TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes – April 27, 2021

Members Present: Michelle Francesconi, Chair
Jason Levesque, Emergency Services Liaison
Ronald DeAngelis, Highway and Infrastructure Liaison
Mark Biagini, Clerk

Others Present: Mark Webber, Interim Town Administrator
Noelle M Pandell, Interim Administrative Assistant
Peter Traub, Lake District
Thomas Walsh, Lake District
Charles "Chick" Lewis, Lake District

Go-To-Meeting: Denise Gregoire, Finance Committee
John Tremblay, Finance Committee
Kathleen Levesque, Finance Committee
Lenwood "Woody" Vaspra, Finance Committee
Heather Emerson, Finance Committee

M. Francesconi opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Ms. Francesconi read from a prepared set of remarks that was listed on the agenda concerning that, pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.

Ms. Francesconi acknowledged the members of the Board present at the meeting.

1. **Workshop Meeting: Joint Meeting with the Hoosac Lake Recreation/Preservation District**
   M. Francesconi explained that this meeting is a continuation of the first meeting on March 25th. The topics discussed follow:
   - <u>What is the Board of Selectmen doing to request the Commonwealth of MA to participate in funding the weed control of the lake</u> - M. Francesconi said that there is potential state funding in the works and M. Webber said that there is a bill in the legislature. Following a brief discussion, M. Webber did not recommend contacting the legislature at this time.
   - <u>The funding of an independent consultant to review and advise on the best management practices of the lake</u> - M. Francesconi stated that no action is needed.
   - <u>Nonpoint Source Program for the Shadow Land Cove drainage problem</u> – M. Francesconi said that residents need to submit a Notice of Intent with the Conservation Commission. Discussion

followed – M. Webber stated that Foresight Land Services was contracted to survey the shoreline; they had done previous work there, so they have base information.

- Harbormaster duties / BOS creating a job description for the Harbormaster who would be appointed yearly – R. DeAngelis said he spoke with the Harbormaster from Stockbridge who said there is no such thing as a lifetime appointment. He said they are hired and fired by the Board of Selectmen. It is recommended that the Harbormaster be someone who live on or close to the water. Before creating a job description, M. Francesconi recommended having a meeting with the numerous stakeholders: the Lake District, the Board of Selectmen, the current Harbormaster and the Police Chief because we need written guidelines. M. Francesconi stated that once the new Board is elected, we will continue this discussion.
- Contracting with a lake management company – M. Francesconi said we need to budget for it this year and she would like to try a new vendor. M. Francesconi said that Town Counsel will review the contract. Following a brief discussion, it was noted that the money budgeted will cover this.
- BOS to request the Town's BOH to test the lake to determine if it is safe to swim in – M. Francesconi said that we will definitely move forward with this.
- Susan Ruch's, DCAMM, response concerning the state's responsibility of the dam including clearing of debris yearly – A response has not been received yet.

M. Francesconi then took questions from the public regarding the lake:

Francis Willett said that they need to make sure first responders have access. He said that the statute is very vague, but the Harbormaster is a very serious position, and the job description needs to be law enforcement based. He said he appreciates the Board pulling everyone together. With regard to surveying the lake, he appreciates the issues being raised and everyone working together to solve them.

Liseann Karandisecky said that with regard to the survey of the lake, a lot of people may be willing to volunteer their time. Once it gets organized, you could get more people involved.

Karen Kruszyna said she would pass the need for water testing on to Mike who would very much like to be part of that.

Ken Alesevich said he has concerns regarding the gate being open and closed, open and closed and he wanted to know why. Last year the water went down real low and 15' of cattails were lost. He said at least two people monitor the gate opening. He said most wanted more than one meeting per year. He said homeowners clean up in front of property and lastly, he said many people are willing to volunteer.

M. Francesconi said that we did not touch on the gates. P. Traub stated that when he was originally given the height over the dam as close to 1" as possible and he kept that going. Recently, he was told that the some say the lake is historically high and some say it is historically low. He has no way of knowing. He said in the winter the water is a little lower; close to 1" and in the summer with boats it is closer to 2". P. Traub said that it requires at times for the gates to be opened and closed. If the water raises over 2" the gates are opened. Peter said he keeps a log of when the gates are opened and closed. M. Francesconi suggested the log be shareable so other lake district members can see it. Following a brief discussion, Liseann said she is willing to help with making the log shareable. In the chat window, it was mentioned about using a permanent measuring instrument.

P. Traub, T. Walsh and C. Lewis left the meeting.

2. Workshop Meeting: FY22 Budget – Joint Discussion with Finance Committee

a. Discussion regarding building maintenance projects

M. Francesconi said that she followed up with contractors to get quotes she has been waiting for; she said she will not be getting the masonry quote and, as a result, she has a meeting with another contractor regarding masonry work. J. Levesque asked if we were on track for the compactor or if we have to budget for it; M. Francesconi stated that we have the materials in hand and now the work needs to be done. J. Tremblay said that we seem to be playing catch up with building maintenance in many areas. He suggested that all of the town buildings be assessed for structural needs so that a capital plan can be done. He suggested putting money aside for the assessment. Discussion followed.

b. Discussion regarding emergency exit signage and lighting in Town Buildings

M. Francesconi said she invited Cintas to come out and do an assessment and provide a quote for emergency exit signs and lighting. She said we will have to address this so there will need to be a warrant article. OSHA could inspect the Fire Station at any time for compliance with fire extinguishers. The heat detectors in the Fire Station and the highway garage are not operational. Discussion followed.

c. Green Communities Program

M. Webber said that lighting upgrades have been addressed. He said the police station, highway garage and town hall have been surveyed. The Cheshire Elementary School building needs to be done within the next 12-months because the federal credits are going to go away. Discussion followed – J. Tremblay asked for a copy of the report; M. Francesconi said that she would put it in the shared folder. M. Webber stated that John Burzimatti's quote for the fire house boiler is very reasonable.

d. Technology Inventory

M. Francesconi would like to do a google survey to all departments about technology that is out there and what their needs are. For example, who has phones, what are the phone numbers what software is being used, what devices do people in the department have, what could they use that they do not have (antivirus software). Discussion followed and it was agreed to include questions on the survey about keys. M. Francesconi said she would send the survey out at the end of the week.

e. Budget and warrant articles

M. Webber distributed and reviewed a list of ATM Special Articles; a brief discussion followed. J. Levesque asked about the stimulus money; M. Francesconi said she attended an MMA webinar, and they did not provide any update. The money could start to drop with little to no guidance.

R. DeAngelis stated that the bylaws state that sidewalks are the responsibility of the residents and the town snow blows the sidewalks. He said this should be stopped. A brief discussion followed.

J. Tremblay noted that the following still need to be changed in the budget: Cheshire Elementary School Maintenance should be changed to Cheshire Elementary School (CES) Utilities and the Special Repairs to Town Buildings line item should be at $75K and the CES Utilities line item should be at $45K. J. Tremblay also noted that the Town Administrator's expenses and education line items were

zeroed out; following a brief discussion, it was agreed to put $2,500 in for education and $500 in expenses.
M. Francesconi stated that the amount budgeted in the website maintenance line item does not leave any room to improve if we want to do a new site. M. Francesconi stated that she has asked what the cost would be to update the current site.

3. **Public Comment Period**
Kathy Levesque suggested adding use of home computers and town stored information to the technology survey. M. Francesconi said those were good suggestions. She also thanked R. DeAngelis for his service on the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.

Shawn McGrath said there was a recommendation to assess all town buildings in 2017 and he wanted to know if it was ever done; M. Francesconi said that it has not yet been completed.

Woody Vaspra thanked R. DeAngelis for his service.

4. **Announcements from Board Members**
M. Francesconi acknowledged that it was R. DeAngelis' last meeting and she thanked him for his service on the Board.

M. Francesconi said the Cemetery Commission was asked to develop a job description and the Treasurer contacted them looking for the job description because a person was asked to work today but there was no hiring paperwork. M. Francesconi asked if the Board agreed with side-stepping Board approval of the job description if M. Webber sends out the posting; the Board agreed. This will be added to next weeks agenda.

M. Francesconi said that next week the Board will re-organize. M. Webber suggested to wait until June to do the annual appointments. He suggested that the list of appointments get sent to each individual Selectmen to review and put a yes or no next to the appointment. The lists are then returned to M. Webber, who will tally up each re-appointment. If it is not unanimous, it will get reviewed at the next meeting. Discussion followed.

There was a brief discussion about changing the Town Meeting date and the election date on the Town Warrant; it was noted that the election date cannot be changed because it is tied to the Adams election.

5. **Any Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48-hours Prior to the Meeting -** none

6. **Adjournment** – *R. DeAngelis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes –*** *Motion carried*

Respectfully submitted,
Noelle M. Pandell