

CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2017  
CHESTER TOWN HALL  
203 MIDDLESEX AVENUE  
CHESTER, CT

CALL TO ORDER: Lauren Gister called the meeting to order at 7:02PM

ROLL CALL: Present included Lauren Gister, Charlene Janecek, and Carolyn Linn.

The Audience of Citizens included James Schaefer, Susan Wright, Karen Badger, Denny Tovey, and Virginia Carmany

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

In the section 'Audience of Citizens', the term 'presented' should be changed to 'read'.

Two paragraphs down from there, the section should read: "...expressed their concerns for 'project size and cost, primarily regarding the hardship in increased taxes on top of other state and municipal increases. Several people commented they were afraid tax increases would cause them to leave Chester."

Before the line 'Lauren Gister thanked the citizens...' insert the following paragraph: "Questions were asked about Gwendolyn Orton Jones trust and how it was being handled. Lauren Gister explained that the income from the trust would be paid to a restricted fund once a year after which any purchases accounted would be approved by the LBOT. Karen Badger stated that \$452,000 had been paid out of the trust over 20 years, which could have been the beginning of a sizeable endowment for the library expansion. Lauren reminded the audience that these funds were privately managed by the former Trustee and have never been paid to the LBOT to manage, as they were intended, and new procedures are in place to oversee these funds so that they are handled properly in the future."

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/24/17 BOS meeting as amended above. Carolyn Linn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Susan Wright expressed concern for the amount of detail included in the previous meeting minutes. Lauren Gister assured her that more detail would be included in the future.

Karen Badger inquired as to the current state of the library project. Lauren Gister reported that this topic would be discussed further in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

LIBRARY PROPOSAL/NQP

Lauren Gister distributed copies of previous library meeting minutes, information packets, and reports, all of which are available online and at the town hall. The BOS discussed reasons why certain past ideas, such as adding onto the current library building, were abandoned, and if there were any alternatives to the proposed NQP library project.

Lauren Gister stated that, though she thought the NQP and library building project would be ‘a home run for the town’ with regard to providing a multigenerational community space that incorporated technology, education, programming space, play and nature, she did not believe it was fiscally responsible to incur that amount of debt with the current revenue uncertainty and the lack of a state budget.

The BOS also questioned Denny Tovey as to why the original expansion suggestion was not pursued. Denny Tovey replied that when the Library Building Committee went to the current Board of Selectman and asked for the funds to continue, the BOS denied the request and instead charged them with applying for a grant for the NQP site and library design.

Carolyn Linn states that she believes a decision must be made quickly, and that the town must ask the public what they want. She suggested presenting the town with options, including the NQP library plan, expansion of the old library building, or to do nothing, along with other potential options.

Lauren Gister suggested putting the options out to Referendum, which will give the town the opportunity to vote. However; she expressed concern that, should a referendum fail, the Library project, whatever it looked like, would be back to square one. She also expressed concern about rumors that have gone out to the public. She stated that she knows of people in town who thought the project was already underway and that they had no say, and people who didn’t know about the project at all. Karen Badger expressed the same concern. Lauren reiterated that this project is not a “done deal” and it is important to know what the Town wants.

Denny Tovey stated his belief that the BOS must come to a decision soon.

Lauren Gister also expressed concern that it was unclear how many people in Chester would not be able to afford the increase in taxes that would come with the NQP project. An audience member suggests checking food pantries, affordable housing, and other locations to see how many people are utilizing these services, as they are the ones who may not be able to afford tax increases.

The BOS discussed the fiscal responsibility of the project, other options moving forward, and what to include in a potential Referendum.

Carolyn Linn made a motion that the BOS should make a decision with regard to next steps for the library at the June 28, 2017 BOS meeting. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### STREETLIGHT PROJECT SCHEDULE UPDATE

Lauren Gister updated the BOS on the Streetlight Project, stating that the audit found 6 damaged poles/lights. Findings are now being compared to Eversource information. The next steps will include public participation with a survey, informational posters, and locations in nearby towns with examples of similar streetlights. A public participation meeting for citizens to ask questions and give opinions will be scheduled for the 28<sup>th</sup> of June at 7:30 p.m. The BOS made the decision to change the time for the June 28<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting to 6:30 to complete its business prior to the public information session.

#### TOURISM COMMITTEE/REGIONAL DISTRICT UPDATE

The BOS discussed the Tourism Committee at the state level, and discovered that the Central Regional Tourism District was defunded and no longer running. Caitlenn Fearon will be appointed to a newly

created position within the town (Tourism Liaison). The BOS discussed the role of said position and what the individual would do, including updating the ctvisit.com site, and providing tourism services for the town.

Carolyn Linn made a motion to create a Tourism Liaison position for the Town of Chester reporting to the BOS. Lauren Gister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lauren Gister made a motion to appoint Caitlenn Fearon to the position of Tourism Liaison for a term beginning July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### HADDAM—CHESTER WATER LINE PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing on the Haddam-Chester Water Line will take place next Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Haddam Firehouse. This State funded expansion of the public water supply to Haddam is necessary due to the contamination of the water supply in Tylerville.

The board also discussed the potential for fire hydrants, possibly between Eagle Landing and the town line. They also discussed how Chester residents could be added to the new water line, the addition of slightly more chlorination closer to the CWC treatment plant, and water pressure, which the town was told will stay the same. At the moment, there is no plan to allow private resident tie in to the public water supply except by recommendation of the town health director for health related reasons.

#### NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - Completed under Tourism Committee and /Regional District Update

#### PARAMEDIC AGREEMENT AMENDMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to authorize Lauren Gister to sign the amended agreement with Middlesex Hospital as presented, keeping the per capita price the same for paramedic services. Carolyn Linn seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Paramedic Costs have been included in the budget.

#### VANGUARD SIGNATORY

No changes were made to the Vanguard document regarding the retirement account.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to authorize Lauren Gister to sign the Vanguard document as presented. Carolyn Linn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### SELECTWOMAN'S REPORTS

Lauren Gister updated the board on the hiring of the new police constable, Craig Lee, who just recently retired from the Clinton police Department. He will be working 3 eight hour shifts per week.

The BOF meeting scheduled for 6-15-17 was canceled.

#### AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

James Schaefer updated the board on the Tri-Series, and stated that there were still safety issues remaining, including individuals who were running in the middle of the road, and not having an accurate count of individuals in the water. However, the event was noticeably smaller and improvements were made. He suggested waiting another week and allowing the Tri-Series to continue for another event, then sitting down with the coordinator and expressing any remaining concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m. Carolyn Linn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Jo Helchowski  
Clerk