

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, August 11, 2021
ZOOM Meeting and Community Room

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, Terri Englert, Bettie Perreault, Virginia Carmany, Chairman BOF and Kimberley Mcgrath.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – Terri Englert requested that the town-wide emails include dates/times of upcoming Board and Commission meetings. Lauren will facilitate same.

CHESTER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

A copy of the report developed by the Chester Community Partnership Committee (see attached) was included in the Board’s packet and discussed. The report outlines the parameters of the Chester Food Program that opened on June 15, 2021 to all Chester residents, the Back-to-School Program, and the Chester 211 initiative that will assist residents in accessing technology. In September, the Community Partnership Committee will begin collaborating with Bare Necessities to distribute diapers and wipes.

Ms. Mcgrath reported that the Committee is requesting funds from the Chester Community Fund to facilitate the purchase of “Dignity Totes” (toiletry items) and funding to establish camperships at Camp Hazen and scholarships to the YMCA. Lauren will research the balance of the Chester Community Fund and the BOS will discuss requests for funding at a future BOS meeting.

Ms. Mcgrath, Chairman, was available to address questions posed by BOS members.

The Board thanked Kim and the Committee for their work for Chester residents.

END OF YEAR TRANSFERS – in packet

A Proposed Year End Transfer Report, developed by Peter Evankow, was included in the BOS packet.

From: BOS Dues	\$532
To: BOS – First Selectman	\$288
To: BOS – Elected Officials	\$31
To: BOS – Regular Payroll	\$213
From: Finance – Supplies	\$501
To: Finance – Regular Payroll	\$501
From: Assessor – Outside Contractor	\$3,017
To: Town Office Operations – Service Contracts	\$3,017
From: Town Clerk – Data Processing	\$1,541
To: Town Clerk – Elected Officials	\$1,420

To:	Town Clerk – Regular Payroll	\$121
From:	Treasurer – Bank Fees	\$64
From:	Treasurer – Professional Dev.	\$30
To:	Treasurer – Elected Officials	\$94
From:	Tax Collector – Regular Payroll	\$138
To:	Tax Collector – Elected Officials	\$138
From:	Building Dept. – Regular Payroll	\$3,680
To:	Registrar of Voters – Elected Officials	\$1,633
To:	Registrar of Voters – Data Processing	\$2,047
From:	P&Z – General Legal	\$3,179
From:	P&Z – Regular Payroll	\$20,183
To:	P&Z – Outside Clerical	\$2,422
To:	P&Z – Advertising	\$757
To:	P&Z – Outside Contractor	\$20,183
From:	IW – Outside Clerical	\$44
To:	IW – Regular Payroll	\$44
From:	P&Z – Regular Payroll	\$1,639
To:	ZBA – Outside Clerical	\$84
To:	ZBA – Advertising	\$1,555
From:	Park and Rec – Temp Part-time	\$214
To:	Park and Rec – Regular Payroll	\$214
From:	Park and Rec – Temp Part-time	\$7,806
From:	Library – Regular Payroll	\$12,231
From:	Light/Water – Equip Maint.	\$8,508
To:	Highway – Gen Maint – Reg Payroll	\$4,517
To:	Highway – Gen Maint – Overtime Payroll	\$3,289
To:	Highway – Gen Maint – Equip Maint	\$12,231
To:	Highway – Winter Maint – Outside Contr.	\$8,508
From:	Lights/Water – Street Lights	\$5,590
To:	Build & Grounds – Outside Contr. Cleaning	\$5,590
From:	Chester Hose Co – Regular Payroll	\$345
To:	Chester Hose Co –Supplies	\$345
From:	Chester Hose Co – Regular Payroll	\$5,732
To:	Fire Marshal – Outside Contractor	\$5,732
From:	Police – Regular Payroll	\$15,902
From:	Police – RST Private Duty	\$6,948

From: Police – RST	\$10,667
From: Police – RST Overtime	\$3,267
From: Police – DUI	\$13,964
From: Police – Equip Maint	\$2,580
To: Police – Constable Private Duty	\$53,328
From: Animal Control – Outside Contractor	\$1,505
To: Animal Control – Regular Payroll	\$1,505
From: Human Services – Mileage	\$168
To: Human Services – Regular Payroll	\$168
From: Light/Water – Equip Maint	\$7,344
To: Municipal Ins – Comp Bus Policy	\$3,934
To: Municipal Ins – Vol Accident Policy	\$3,410

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the Year End Transfers as presented and forward to BOF for further action. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AIR CONDITIONER REPLACEMENT

As previously reported, one of the air conditioning units at the town hall is no longer operational and several window units have been installed in the building. A copy of a quote, developed by John Zanardi Oil Co., in the amount of \$40,000 for air conditioning replacement was included in the BOS packet and discussed. A quote from Foley, in the amount of \$60,000 was also received.

Lauren reported that through the budget process, funds were put into Capital for AC replacement; however not in the current year’s Capital budget. Lauren outlined the parameters of replacement of the units, including access via the attic and removal of the ceiling which will displace several offices for the duration of a project.

Brian Zanardi developed a plan that includes the purchase of coils and a retro fit of the units, one at a time, without the need to access the attic or remove the ceilings. It is anticipated that the rebuilt unit(s) will have a lifespan of 15 to 20 years. Funding for the coils may be available in the Public Works budget (equipment maintenance line).

Lauren will direct Brian Zanardi to provide costs associated with the purchase of the coils ASAP. The consensus of the BOS was to pursue the replacement of the coils as proposed by Mr. Zanardi.

Bettie Perreault commented that there are many items in the Town Hall that will need replacement, due to the age of the building. Lauren reported that the Capital Plan does include funding for these items/systems.

MUNICIPAL FLEET STRATEGY

A copy of the Town of Chester Municipal Fleet Improvement Management Strategy Draft was included in the BOS packet (and is attached to the minutes). The Sustainable CT Committee members are pursuing the Sustainable CT certification which includes a Municipal Fleet Improvement/Management Strategy. Said strategy has also been discussed via the POCD.

The BOS discussed the draft document and agreed that much of what is included in the document is currently being done; however, the section “Create and enforce an anti-idling policy for all fleet vehicles” should be revised to “Encourage non-idling of vehicles when possible”.

Lauren Gister made a motion to adopt the Town of Chester’s Municipal Fleet Improvement/Management Strategy as amended above. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

A Climate Report was released this week. Over the last 10 plus years, Chester has pursued various projects that protect natural waterways, promote energy efficiency and other climate initiatives.

Lauren recommended that the BOS begin discussions relative to the development of a Climate Action Plan that may include collaboration between various Boards/Commissions; i.e. Energy Team, Conservation Commission, Sustainable CT Committee, etc. Said plan could be instrumental in helping Chester prepare for a climate emergency. The BOS will discuss this item further at future meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 28, 2021 BOS meeting, as presented. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Tom Englert reported that the Superintendent of Schools has prepared a Re-opening Plan for Region 4 schools. This plan includes in person only classes with no option for remote learning. Masks will be required for all students and staff regardless of vaccination status (masks are not required outside). Mask breaks will be provided and social distancing requirements have been reduced from 6 ft. to 3 ft. Students will again eat lunch in the cafeteria. The Administration has been working with the Health District and the Essex Health Director. No quarantining is anticipated for those asymptomatic. The BOE’s presentation is available on the school’s website.

Charlene Janecek forwarded to the Selectmen the proposal on the Skyview property developed by Luke Whitehouse. His proposal recommends a Phase I study of the property (\$8,000). Another quote may be required to meeting the Town’s policy.

Lauren reported that the restaurant tables on Main Street are now in compliance with Zoning. The ZEO was commended for his efforts to bring the restaurants into compliance. There has been a request for a transfer of the liquor license at the Hot French Chix location. In addition the Brushmill restaurant has been sold and is under new management. They will be closed for renovations.

A candidate for the part-time Assessor Asst. and part-time Land Use Admin. has been offered the position. Lauren will speak with Angus MacDonald, Deep River First Selectman about a contractual arrangement (similar to the arrangement that Chester had with Haddam for the Assessor) between Deep River and Chester as this individual will also be working part-time in Deep River.

The Animal Control Officer and Asst. Animal Control Officer will both be resigning (date to be determined). Lauren will speak with First Selectman Needleman and First Selectman MacDonald relative to the next steps with regard to the shared Animal Control officers.

The Parker's Point property is under contract. As previously discussed, the offer on the property made by the Town of Chester was rejected. In addition Brook Factory is on the market as a "for sale by owner" listed at \$1.3 million.

Covid Report:

- The State's infection rate is now over 3% (mostly younger individuals as the majority of senior citizens have been vaccinated).
- Delta variant is very contagious.
- Health District has seen an up-tick in requests for the vaccine.
- Lauren will develop an email with vaccination sites and testing sites.
- A Vaccination Clinic, sponsored by Griffin Hospital, will be at the Chester Fair.

Lauren reported that she is in discussion with the Resident State Trooper and IT provider regarding the dash and body cams and the requirements for storing and access to footage. Costs associated with storing and accessing body cam video are very high. She will schedule a meeting with the RST, IT provider, Peter Evankow and First Selectmen Needleman and MacDonald to discuss further.

As previously reported, the Hornbeam trees planted as part of the Main Street Project are dying. They are under warranty and a "dead letter" has been written by the Tree Warden and forwarded to the contractor. When this letter is acknowledged, the trees will be cut down and new trees will be selected (the Tree Warden recommends Paperback Maple trees) and planted. Due to space restrictions, the tree in front of Ottos and Hot French Chix will not be replanted.

Lauren explained that the tree in front of the Villager is the town's responsibility and the remaining 3 trees are under warranty with the contractor. The grant has not yet been closed out and funds remain in contingency. If additional Belgium Block is required, a change order will be issued and costs associated with the change order will be negotiated with the contractor.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Tom Englert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk