

Chester Finance Committee Meeting

4/9/2026 Fire Department



In Attendance: Sr. Judith Dalesandro, Florence Bolduc, Mary Ann Pease, Joe Ryan and Nick Chisano

Absent: Bob Daley and Jon Williams

Guests: Brian Fogue and Andrew Alward and Jill Strong and Graig Gauthier

Meeting called to order by Flo at 5:30.

4/2/26 meeting minutes were reviewed. Minutes were updated to reflect Nick suggesting we increase plumbing fees to flow more funding to the town. Also discussed at 4/2/26 meeting was adding the dump fees to the tax bill in the future. Sr. Judith made a motion to accept, Flo 2nd. Unanimous. Flo signed and will get to town clerk.

Before Library presentation began there was much discussion regarding the changes and stipend recommendations for the Board of Selectmen. It was noted to keep them as Fin Con recommended and the final say on the budget will come from the BOS and the voters.

Library Presentation: Mary Ann recused herself from voting on this matter as she is a Library Trustee.

Librarian, Tammy Merenda reviewed the library budget for the upcoming year. This included annual circulation figures, a graph showing the annual budget breakdown excluding salaries. Grant information shows the library getting \$21,700 in grants which is more than the librarian's salary. Programs that have been held during the year. Bringing 257 adults and 716 children. Also capping the salary increase to 5% as all staff have had satisfactory reviews and Cola. Overall budget increase is 4.14%

Highway, Chipper Dazelle presented the highway budget.

Highway salaries were reviewed. A 5% increase for all workers was discussed and approved. However, PT worker #4 was approved as requested, he is capped at how much he can make as he is in the county retirement system.

Chipper mentioned that he would like to retire in a year or two and feels that Mark is coming along as a good worker to fill the role in the future. Members of the Fin Com were pleased with the job the Highway department is doing under the shortage of manpower and this past winter weather.



Chipper is also the Civil Defense coordinator and gets \$1,000. Annual stipend for this position.

Work needs to be done on the heating system at the garage, Chipper is going to get 3 quotes for the work as it will be well over \$10,000. It was mentioned there may be extra funds in some of the Highway accounts that can cover this.

He is looking to replace the 2016 F150 in a short time.

He has work for a senior worker if they want to help out at the garage.

Discussion regarding the overspending of the snow budget and where this will come out of. Free Cash and some extra funds in some of the highway accounts that will have extra at the end of the FY is a possibility.

Next meeting will have the Police, COA and Tax Collector.

Meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM

Next meeting scheduled for 4/16/26 at 5:30 at Fire Station.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Pease

Fluore A Breda

4/16/26