 5, would like to increase it to 7 and appoint Annette and Peter Stone.

Brian Forgue made a motion to increase the Energy Committee board to 7 members and to appoint Annette LaMountain and Peter Stone to the Board, Andy Sutton seconded, all in favor.

- **Andy Myers- Finance Committee update**

-Committee to meet Saturday Feb 17 for an organizational meeting and Saturday March 2 9-3 for meetings with Dept heads

-Why is MIAA insurance so high? Don to check on.

- **Public Comment**

Jason Forgue -school budget, Roof repair is in the budget, in negotiations with teachers, their contract is due June 3rd

-Chester Commons, Phase 1 of project, valuation of project is changing considerably, Phase 2 and 3 lots of changes coming. Jason will send email to selectboard.

Donna LaRoche-Southern Hilltowns Domestic Violence Taskforce Just wanted to introduce herself and drop off cards

Rich Holzman- CHA and WMHH co-sponsoring the Feb 24th snow day at Holzmans on Abbott Hill rd.

Bob Daley-Former State Rep, Smitty Pignatelli has decided not to run.

On Line – wondering if Abbott Hill rd can be opened, can he make the road a private way? John said he should check with the register of deeds, if the road has been abandoned in perpetuity then he would need an easement from property owners to use.

Roll Call Vote to go into Executive Session.

John B- Yes

Andy S- Yes

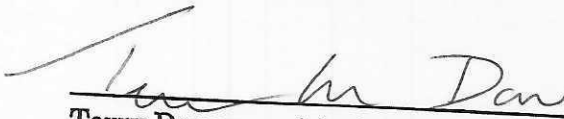
Brian F-Yes

8:17pm




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

Respectfully Submitted



Terry Donovan, Administrative Assistant

2/26/24
Date Signed



John Baldasaro, Chairman

2/26/24
Date Signed



Andy Sutton, Vice Chairman

Date Signed



Brian Fergie, Clerk

2/26/24
Date Signed

Southern Hilltowns

Community Development Program

Chester ♦ Huntington ♦ Middlefield ♦ Russell

Public Hearing

Chester Town Hall

February 12, 2024 6:00 P.M.

Proposed FY 2024 Community Development Block Grant Application

Infrastructure Improvements	
Prospect Street Infrastructure Improvements Phase II	Phase II of Prospect Street Infrastructure Improvements will build off of the drainage work done in the first phase of the project. This phase will continue up Lower Prospect Street and perform drainage and water improvements that will tie in and run to the catch basin and other work completed in Phase I. Total Not to Exceed: \$700,000
Public Social Services	
Hilltown Social Services Family Center Health Outreach Program for Elders	The Hilltown Social Services Project will provide case management, job counseling, assistance obtaining health care, fuel assistance, emergency food, housing assistance, transitional assistance, unemployment, food stamps and other programs toward the goal of economic self-sufficiency. The Family Center will offer parenting workshops, support groups, play groups, school readiness programs and other family-oriented activities. The Health Outreach Program for Elders (HOPE) will provide preventative health care and education to elders at home through visits from medical professionals. \$170,000 Requested
Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center	The Adult Education Center will provide GED/HiSET preparation, adult basic education, computer skills and workplace readiness learning. Continued partnership with HCC for health care worker program. Workshops and support for small business owners/cottage industries, economic sustainability programs. \$72,912 Requested
Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force	The Domestic Violence Task Force will prevent and respond to domestic violence by providing community education and outreach, professional training, prevention programs, service coordination and development, and direct services to victims. \$48,908 Requested
Huntington Food Pantry	The Food Pantry will provide emergency food to income eligible Southern Hilltown residents. \$55,000 Requested
Social Service Budget	Total Cost Not to Exceed: \$275,000
Housing Rehabilitation	
Housing Rehabilitation & Septic Repair	The Housing Rehabilitation Program will provide deferred payment loans for repair/replacement of basic building systems, lead and hazardous material abatement, removal of architectural barriers, and corrections to sanitary and building code violations for up to six (6) units of housing. Total Not to Exceed: \$300,000
Grant Administration	
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission	The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission will provide all grant administration services including program and financial management. Total Delivery & Administration Cost Not to Exceed: \$412,500

Total Grant Not to Exceed: \$1,375,000

Selectboard update 2/12/24

- 1] Spot sanding in am puddles in roadways
- 2] Patching potholes
- 3] Working on budget and FCOG FY 25 bids
- 4] Freightliner is getting the front end fixed
- 5] Getting prices on a new vehicle to replace the International that was sold to see how and when it would fit in budget.
- 6] Working on fuel issues with row, she has been working on this.
- 7] Working on streets to pave in the coming year I have Prospect, main, emery and Bendix drive. We are putting in for a grant for Blandford hill and looking for money for Skyline trail. Looking for suggestions for others

Road conditions in My words

2023

Good 1 Minor work 2 Needs work 3 Getting bad 4 Bad 5

Abbott Hill Road	Gravel	Need to put a secondary culvert at bottom in 24	2
Allman drive			1
Andrew's avenue			
Bailey road			
Baker avenue			
Baystate drive	Kinda dirt and pavement		4
Birch circle	Blacktopped	in 2023	1
Blandford road	Needs Blacktop		3
Bromley road	paved 2021?	east river to Huntington line	1
Brown road			
Captain Bemis road			?
Cemetery road			
Cooper drive			
Crane road	Dirt	Ditches need attention	2
East River road	Blacktop	new top 2018?	2
Eastern View Road			
Eastman road			
Ed Lebeau road	Black topped	2023	1
Elder road	Needs culvert and ditch work		3

Emery street	Blacktop needs preventive top	2
Fisk road		2
Forest road		
Goss Hill road		1
Griffin Brook road		
Hampden street	New Blacktop?	1
Herbert Cross road		
Higgins road	Dirt needs minor work	2
Holcomb road	Dirt needs minor work	1
Huntington road		
Ingell road		
Johnson Hill road		
Kinne Brook road		
Lyman road	dirt first good last end needs a lot	2 & 5
Lynes road		
Lyon Hill road	New top 2020?	
Main Street	Blacktop and Bridge needs work road	3
Maple street		1
Maynard Hill road	dirt Started work on bottom 2023	3
Main road	needs culvert work	3
Mica Mill Road	Installed 4 new culverts 23	
Middlefield road	pave from rt 20 to almost train bridge August 23	1
Mitchell road		
Morey ave		

North Chester Road		
Old state highway		1
Olin ave	new pavement 2023	1
Park Knox road		
Pineridge road	Paved in 2023	1
Prospect street		4
River front street		1
Round hill road	needs culverts and edge work	2
Sanderson brook road		?
School street		
Skyline trail	Needs to be Blacktopped from Bromley to	4
Smith road		
Soisalo road		
South Worthington road		?
Sylvester Hamilton road		2
Taft road		privet
Town road		
West Main Street		
Western view road	paved 23	1
William street		1



2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

More than 100 Chief Administrative Officers representing communities with populations of 12,000 or less from across the Commonwealth join with the Town of Chester to advocate for legislative priorities impacting resident lives.

STAM members listed addressing crumbling Infrastructure as their top legislative priority

- Permanently change the **CHAPTER 90 FORMULA**, increasing total funding to more than \$330 million per year to help small towns improve roads, bridges and water systems
- Create and fund the **MUNICIPAL BUILDING ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY**

Regional school support and sustainable approaches to education remain a top priority

- Reform the **EDUCATION FUNDING FORMULAS** to provide more support for regional school districts in towns having to choose between schools and municipal services
- Create regional incentives for districts looking to create **SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS** in the face of declining enrollment and increased costs for personnel and transportation

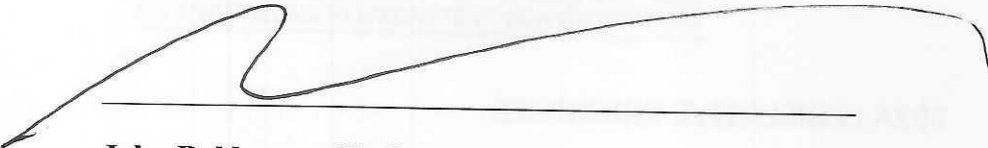
Members continually cite common-sense reductions in procurement burdens

- Increase state **PROCUREMENT THRESHOLDS** to reduce administrative and cost burdens on small towns with limited budgets and vendor choices
- **IMPROVE PREVAILING WAGE LAWS** by provide exemptions and rural factors that would allow small towns to complete necessary projects

Small towns consistently advocate for legislative changes with a big “small-town” impact

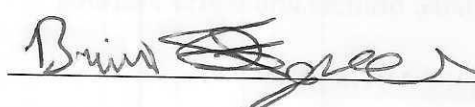
- Reform the state-owned land **PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT)** to create more equity for towns constrained by necessary land preservation
- Provide **STAFFING AND SUPPORT** for the Office of Rural Affairs
- Reduce **ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS** that prevent small towns from getting state grants

We call upon our legislative leaders to pass bills related to these priorities to properly equip small towns with the resources they need.

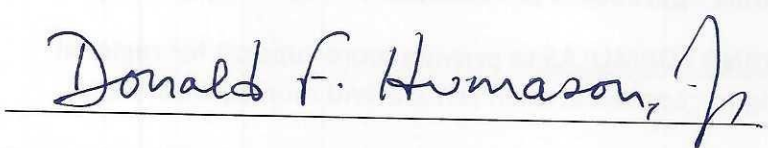


John Baldasaro, Chair

Richard "Andy" Sutton, Vice Chairman



Brian Fogue, Clerk



Donald F. Humason, Jr., Town Administrator

2/12/24

Date

2/1/2024

Board of Selectmen
15 Middlefield Rd.
Chester, MA.01011

I would like to be considered for a position on the Energy Committee.
Thank you for the consideration.

Respectfully,
Annette LaMountain
Annette LaMountain

1 Maple St.
Chester, MA.01011

Rec'd 2/1/24
Don