

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, July 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. Note that the public joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Audience members included: Andrew Gardner, Elizabeth Reinhart and approximately 6 additional audience members.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Charlene Janecek made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:01 p.m. to discuss a Personnel matter. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regular Session resumed at 7:20 p.m.

As previously reported, the Town has been searching for a permanent Building Official for several months. Due to a variety of reasons, including Covid-19 and the lack of qualified individuals applying for the position (certification classes cancelled due to the Pandemic); the Town has been unable to fill the vacancy. Dick Leighton has been appointed interim Building Official several times; however, due to State Statute, he cannot be re-appointed as an "interim" Building Official again.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to appoint Dick Leighton as Chester's Building Official for a 4 year term effective 7/1/20. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

LONG TERM RECOVERY TASK FORCE AND SURVEY RESULTS UPDATE

Approximately 620 residents participated in the survey. Briefings on the results have been communicated via ZOOM. Results will also be posted on the Town's website and will be distributed via the town-wide email. Data indicated that approximately 30% of households were affected negatively, either financially or due to employment, as a result of Covid-19. However, of that 30%, a small portion sought assistance. Results also indicated that many had difficulty obtaining PPE, etc.

As previously reported, the Long Term Recovery Task Force Chairmen meet regularly with the 11 sub-committees, including a Merchants and Tourism sub-committee, an Emotional, Wellness and Social Services sub-committee and a Finance sub-committee. To date, the Tax Collector reports that the Town is "on par" with last year's tax collection rate. The Tax Collector will continue to monitor same.

The sub-committees will review and use the data developed by the survey to facilitate plans to keep our residents safe and for a potential "shut down" in the Fall.

A list of resources for residents in need of assistance will be developed.

APPOINTMENTS – OFFICIALS, BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

RiverCOG has a committee developing a Regional POCD. Mike Sanders is Chester's primary representative on the Committee and there is also an alternate member position open. Ms. Cindy Lignar has expressed an interest in serving in the alternate position. Lauren provided a brief background on Ms. Lignar who has been an active member of the Chester community and a member of the DTC.

Lauren Gister made a motion to appoint Cindy Lignar as Chester's alt. representative on the Regional POCD Committee. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A joint meeting with Deep River P&Z, Essex P&Z, Chester P&Z and the Regional Committee has been scheduled on August 13th and is open to the public.

The Town's 10-year POCD was published in 2019 and RiverCOG's Regional POCD will "mesh" with both Town and the State requirements.

AMERICAN LEGION FLAG REQUEST

Jerry LaMark, American Legion, at no cost to the Town, has requested permission to install American flags along Main Street for Memorial Day, 4th of July, Veteran's Day etc. (similar to the way Deep River displays flags along their Main Street). Lauren will discuss the logistics; i.e. site lines, hardware to be installed on poles and non-interference with delivery trucks, etc. of the installation. Lauren encouraged BOS members to forward additional questions/concerns to her and she will discuss same with Mr. LaMark. The BOS was agreeable to the request provided that all concerns are addressed satisfactorily.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 24, 2020 MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/24/20 BOS meeting. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Charlene reported that as a result of complaints received relative to speeding, non-resident use of beach area, etc., she has been touring the Cedar Lake area several times a day and has observed no infractions.

The Town has been issuing free public access stickers for the area and the police have been patrolling to make sure residents are able to park. As previously reported, social distancing measures have been instituted at the beach and Park & Rec is monitoring activities at the beach.

Lauren reported:

- The Governor has postponed the Phase III re-opening. Phase II will remain in effect and limits indoor capacity at 25 individuals and outdoor capacity to 100 individuals. Phase III re-opening will be reevaluated in 2 weeks.
- The Town Hall has re-opened to the public, with all appropriate safeguards in place (floor markings, masks required, etc.). The restrooms are closed to the public and the public is encouraged to do as much as possible via US Mail, email, telephone calls etc.
- The Library is not yet open to the public and during the shut-down has completed renovations including new flooring, lighting and painting. They do offer curbside pick up and intra-library loans.
- Haddam has put down millings connecting Wig Hill Road to Turkey Hill Road. The road is not intended for regular use. The majority of the road is in Haddam and they will be responsible for maintaining it. "No truck" signs will be posted. Lauren was not able to find any documentation

on the history of the road but Public Works informed her that several years ago, after a storm, the towns decided that there should be access to the area in the event of an emergency.

- A contract for work to Cherry Hill will be signed; projects include: HVAC, new windows, siding, sidewalks, and paving in the parking lot. A Small Cities Grant in the amount of \$800,000 will fund the project. The Town applied for the grant on behalf of Cherry Hill.
- The Town has received noise complaints regarding gunfire. The police report that as long as a resident has ample property and the appropriate gun permits/licensing is in place, they are permitted to fire guns on their property.
- Main Street Project – the “substantial completion” date is August 8, 2020. Currently, the contractor is excavating the road. Upon substantial completion, the street should be excavated, the curbs and sidewalks complete. The final payment is due 9/22.
 - Several issues required that the road be closed more than anticipated. The original intent was to have the road open in one direction throughout most of the project.
 - The area between the northeast side of Maple Street to the “wall” area will be closed for several days for excavating work.
 - Eversource will be moving wires next week at the Strut Your Mutt area. It is anticipated that the work will take approximately 3 days to complete and they do not anticipate power outages during the project. They will; however, have a generator on site in the event of an outage.
 - Merchants are happy with the project and have reported that business is increasing.
 - When the roadway is completed, the Farmer’s Market can resume on Main Street.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk