



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

(413) 354-7760

TownofChester.net

Monday, Aug 11, 2025

MEETING MINUTES

Open meeting – This meeting was held in the Council on Aging room with a virtual option.

Selectboard members present were John Baldasaro, Andy Sutton and Craig Gauthier. Also present was Town Administrator Don Humason Town Clerk Terry Donovan, Finance Committee Chair Brian Forgue, and members of the public.

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

There were no reports from Town Departments/Town Business.

Report from Town Administrator: Don Humason

- Upkeep of mini parks at corner of Main Street and Route 20

A vendor in town asked who maintains these little parks and quoted a couple hundred dollars a month for the service. Don said that Liz Massa and Melissa McAuliffe have volunteered to take care of this on their own time for the town. Liz said they did it last year.



Liz also presented the walking map, and key landmarks display for the town as a guide for tourists and residents looking to discover walking paths and hidden gems of Chester. This will be placed on a kiosk downtown near the church.

- Roselli & Clark Chester 2024 Audit nearly completed

It should be completed by the end of the month for the Select Board to review. There are no issues that they have made Don aware of.

Diane Hall said Roselli & Clark are finishing a CMELD audit soon as well.

- CodeRed – Reverse 911 System

It would cost the town \$3,100 for the service annually if decided to move forward with the service. Audiences can be targeted by specific criteria.

- Update on Surplus Animal Control Vehicle

The car has been picked up and the money has been paid.

- New Town Hall Custodian Chloe Kendall begins Tuesday, 9/2/25

From Huntington and does cleaning for the church there already. She was interviewed and said she was comfortable with all aspects of the job, including shoveling the sidewalk and setting up meeting chairs. Dave Pierce has offered to train her as well.

- Chip Dazelle is looking for approval to purchase a new mower for the Highway Department

There is enough Chapter 90 money to purchase and there is no ETA when the town's mower will be fixed. Diane asked what would happen when that mower is fixed because the town and CMELD split the cost on that. John asked if CMELD would split the cost again for the new one? Diane said she would need to talk to the commissioners about it first. There was discussion about having two in case one of them ended up having a problem again.

John made a motion to authorize the Highway Superintendent to purchase a new mower.

Andy Sutton seconded, and all were in favor.

- Chester Halloween & Sinister Sawmill Haunted Trail, Saturday, 10/25/25

Liz Massa will email Don a flyer to be posted on the town website. This event will include Trunk or treat at the ballfield, a haunted trail, an inflatable race and more. Liz said that they asked



Blandford to join their event committee as well because they had low attendance at their Halloween event last year. Blandford accepted and will help the committee with planning and set up. Liz said that Melissa McAuliffe and Jessica Sakaske would like to reinstate themselves on the Rec committee and asked if there were any funds budgeted for it even though there was no rec committee appointed before the start of the fiscal year. Don said there is money in the budget but will need to check the exact number. The Board is willing to appoint both Melissa and Jessica, but they need to fill out appointment paperwork with the Town Clerk first. Once that happens, the board can then vote to approve them. Rain date for the Halloween event is November 1st.

Public Comments

Diane Hall asked about the payroll transition. She said CMELD and the town are being charged for both payroll companies currently because there hasn't been a change over yet. Don said there was a reimbursement processed by PrimePay. He said he left information about it in the CMELD mailbox today. He encouraged Diane to connect with Sonya Kinch. Diane said she's been trying to connect with her for a while and Don said he's sure they will connect soon. Diane also asked about the HGCIT increase. The board confirmed the town voted no on the increase, but all other members voted yes, and the increase passed.

Brian Fogue said Gateway has hired a new superintendent, Melissa Matarazzo. She was a principal in the early 2000s and has been a consultant for schools since 2013. He said he thinks she was a great hire, and she starts on 8/18. Kristen Smidy will be working alongside her for a couple of days before her last day on 8/23. Don asked about the new principal at Chester Elementary. Brian said Todd Gazda is the current interim principal there and has expressed interest in becoming the permanent principal but that has not been decided officially. Don said there is an upcoming alarm system inspection at the elementary school for the wood waste system.

Nate Bolduc said the fire chief's vehicle is starting to have issues and rot. He said they may need to start looking for a new one soon. John asked if it would have to be a new vehicle. Nate said he can try to find something used but they go very quickly. Brian asked if there would need to be



modifications to the truck that would add to the cost. Nate said yes for strobe lights and other emergency needs.

Liz said BOH has an update on the compactor. Renting a compactor would be \$400 a month versus \$24,000 to buy one. Renting would take 7 years to break even, and it may be worth it to rent instead. There is an issue with power that they will need to discuss with CMELD. Liz said she was told the current compactor is not repairable in any way.

John Baldasaro made a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into executive session. Andy Sutton seconded and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:40pm



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Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Fox, Administrative Assistant

8/25/25

Date Signed

John Baldasaro, Chairman

8/25/25

Date Signed

Andy Sutton, Vice Chairman

8/25/25

Date Signed

Craig Gauthier, Clerk

8/25/25

Date Signed



CHARLES "CHIP" DAZELLE, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT
CHESTER HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
2 TOWN ROAD
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

(413) 354-2276

Highwaysuper@townofchester.net

***8-11-25 Selectboard Report
from the Highway Department***

- 1] Roadside mower still in the repair shop, it should be back by next week.
- 2] Hired a new employee Seth Wright He has been doing a great job. Chester, unlike other towns, had no laps with hiring a new employee.
- 3] Almost all roads repaired. Just have Cooper drive left to put rock on sides damaged in the 7-14-25 storm
- 4] New truck is being built. Should be at Marcott ford by September then shop for bed. They are thinking around late October.
- 5] The intersection at Middlefield rd and rt 20 has been done. After a lengthy disagreement with Mass dot, they wound up milling and paving the whole intersection not just patching it.
- 6] The other thing I am wondering about purchasing the M7060 tractor with Flail mower, York rake and blower, out of chapter 90 money. We got a little extra this year. I can come into a selectboard meeting and clarify if you would like.

-Charles "Chip" Dazelle,
Chester Highway Superintendent
Cell 413-393-8946