

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING  
TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, May 10, 2023  
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Janecek called the meeting to order at 7:00. In attendance included: First Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert, Selectman Meehan, Richard Strauss, Pat Bandez, Brian Daley, Erica Udolf, Carol Lewitt and several other audience members.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Richard Strauss provided an update of the Region 4 Retreat. Approximately 20 BOE members attended the May 6<sup>th</sup> Retreat. Items of discussion included the physical condition of the Region 4 schools and Administration Building, funding needed to main the properties and enrollment projections. The importance of BOS and BOF involvement in the meetings was stressed as the next steps/decisions will not just be BOE decisions. Richard encouraged the BOS to be in contact with the Administration and to participate in upcoming meetings.

Pat Bandez provided an update on the RiverCOG Regional Housing Committee. The kickoff meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2023. Pat will be Chester's representative on the Committee. Towns are permitted to have an alternate Committee member. Pat recommended that the BOS appoint same.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Englert made a motion to approve the minutes of the 4/26/23 BOS meeting as presented. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ARPA REQUEST

No new requests. The BOF forwarded all ARPA requests to the Town Meeting.

CHESTER CHARTER COMMISSION

The Nominating Committee, appointed to nominate members to a Charter Commission completed their task. They received 14 applications, 8 Democrats, 4 Republicans, and 2 Unaffiliated residents expressed interest in serving on the Charter Commission. The Nominating Committee recommended the BOS appoint the following residents to the Charter Commission: Mark Borton, D, Brian Dailey, U, Lol Fearon, U (serving on BOE and will not resign), Jesse Gnazzo, D, Pat Holloway, D, Ian McLaughlin, R, (serving on WPCA and will resign) and Richard Strauss, D (serving on R4 BOE and will not resign). The Statute allows two members to continue to serve on a Board/Commission.

Tom Englert made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee as listed above for membership on the Charter Commission. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The BOS thanked residents for their interest and participation in the Nomination process. The commission has 16 months to complete their work. At the request of the BOS, Richard Strauss agreed to facilitate the first meeting of the Charter Commission.

### NORTH MAIN STREET RECONSTRUCTION

Ed provided an update on his recent conversations with Jacobson relative to the draft outline for the N. Main Street Reconstruction project funded via the STEAP Grant. Jacobson will facilitate the engineering and design of the project. It is anticipated that the project will go out to bid in 2024 and work will begin in time for the Spring construction cycle. Ms. Lewitt asked if the project will provide an opportunity to get water extended on Water Street. Ed responded that the project does not anticipate any extension of the water line.

### BUDGET

No major questions relative to the Budget were asked at the May 9, 2023 Public Meeting. The BOF voted to send the Budget to the Town Meeting for town consideration and vote.

Tom Englert made a motion to add to the agenda “SELECTMEN REPORTS”. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### SELECTMEN REPORTS

Ed Meehan reported on:

- Potential Legislation regarding interest rates on delinquent property taxes and sewer/water bills. Presently, towns are permitted to charge 18% interest on delinquent bills. Legislation under consideration calls for reducing the allowable interest to 12% and exempting fees under \$4,000 in unpaid assessments. Charlene will call on our Legislators and express concern as the Town depends on this revenue.
- As part of the Small Cities Grant contract (Cherry Hill), a Public Hearing on the project is scheduled on June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Public Works conducted Energy Building Audits at the Town Hall, Meeting House, and garage. The audit done at the Town Garage uncovered approximately \$3,000 to \$4,000 in potential savings including re-lamping projects and insulation of the roof.
  - The potential use of ARPA funds to facilitate these projects was briefly discussed.
  - Some projects funded via ARPA funds did not expend all the money allocated.
  - The balance in the ARPA funds will be determined in the next several months as projects are completed.
- The BOS thanked Cam for his due diligence in these audits.

Charlene reported:

- The final report on the Kenyon property, developed by Atlas, is expected on 5/14/23. To date, no issues have been uncovered at the property.
- As previously discussed, Jacobson is surveying the Chesterfield Wall to determine who owns the property. There may be grants available to repair the wall.

### AUDIENCE

Erica Udolf and Carol Lewitt expressed interest in participation in a Chester Affordable Housing Commission (not the RiverCOG Regional Committee) as recommended in the POCD. Excerpts from the Chester Affordable Housing Plan were read/shared with the BOS. Many of the initiatives in the Plan are under the direction of Land Use/P&Z. The parameters of the “Village District” and intent of the “Village Tiers” were briefly discussed.

Charlene will solicit residents interested in serving on the Chester Housing Commission.

As reported earlier, Pat Bandez is representing Chester on the RiverCOG Regional Housing Committee.

Some of the 17 RiverCOG Towns have separate a Housing Authority/Commission. The BOS will discuss the appointment of an alternate to the RiverCOG Committee at a future meeting.

Richard Strauss reported that per the recent adoption of the fields project at Referendum, the Region 4 BOE discussed the potential for donations and grants to off-set the costs of the fields renovation. Charlene will reach out to Angus and Norm relative to the possibility of the 3 towns collaborating on a grant.

The BOS expressed their condolences on the recent passing of Peter Goode. Mr. Goode was generous with this time and talents with regard to the Town of Chester.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Tom Englert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk