

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, April 8, 2020
ZOOM Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Gister called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Gister, Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert, members of the Audience included: Michael Ruddy, Terry Englert, Elizabeth Reinhardt, Charlene Feron, Lew Feron, Aiden Stone, Nathan Mezick, Josh Clark, James Kelly, Madelyn Meyer, Jack Newton, and Maxwell Roberts, and Steven Corsey, Conner Douglas, James Gaier, Paul Meecham and Ben Safron.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Charlene Janecek made a motion to appoint Sarah Germini, U, to the Board of Assessment Appeals as a full member with a term to expire 11/21/23. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Germini's credentials were included in the BOS packet. Note that this appointment is to fill a vacancy and as an elected position, this position will appear on the 2023 ballot.

Lauren reported that because of the Covid 19 crisis, the resumes received (two) for the part-time Building Official position have not been acted upon. Approximately 3 months ago, the BOS appointed Dick Leighton as the Temporary Building Official. Lauren recommends re-appointing Dick until 6/30/20.

Lauren Gister made a motion to re-appoint Dick Leighton as Temporary until 6/30/20. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COVID 19 UPDATE

Lauren reported that currently there are 12 positive cases in Chester and additional 5 residents have been tested and await results (presumed positive). Several of the positive cases are at Aaron Manor, which is under the jurisdiction of the State, not our local Health District.

Due to differing testing protocols amongst individual physicians, some individuals have not been tested but do have symptoms. Note that many other viruses are also prevalent at this time.

Approximately 23 Executive Orders have been issued by Governor Lamont including those applicable to protocols regarding the 20/21 budget approval.

Executive Order 7S outlines specific protocols for taxes and the collection of same including penalties for late payments due to the Corona virus. OPM is requiring Boards of Selectmen to vote (by April 25) on offering a forbearance of taxes due on 7/1 for 90 days, without penalty and/or reducing the delinquent tax interest rate from 18% to 3%. Lauren provided an overview of the options and the eligibility requirements for same.

Lauren has discussed the Town's cash flow with the Treasurer to determine upcoming expenses. The Town will be able to meet financial obligations through October 1 if a portion of taxes come in later than anticipated. Lauren will meet with the Tax Collector to determine the percentages of property taxes paid by banks, the amount of motor vehicle taxes, personal property taxes, etc. Banks would not be eligible for deferment. Administration of the program has not yet been determined.

This item will be discussed and acted upon at the next BOS meeting.

20/21 TOWN BUDGET

The Director of Tri-Town, the Superintendent of Schools and CES BOE Chairman will participate in next week's Budget Workshop. Peter and Lauren are forwarding information to Department Heads and Board Chairmen requesting that they fine tune their budget for potential budget savings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Englert made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the March 25, 2020 BOS meeting. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Tom Englert suggested that perhaps the Town should consider paying vendors, especially regular vendors, electronically instead of via paper checks. Lauren reported that the Treasurer, in the past, has not been in favor of paying bills electronically; however, Lauren will discuss same with Peter to determine if there are any accounting/auditing issues with paying vendors electronically.

As previously reported, a Team (volunteers) has been regularly calling some local residents to "check in" with them. Charlene called Cherry Hill residents and all calls have been well received.

Lauren is in contact with the Main Street contractor and it is anticipated that the Main Street Project will begin in approximately two weeks. When a start date is confirmed, the Town will be updated via the town-wide email. Local constables will facilitate traffic, etc. throughout the project and the drainage at the flagpole will be the first portion of the project to be addressed.

Lauren reported that sole proprietors and single member LLCs are having difficulty accessing Covid assistance due to the antiquated IT systems at the State. The systems are currently being updated and it is anticipated that by Friday, 4/10, individuals will be able to access the system and benefits will be retroactive to mid-February. Information on various webinars will be distributed to interested parties.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

At the request of Scout Gaier, Lauren provided an overview of the Main Street Project. Scout Churchill requested clarification of the number of Covid cases throughout the region. Lauren responded that there are approximately 37 individuals identified with Covid. To date, Chesterfields and Masioncare have no confirmed cases.

Mike Ruddy, Scout Master, thanked the BOS for welcoming the Scouts to the meeting.

At the request of Scout Meecham, Lauren provided an update of steps taken, prior to Covid, to assist the Merchants during the Main Street Project including the development of a plan for signage, press, marketing, and advertising of their businesses. Lauren reported that perhaps much of the project can be completed during the Covid closures.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski, Clerk