



TOWN OF CHESTER
15 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

Monday, December 15th, 2025

MEETING MINUTES

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

Selectboard members present were John Baldasaro and Brian Fogue. Also present were Town Administrator Andrew Alward, Administrative Assistant Kim Fox, and members of the public.

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

Report from Town Departments

- Hampton Street Chicken Violation Appeal – Ryan Lister

Ryan Lister of Hampden Street said that he has kept chickens for several years and that his neighbor had previously been agreeable. He explained that he did have roosters in the spring but removed them once a complaint was generated.

John stated that this matter is a zoning issue. Ryan would need to file for a change through the Town Clerk and appear before the Zoning Board of Appeals. John explained that abutters would have the right to speak, and a decision would be made based on the information presented. Ryan stated that he would follow that process.

- Appointment and creation of Accountant Interview Committee (Andrew Alward, Jon Williams, Diane Hall & Terry Donovan)

Andrew stated that several department heads have expressed interest in serving on a committee to interview and screen accountant applicants.

John and Brian agreed this would be appropriate.

Brian made a motion to establish an accountant interview committee. John seconded. The motion passed.



- Open Space Renewal

Liz Massa reported that the Town's Open Space Plan has expired. She said this would be her first experience completing the process through the Planning Board.

John said that PVPC will provide the expired plan as a reference for creating a new one and stated that the plan format is generally standard.

- Appoint Karen Marchetto and Charles Schoonmaker to the Cultural Council

Brian made a motion to appoint Karen Marchetto and Charles Schoonmaker to the Cultural Council. John seconded. The motion passed.

- Appoint Lee Myers to the Library Board of Trustees

Brian made a motion to appoint Lee Myers to the Library Board of Trustees. John seconded. The motion passed.

- Fence Issue Update – Mr. & Mrs. Sanner

Harry and Janis Sanner were present to provide an update following their November appearance before the Board. Janis said that their neighbors were notified and given time to comply with regulations but have since stacked wood pallets to form a new fence. She reported that the Building Inspector determined the fence now complies with height requirements and material standards. The Sanners disagree with that assessment, saying that the fence exceeds six feet in multiple areas, is not fully constructed of good wood, and still incorporates tarp material. She stated the fence is not in good repair and presented photographs to the Board. Janis requested that the Select Board deem the fence noncompliant and require its removal.

Brian said that the tarp material alone is not illegal but noted concerns regarding the fence's condition and height in certain areas. He agreed the fence appears to be in poor repair. John said that while tarp used as privacy screening with a wooden fence may not automatically make it illegal, the structure is not a sufficient fence. He stated the matter would be referred to the enforcement officer for further action, including requiring the fence to be repaired or removed.

Janis asked why the Select Board could not take direct action. John explained that enforcement falls under the Building Inspector's role, though the Select Board may request reinvestigation.

Liz Massa stated that the Planning Board is working on a fence bylaw, noting that Chester currently does not have one, and that MGL provides limited guidance on spite fences.



John stated that the Board will ask the Building Inspector to proceed based on the quality and condition of the fence. He noted that if a similar fence is erected again, the matter may be brought back before the Board.

- Valentine's Day One Day Liquor License – Melissa McAuliffe

Melissa McAuliffe of the Recreation Committee said that a Valentine's Day dance is scheduled for February 13th and her company Mel's Kitchen would be applying for approval to serve beer and wine. The Board agreed that they would approve it once the paperwork is completed. Her insurance is on file as good for one year from the Halloween event.

- Heating Oil Tank at Station 2 – Nate Bolduc

Nate Bolduc stated that Fire Station #2 on Bromley Road has a 1,000-gallon heating oil tank that is no longer used. He reported that Wheeler Oil quoted \$1,500 to siphon the fuel and transfer it to Station #1, which could offset heating costs this winter.

John requested confirmation of the fuel supplier and asked that the supplier be contacted first. Andrew stated he would facilitate follow-up.

- Prospect Street Apex Amendment

John expressed concerns about an amendment request from Apex Engineering seeking payment for additional engineering work. He said that the Town should not be responsible for costs resulting from design errors and stated that if Apex does not accept that position and continues to expand the contract, the Town should consider a new engineer.

Report from Town Administrator

- Review and Approval of Policies

One Time Revenue Police:

Brian Forgue made a motion to approve the One Time Revenue policy as written. John Baldasaro seconded. The motion passed.

Annual Budget Cycle Policy:

Brian Forgue made a motion to approve the One Time Revenue policy as written. John Baldasaro seconded. The motion passed.



Financial Reserves Policy:

Brian asked for clarification regarding the goal of reserving 3% of the budget from free cash and whether a portion would be used for items such as old FY bills and overages, with the remainder going to stabilize. Andrew confirmed.

Brian Forgue made a motion to approve the Financial Reserves policy as written. John Baldasaro seconded. The motion passed.

Investment Policy Statement:

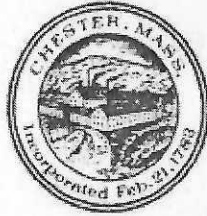
Brian Forgue made a motion to approve the Financial Reserves policy as written. John Baldasaro seconded. The motion passed.

Public Comment

Liz Massa congratulated the Fire Department on placing third in the Russell Parade of Lights event.

Brian reported that the School Committee met recently and noted a reduction in Chester student enrollment, which may help with budget pressures. Chester lost five students from the school system while Gateway overall had 10 new students. Rich Holzman asked about verifying student residency. Brian stated that residency issues do arise and are investigated but can be difficult to determine in certain cases. He noted that official enrollment numbers will be finalized in March.

John Baldasaro made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm and go into executive session. Brian Forgue seconded and the motion passed.



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

(413) 354-7760

TownofChester.net

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Fox, Administrative Assistant

12/24/25

Date Signed

Selectboard:

John Baldasaro

12/29/25

Date Signed

Craig Gauthier

12/29/25

Date Signed

Brian Forgue

Date Signed