



TOWN OF CHESTER
15 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

Monday, March 9nd, 2026

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES**

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

Selectboard members present were Craig Gauthier and Brian Forgue. Town Administrator Andrew Alward and Administrative Assistant Kim Fox were present as well as Nate Bolduc, Bob Daley, Terry Donovan and Liz Massa.

Brian Forgue opened the meeting at 6:00pm. Warrants, minutes and correspondence were signed.

Report from Town Departments

- Trailer Bylaw Amendment

Liz Massa said that there have been resident requests to have clarification to the Trailer bylaw. There have been issues with trailers being stored on empty lots when the bylaw states that residents are only allowed to have a trailer on their principal lot. Residents are taking the verbiage to mean that by stating that their vacant lot is their principal resident property, they can store or live in a trailer on that property. A property is not considered a principal residence unless there is a livable building on that property. Liz said one of the main issues is living in trailers that do not have self-contained bathrooms is against the health code.

A resident asked why she couldn't have her trailer parked in the front yard. Liz said that there is a proposal to amend the bylaw to state that trailers have to be on the side of or behind the house on the property. Craig Gauthier mentioned that some properties have a lot of frontage area and believes there should be specifics on how far from the road the trailer can be from a safety standpoint. Liz said they receive a lot of resident complaints about the eye sore aspect of trailers. Liz mentioned the need for fire protection also and the verbiage should also be updated to state any trailers on the property would not be blocking any fire rescue efforts. The board recommended it be adjusted further before it is presented to the town for a vote on amendments.



- Open Space Plan Committee Creation and Appoint

Open Space Plans detail what recreational activities the town allows on town owned land. It was mentioned at a prior meeting that the town does not have an active Open Space Plan, which allows the town to apply and qualify for specific grants.

Bob Daley said he feels that Conservation, Water Department and Planning Board should be involved. Brian Forgue said he would reach out to a member of the Conservation Committee to move forward. There was discussion about having Liz included as director of Parks and Trails, Veronica Marr volunteered, there was discussion about adding two more members of the public.

Brian Forgue made a motion to make the Open Space Plan Committee. Craig Gauthier seconded. The motion passed.

- Appoint Keirsen Broman and Holly Garvey to the Board of Registrars

Terry Donovan said the Board of Registrar appointments typically happen this time of year before the upcoming town elections and asked if the Selectboard still wanted to review the appointments before approving at a future meeting. She provided the board with appointment paperwork for the members. Carol Hepworth was added to the list of appointed members within 48 hours of the selectboard meeting.

Brian Forgue made a motion to waive the two-week waiting period for the appointments. Craig Gauthier seconded. The motion passed.

Brian Forgue made a motion to appoint Keirsen Broman, Holly Garvey and Carol Hepworth to the Board of Registrars. Craig Gauthier seconded and the motion passed.

Report from Town Administrator

- Update on Town activities

Chester on Track will be happening on Saturday, May 16th. The President of the Chester Foundation asked if the Selectboard and the Town Administrator would lead the parade. Both Brian Forgue and Craig Gauthier said they were willing to be in the parade.

- Payroll

Today was the first day for town employees to start using the timeclock with Harper's payroll. So far there were no issues reported with the exception of one employee with a sign-in issue that was resolved quickly.



- Town Budget

There was discussion about department budgets and that there were only a couple more things needed before the entire budget could be reviewed. Health insurance has been over budgeted for the last couple of years and now there is a better understanding of what the town pays.

- Town Accountant

The new accountant started last week and is waiting for her laptop to be up and running but she is getting up to speed.

Public Comment

Brian said that Gateway is close to finalizing their budget to present to the hilltowns. There are a few different options that the school will be presenting to the school committee for further discussions. He said there may be a compromise with level funding. There is discussion in increasing the amount towns would pay to alleviate the need to reduce staff positions and/or hours. There was discussion that Chester has a big reduction in students in the school system and it doesn't seem right to pay more toward the schools when there are less kids enrolled from town. Last year, Chester had the largest increase in students but this coming year, Chester will have the largest decrease in students.

Brian made a case for all the programs Gateway has and all the improvements the school has made over the years. There are a lot of things that go into their budget and with the health insurance increases on top of decreases in state funding, they were hit with a tough year. Brian said that there will be a school committee meeting on Wednesday, March 11th at Gateway.

Bob Daley mentioned that there is a Public Rate Hearing of the Water Department on Wednesday, March 11th at 6pm at Town Hall.

Craig asked Liz how the Highway department could bring their trash to the transfer station and save on having a dumpster they pay for at the garage. Liz said they are required to be highly regulated on the kinds of materials allowed at the transfer station. She said they are not able to take hazardous material which was the issue in the past with rubbish from Highway and CMELD. She said they would just need to work with an attendant at the station, to ensure nothing hazardous is being thrown away. Craig mentioned the difference in shifts between the Highway Department and Transfer Station might be a problem.

Craig asked Bob if there has been anything new related to test drilling around Reservoir Road. Bob said they don't have any new information on that.

Brian Forgue made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Craig Gauthier seconded and the motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52pm



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and ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
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TownofChester.net

Kim Fox, Administrative Assistant

4/21/26

Date Signed

Selectboard:

John Baldasaro

Date Signed

Craig Gauthier

4/21/26

Date Signed

Brian Fergue

Date Signed