

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021  
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, Elizabeth Reinhart, Press, Amy Safran, and Virginia Carmany, BOF Chair.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The DTC sent a nomination and recommends that Michael Peck, a current alternate member of the ZBA, fill the full member vacancy seat on ZBA. The term will expire 11/2/21. He must run for the “seat” in November.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to appoint Michael Peck, D, to a full seat on the ZBA with a term to expire 11/2/21. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The First Selectman’s office has received two nominations to fill an alternate seat on the BOF; one from Kristina Pollack, R, (who also serves on two other boards) and one from Michael Jordan, L. The term expires on 11/16/21.

The consensus of the BOS was to invite both individuals to the next BOS for further discussion.

COVID VACCINE UPDATE

Distribution and administration of the Johnson and Johnson Covid-19 has been suspended; however, CHRAD will administer the Moderna vaccine to those scheduled to receive the J&J vaccine.

State and Chester Covid positivity rates of infection seem to be plateauing at approximately 3%. The State is determining what is and what is not permitted vis a vis re-opening and businesses are slowly re-opening as residents are eager to get back to some sense of “normal”.

The Chester Fair Committee will meet next week to determine if/when the Fair will take place.

DREDGING OF CHESTER CREEK OPTIONS

As previously discussed, funds were released to pay the consultant and for site restoration as a result of dredging. The permit received in April from the Army Corps of Engineers called for work to be completed by March 31; to accommodate spawning fish, the Harbor Commission’s request for an extension was denied. In addition the Bond Commission meets this week to determine the status of the grant for dredging. It is anticipated that the dredging project will commence in the Fall. This item will be discussed further at a future BOS meeting.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Information relative to the Town's Health Insurance was distributed to BOS members and discussed at length. Lauren outlined the parameters of the Union contract relative to health insurance and recommends that the Town participate in the State's Partnership for insurance. Deep River and Essex have been part of the State's health insurance plan and have been pleased with it.

Lauren Gister made a motion participate in the State of Connecticut's Health Insurance plan and commit via Union negotiations, to retain the employee contribution at 5% and 15% (for one employee) for 3 of the next 5 year Union Contract. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

This item will be forwarded to the BOF for further action.

#### DOWNTOWN MASONRY REPAIR

As previously reported, Charlene has been pursuing 3 contractors to address masonry repair work in the downtown area. A proposal from Shoreline Landscapes regarding the downtown masonry work was screen shared. The proposal detailed the costs associated with all aspects of the project; i.e. flagpole area, wall in front of brewery and repair to the Chester Wall. The total cost is \$16,860.00 and the contractor can begin work within the next two weeks. He anticipates that the project will be completed in 2 weeks. Funding for the project is via the Main Street Project.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to award the downtown masonry work to Shoreline Landscaping in the amount of \$16,860.00 and to authorize First Selectwoman Gister to sign the contract. Lauren Gister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### GARBAGE ORDINANCE

Lauren reported that she is finalizing the language in the Garbage Ordinance and anticipates further BOS action at the next BOS meeting. As previously discussed, garbage receptacles are being left on the sidewalks for extended periods of time and town action is necessary to address same.

This proposed Ordinance, and several other items require Town Meeting approval. Due to the Pandemic, no in-person meetings have taken place in the past year.

The BOS discussed options to safely hold an in-person Town Meeting; i.e. venue, CDC requirements, etc. It was determined that budget items will be discussed at a Town Meeting and a separate Town Meeting will be scheduled to address non-budget items requiring Town Meeting approval.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2021 BOS meeting. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### SELECTMEN REPORTS

Lauren reported on landscaping work done at the Meeting House. The trees at the Meeting House were pruned and damaged/dying trees/shrubbery was removed. The Public Works Dept. and the Tree Warden have developed a Planting Plan that includes flowering shrubs, flowers and trees. The Planting Plan will be placed on the Town's website.

The BOS discussed the appropriate use of downtown sidewalks for outdoor dining as the Governor's Executive Orders allowing outdoor dining have been extended. Lauren reported that the ZEO has been alerted to the issues and will address same. The safety and well-being of residents was stressed; note

that no parking spots may be reserved for "food pick-up". The only acceptable reserved spots are for handicapped parking. As reported above, the ZEO is addressing these issues.

Lauren reported:

- The Middlesex Foundation has offered to fund the installation of several Little Libraries throughout Chester (beach, Meeting House, NQP). Public Works will assist with the installation.
- Parking issues at NQP are being addressed. Park and Rec. in conjunction with Public Works is developing a plan to provide more parking at the park. This plan includes removing unhealthy trees to create parking spots.

#### AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Virginia Carmany requested the resumes of the two individuals interested in joining the BOF.

At Virginia's request, Lauren provided an update on trees planted at the Public Works facility, NQP and the status of additional trees on Main Street. The Tree Warden is aware of the concerns and is addressing same. Regarding the trees at NQP, the intent is to replace trees that have been removed and screening will be maintained.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Tom Englert made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:23 p.m. for the purpose of a discussion on Real Estate. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

Regular Session resumed at 8:55 p.m.

No action taken.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Tom Englert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk