

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 10, 2020
ZOOM Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Gister called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Gister, Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert; also in attendance Terry Englert, Elizabeth Reinhart, Press, Cate Hewitt, and Susan Wright.

APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None.

RE-OPEN CHESTER UPDATE AND SURVEY

The Re-open Chester survey was sent, via the Town-wide email, a postcard to homes and a posting on the Town's website. To date, 271 responses have been received. The survey includes questions relative to how residents are "coping" with the Covid-19 pandemic, both personally and professionally i.e. do you have a sense of safety, are you willing to go to restaurants and shops, do you have access to appropriate PPE, etc. A survey "reminder" will be placed on the Hose Co. sign and in other locations throughout town.

Lauren commended the volunteers who have worked tirelessly brainstorming, formulating surveys, etc. to facilitate the re-opening of the Town. Ms. Wright updated the BOS on additional work of the committee. The group is excited as new residents are getting involved. She was encouraged that individuals are responding to the survey and taking the time to fill it out. The group is working in conjunction with the Tri Town Social Services survey and the school's survey to parents, teachers and students. It is anticipated that data collected from the survey will be instrumental when applying for grants.

Phase II re-opening of the State is scheduled for June 17, 2020. Phase II includes guidelines for movie theatres, bowling alleys, gyms, and in-door dining. Some Chester restaurants are ready for indoor dining at 50% capacity.

Several weeks worth of work remains on the Main Street project. The curbing is being installed and it is anticipated that the sidewalks will be poured in short order; ideally as the curbing is being installed.

Lauren provided a status report on the re-opening of the Town Hall to the public and is conferring with her colleagues in surrounding towns regarding same. Staff is currently working from home and coming into the Town Hall in "staggered shifts". It is anticipated that the Town Hall will re-open the first week of July. She stressed the importance of insuring the safety of staff and residents. Residents will continue to be encouraged to attend to business on-line or by mail whenever possible. The tax bills will include a return envelope to facilitate paying taxes by mail. Plexiglas has been installed throughout the town hall offices.

INSURANCE FEE AGREEMENT RENEWAL

A copy of the Insurance Services Agreement between Smith Brothers Insurance LLC and the Town of Chester was included in the BOS packet. Smith Brothers has represented the Town well and provided good advice to the Town for years and has saved Chester considerable money. The proposed agreement has no changes from the prior contract. Funding for the service is included in the budget.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to authorize First Selectwoman Gister to sign the Insurance Services Agreement between Smith Brothers Insurance LLC and the Town of Chester as presented. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EVERSOURCE/FRONTIER POLES AND MAIN STREET PROJECT

Charlene Janecek provided an update on Eversource/Frontier poles relative to the Main Street project. Eversource has agreed to replace the deteriorated pole, as soon as possible, in front of the Strut Your Mutt establishment. Eversource has contacted Frontier, the owner of the pole. Until all utilities on the pole are moved, there may be two poles at the site for a period of time.

Regarding the pole located in front of Simon's, Eversource planned to put a guide wire on to the sidewalk. This was unacceptable and they agreed to place their lines on the opposite side of the pole.

Update on Main Street Project - Lauren reported that the contractor is trying to get the granite curbs in ASAP to support sidewalks and the road bed. As a result in a delay in receiving product, the contractor is willing to work extra hours to "catch up" and get back on schedule.

POSSIBLE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RACIAL JUSTICE

In light of recent events, i.e. George Floyd death, riots, looting, etc. Lauren suggested that the BOS develop a proclamation/resolution stating the BOS's acceptance of all differences; i.e. race, religion, etc.; a simple statement regarding the Boards intent in governing. A copy of a draft, developed by Lauren, will be forwarded to BOS members for review and potential action at a future BOS meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the May 27, 2020 BOS meeting. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note – "Ohaus" – proper spelling of audience member name.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Charlene reported that several signs have been ordered for the Maple Street Parking Lot. These signs will be placed at the Maple Street Parking Lot, the entrance to the walkway and at the top of the walkway. The Board thanked Jan and Peter Good for their design of the signs and their willingness to donate their time and talents to Chester.

Lauren reported that Cedar Lake is open and social distancing and cleaning/disinfecting protocols have been put into place. The Snack Shack is window service only; Park & Rec designated spaces on the beach accommodating groups of 5 people. Park & Rec is requiring social distancing in the water and asking that people wear masks on the beach. Hours of operation are: 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., a 1 hour closure for disinfection of bathroom facilities and surfaces and a raking of the beach. The beach re-opens from 3:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Out of town beach passes are not being sold and capacity at the beach has been limited.

John Williams developed signs to clarify parking at Pelletier Park and protocols at North Quarter Park. The North Quarter Park playground signage indicates that the playground is not being disinfected and individuals are encouraged to use hand sanitizer and to wipe down equipment before and after play.

Park and Rec reserves the right to revisit and adjust policies as necessary.

Lauren provided an update on the protocol for Valley graduation on 6/17/20. A virtual graduation has been planned from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. followed by individual "drive up", by appointment, to receive diplomas. Parents have organized a car parade throughout the 3 towns scheduled for Sunday 6/21/20.

The Fair Association will not be hosting a drive in movie at this time.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Tom Englert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski, Clerk