TOWN OF CHESTER
Select Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 24th, 2026

Open Meeting: The meeting was held in the Council on Aging room at Town Hall, with a virtual option available.

Select Board members Brian Forgue and Jill Strong were present. Town Administrator Andrew Alward, Administrative Assistant Kim Fox, and members of the public were also present.

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

New Business:

- Appoint Rebecca Boisseau to the Library Trustees till the next annual town election

Rebecca was not present at the meeting but had attended a recent Library meeting and expressed her interest to their Trustees and the Town Clerk directly.

Brian Forgue made a motion to appoint Rebecca Boisseau. Jill Strong seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0.

- Fire Department Security System

Chief Bolduc presented updated quotes to the Select Board for security systems at all Town buildings. He mentioned that Hackworth submitted the highest quote but did not verbally discuss all the quote amounts or companies that participated.

Brian asked about the quote presented at the previous Select Board meeting and requested clarification on whether funding would come through a Special Town Meeting or the Fire Department budget. Nate said that funding would need to be approved through the Special Town Meeting process. The Board agreed that the service is necessary.

Bob asked which Town buildings would be included. Nate stated that the two fire stations, highway garage, and Town Hall would be included. Camera access would be available to the Fire Chief for the fire stations, the Highway Superintendent for the highway garage, the Town Administrator, and possibly a few other employees. Jill said it would also be appropriate for the Police Chief to have access to all cameras.

Town Administrator Report

- SBA Towers Contract Amendment Review Update

An email was received from Tom Mullen stating that the original 25-year contract may not have been properly signed because there is no record of it being approved at Town Meeting. Any vendor contract over three years typically needs a Town Meeting vote to be approved. The attorney recommended that the Town not proceed with any contract amendments and instead allow the current contract to expire in 2033. After that date, the Town would have the opportunity to seek bids from other companies to rent the cell tower and land. The Board discussed there being limited options available because the contract was signed in 2008. There was agreement not to move forward with amendments and to continue under the current contract terms.

- Town Health Insurance Update

Andrew spoke with consultants from Maximum Impact Partners to discuss insurance options that may provide the Town with access to additional smaller groups and potentially lower rates. Andrew said that there may be another mid-year increase with HCGIT this year, based on information from the consultant. If the Town chooses to pursue another option for its insurance trust, Maximum Impact Partners may be able to connect the Town with other smaller groups, which could result in lower rates.

Brian asked whether the consultants could attend a Select Board meeting to discuss next steps and how to proceed if the Town chooses that option. Andrew said he could have that arranged and stated that he would also like to identify additional consultants to review, including more direct-to-company options. The Board agreed that a mid-year rate change would not be favorable. Brian and Jill both expressed interest in continuing to explore consultant options rather than remaining solely with HCGIT.

- Pay Scale sheet/Policy or By-Law

Andrew presented a pay scale sheet based on job titles and roles, intended to help the Town begin making employee pay rates more equitable for all town employees based on their job role. Andrew stated that many towns have either a policy or a bylaw establishing pay scales. Brian and Jill agreed that a policy may be preferable because it could be easier to adjust in the future. Andrew said that a bylaw could also be reviewed annually.

Brian noted that the Finance Committee is expected to meet in the fall and stated that he would like to hear their input as well. He confirmed that the matter is not time-sensitive and that the Board should take time to review it carefully.
Bob asked whether the Water Department and CMELD were included in the pay scale. Andrew stated that they could choose whether to participate, as enterprise funds are allowed to establish their own pay scales.

- Wood Waste Landfill monitoring

Andrew said that there had been a lapse in the Town's contract with Atlas, the monitoring company previously used for the wood waste landfill. While the Town had explored other companies to perform the work, the contract was not renewed, and no other company was approved for the work. Due to that, returning to Atlas would now result in a slight price increase. The Board also discussed the need to uncover a groundwater test well near the site. Because DEP is now aware of the well, the work is required and will result in an additional cost to the Town.

Members Report

- Skyline Scenic Byway Designation

Brian said that Liz Massa and himself recently attended an informational session regarding the process for designating Skyline Trail as a scenic byway. Brian said the designation could potentially provide the Town with additional grant opportunities. Towns abutting Skyline Trail would also need to participate and approve the designation. Liz said that Hinsdale and Peru have already agreed to participate.
It was noted that scenic byways have previously received funding for projects such as removing abandoned houses. Funding may also be available for road work, crosswalks, or other improvements to the road and surrounding areas. Andrew confirmed that those grants are possible outside of scenic byway designations as well.
Concerns were raised about whether restrictive bylaws would be required for scenic byway designation. Liz said that such bylaws would be at the Town's discretion and would not be required.

Public Comment

Nate Bolduc asked about disposing of an old vehicle previously used by the Fire Department and how he needs to post that. After confirming it would be less than $10,000 received, Andrew said the Fire Department can follow the Disposal of Surplus Tangible Items No Longer Useful to the Town policy.

Greg Harrison was present and asked questions regarding his newly appointed Constable position. He said that he had found state law indicating that he should be compensated for mileage, hours worked, and related duties. He provided the Select Board with the state law that he said supported compensation for all of his duties. He also stated that he had been told he should be present for early voting, but later the Town Clerk informed him that he was not needed. He could not confirm who had originally told him to come in for early voting. Andrew stated that the Town Clerk should be the only person providing him with the dates he needs to work.

Bob Daley asked about accepting millings from Palmer Paving, which is performing work on Route 20. He stated that he had been approached by someone offering the millings to the Town. Jill expressed concern about potential DEP-related issues with using the millings on the Water Department Road. Bob stated that he had reviewed the matter with the Conservation Commission and received approval. Chip Dazelle said that millings are not ideal material for filling holes because they do not compact well and would not last through the winter. He noted that paving would need to be added as part of the process. A question was raised about whether the Horn Pond access road could benefit from millings, with DEP and Conservation Commission approval. Chip said that if the road is not plowed, the material may be worth considering; however, someone would need to transport and spread the millings. There was consensus that the Town did not want to be involved in that work.

Brian Forgue made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jill Strong seconded. The motion passed 2-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM

Submitted by

Kim Fox, Administrative Assistant

8/26/26

Date

Approved by Select Board:

Brian Forgue, Chair

9/14/26

Date

Jill Strong, Vice Chair

9/14/26

Date