

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, March 24, 2021
ZOOM Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Gister called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Gister, Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert, Michael King, Bettie Perreault, Elizabeth Reinhart, Press, Chief Grzybowski, Virginia Carmany, BOF Chairman and James Hays.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Michael King provided a brief overview of his background. He has been a Chester resident for 28 years and as an engineer for the DOT and an active boater, he is familiar with the marine industry.

Tom Englert made a motion to appoint Michael King, R, to the Harbor Management Commission (alt) with a term to expire 10/3/21. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COVID VACCINE UPDATE

Lauren reported that Covid positivity rates have been increasing (currently at 4.3%) as the State has “opened up”. Chester has experienced two recent deaths attributed to the Pandemic. Residents were encouraged to adhere to the CDC guidelines; i.e. masks, social distancing, etc. Vaccine availability continues to increase and this trend is expected to continue.

DREDGING OF CHESTER CREEK OPTIONS

Lauren provided an update on the dredging project and reported that she received clarification on the Harbor Commission’s request relative to the funding for dredging. The Harbor Commission’s request was not for the actual dredging funds but for the money necessary to restore the Eck Property as required by the permit that allows the dredging spoils to be deposited at that location. There is \$25,000 budgeted in Capital for dredging. Note that a portion of these funds was to be used as the Town’s “match” for a potential grant; however, the parameters of the Grant have changed to a reimbursement grant. Lauren has not heard back from DEEP regarding the appropriate use of the DEEP permit (can the marinas perform and pay for dredging under the Town’s permit?). In addition, to date, the permit from the Army Corps of Engineers has not yet been received (it is anticipated that this permit will be received within the next several days).

Note that the DEEP has already determined that the spoils are not hazardous and the Eck site is an appropriate area to place the spoils.

Lauren Gister made a motion to recommend that the BOF approve and release an amount not to exceed \$25,000 from the dredging Capital account to facilitate the permitting and bidding process for the restoration of the Eck property as a result of dredging Chester Creek. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Note that the marina has been dredging the area and has installed, at their expense, a silt fence and ramp at the Eck property to facilitate the project.

The motion passed unanimously.

Lauren will invite Joel to the BOF meeting to discuss the project.

BUDGET ITEMS

The weapons request from the Police Department and information provided by the Resident State Trooper will be discussed at the Budget Workshop.

Executive Orders expire on 4/20/21. The Legislators are considering legislation to extend some of the Executive Orders until 5/20. Depending upon what, if any Executive Orders are extended, will determine the protocol for Town Meetings, potential hybrid meetings, etc. Note that it is very time consuming for the Registrars to determine voting eligibility via a ZOOM Town Meeting. The BOS discussed potentially holding a Town Meeting on the budget at a larger venue (CES gym) to allow for social distancing.

Guidance from the State and Treasury relative to the American Rescue Plan is not anticipated before the Town's budget is finalized.

MASONICARE RESIDENT CELEBRATION

Flora Tucci, Masonicare resident, turns 100 on April 19th. A copy of her "bio" was included in the BOS packet.

The consensus of the BOS was to develop a Proclamation in honor of Ms. Tucci. Lauren will draft same for BOS review.

TOWN EVENTS AND POLICIES

Several emails, requesting use of Town space; i.e. parks, Little League, Dance recital, Cedar Lake, Meeting House, 4 on the 4th Event, Chester Fair etc. were included in the BOS packet.

Lauren has requested guidance from the Health District. They recommend approval of events with the understanding that if Covid positivity increases, their event may be cancelled. In addition an acceptable plan, per CDC guidelines, must be submitted to the Town. The BOS briefly discussed what party is responsible for enforcing said plan and other CDC guidelines.

The status of Prom, graduation, Memorial Day parade and other events has not yet been determined.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2021 BOS meeting as amended. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note that the Executive Session ended at 7:23 p.m. and the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. with Charlene Janecek making the motion to adjourn and Tom Englert seconding the motion.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Charlene continues to pursue contractors to address the downtown walls. She has requested that the contractors provide additional information relative to their bids.

Lauren reported that she has had discussion with the Executor of the Estate relative to the Parker's Point property. A Special BOS meeting may be scheduled to discuss further.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk