TOWN OF CHESHIRE

80 CHURCH STREET | CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413) 743-1690 | FAX (413) 743-0389

WWW.CHESHIRE-MA.GOV

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes – June 22, 2021

Members Present: Michelle Francesconi, Chair
Jason Levesque, Emergency Services Liaison
Shawn McGrath
Mark Biagini, Clerk
Raymond Killeen

Others Present: Mark Webber, Interim Town Administrator
Noelle M Pandell, Interim Administrative Assistant
Robert Navin, Highway Department

This was a hybrid meeting with people attending in person and via Go-To-Meeting.

M. Francesconi opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

Ms. Francesconi noted that this is the first hybrid meeting with in-person attendance as well as Go-To-Meeting.

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

1. **To hear and act on Minutes from prior meeting(s)**
   a. **May 18, 2021** – tabled until the next meeting.

2. **Department Reports**
   a. **Highway Department –** R. Navin gave an update on what the Highway Department has been working on, which included working to get the patch work done, keeping up with the mowing, looking to adding guardrails to Wells Road near the outlook. A question was asked if the restrictive parking signs had been ordered for Boat Parking Only and R. Navin said they had been, and the signs should be in within a week or so.

3. **Old Business**
   a. **Follow up discussion regarding Town Accountant's work schedule**
   M. Francesconi advised that R. Herzog and L. Lemanski requested to have L. Lemanski's Thursday hours move to a more convenient time for the two of them to work together. R Herzog said that she does payroll on the weekends, and she needs to work with L. Lemanski when she does payroll. Following some discussion, *M. Biagini made a motion to allow the Town Account to work ½ day in the office and ½ day at home on the weekend only on payroll weeks – seconded by M. Francesconi –* ***Roll Call Vote – 4 – 1 abstention by R. Killeen - motion carried***

4. **New Business**

a. Route 8 Mural Presentation

M. Francesconi said that she sent the Board information on the Route 8 Mural. Maureen (?) said that the permit for the mural is still pending but they should know by July 6, 2021. She said that this is a beautification project for the area and there will be a plaque with information. She said the Town will have to vote on the image. She will include the high school students because she feels that if they are involved then they will be less likely to deface it. Maureen said that the theme is natural wildlife. Some discussion followed.

b. Discussion and potential discussion regarding locking in price for heating oil

R. Navin advised that he called five different oil companies and two of them wouldn't give prices because it was too early, and one company never responded. The two companies that did respond were:

1. West Oil quoted $2.4847/gallon for the school, town hall and police department;
2. Lipton Oil quoted $2.359/gallon for the school and $2.419/gallon for the school and the police department.

Discussion followed and *M. Francesconi made a motion to lock in oil prices with Lipton Oil – seconded by M. Biagini –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

c. Discussion and potential decision regarding the Custodian/Caretaker position

R. Navin advised that the Custodian/Caretaker is out on medical leave for at least 2-3 months. He said the Highway Department has picked up his duties, but it is putting a strain on the Highway Department – Following some discussion regarding options, *M. Francesconi made a motion to post the position and state that it is a temporary position and also get quotes for services – seconded by J. Levesque* ***– Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

d. Appointments – two seats on Planning Board expiring at the Annual Town Election 2022

M. Francesconi made a motion to appoint Dan Skorcz to the Planning Board until 2022 – seconded by M. Biagini – ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

M. Francesconi made a motion to appoint E. Richard Shultz to the Planning Board until 2022 – seconded by S. McGrath – ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

e. Discussion and potential decision on the Supplemental Tax Assessment on New Construction – requested by the Board of Assessors

Robin from the Assessor's Office was present at the meeting and advised that IGR municipal law changed and forced a supplemental tax assessment on new construction unless it is rescinded by the Board of Selectmen. Robin, on behalf of the Board of Assessor's requested that the Board rescind the Supplemental Tax Assessment on new construction. Discussion followed and *M. Francesconi made a motion to rescind the Supplemental Tax Assessment on new construction – seconded by M. Biagini –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

5. New Business

a. Annual Appointment List

The Board reviewed the Annual Appointment List, and they postponed the following appointments: Town Administrator, BRTA Representative and Chief Procurement Officer. The following positions were set aside and taken up separately. M*. Francesconi made a motion to appoint all positions not set aside and discussed below – seconded by M. Biagini –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – Motion carried***

Rent Control Board – Other communities have others outside of the Board act as the Rent Control Board – following a brief discussion, *M. Francesconi made a motion to appoint the Board of Selectmen as the Rent Control Board – seconded by S. McGrath –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Following discussion regarding the Building Commissioner, Local Building Inspector, ADA Coordinator, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Gas Inspector and the Plumbing Inspector, M. Francesconi said she would contact Town Counsel regarding these positions.

There was a question as to why the following positions needed to be appointed annually the three Captain positions, the EMS Captain, and the 15 firefighter positions and the NREMT position; it was noted that the insurance company often asks for a roster and right now the Town doesn't know who is on the fire department. If the positions are appointed annually, it protects the Town. Following some discussion, *M. Francesconi made a motion to approve all positions under the Fire Department that were set aside – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Municipal Vulnerability Program Core Team – *M. Francesconi made a motion to replace Mark Webber with Town Administrator – seconded by S. McGrath –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Recreation Committee - M. Biagini said that member Andrew Kechel went to him because he is selling his house and moving out of town, and he was told that he needs to live in town to be on the committee. M. Webber said that there is no statute or bylaw that says you have to be a resident in order to be on the committee. *M. Francesconi made a motion to appoint Andrew Kechel to the Recreation Committee – seconded by R. Killeen –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Assistant Election Official – Ronald Lancia – M. Francesconi said she hadn't seen this position and she thinks it needs to be enacted. Following a brief discussion, the Board agreed to postpone this position pending more information.

Farm Commissioner – Mark Warner - *M. Francesconi made a motion to not reappoint Mark Warner as he has an active lawsuit against the Town – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – 3 – 2 abstentions by R. Killeen and M. Biagini – motion carried***

Historical Commission – Alternate – Jarod Martin – At the request of the Historical Commission, *M. Francesconi made a motion to appoint Jarod Martin as an alternate member of the Historical Commission – seconded by M. Biagini –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Right -to-Know Coordinator – Richard Francesconi – M. Francesconi advised that Richard Francesconi is not interested in holding this position after finding out the duties. M. Francesconi suggested asking the Board of Health to assign a member of the BOH to this position. For now, the position is vacant.

Complete Streets Committee and MPI Committee Member– Edmund R. St. John, IV – *M. Francesconi made a motion to replace Edmund R. St. John, IV with Town Administrator –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Town Administrator Screening Committee – *S. McGrath made a motion to dissolve the Town Administrator Screening Committee – seconded by M. Francesconi – Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried*

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership – Cheshire Resident – Fred Jayko – *M. Francesconi made a motion to not appoint Fred Jayko to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

Keeper of the Flags – Stephen LaFogg – *M. Francesconi made a motion to review this position – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

6. **Public Comment Period**

R. Navin said that having the Town Accountant in Town Hall is extremely helpful to department heads.

With regard to annual appointments, the Board can simply appoint or not appoint but if the majority of the Board wants an Executive Session, we can have one. *S. McGrath made a motion to Enter into Executive Session to discuss the Building Inspector and related positions and to reconvene in Open Session – seconded by R. Killeen –* ***Roll Call Vote – 3 yes - 2 no by J. Levesque and M. Francesconi – motion carried***

The Board reconvened Open Session.

7. **Announcements from Board Members**

M. Biagini said the Town Clerk asked if the debt exclusion vote was going to be on a weekend or weekday. Last year it was on a Saturday and it's normally for 6-hours. M. Webber said that the Town Clerk anticipated that it will be the 2nd or 3rd week of August. Following a brief discussion, the Board agreed to have M. Francesconi ask for a different time frame on a weekday from 1 pm – 7 pm. M. Francesconi said she will put this on the next meeting agenda.

R. Killeen asked when annual licenses are done, and the Board advised that they are done at the end of the calendar year.

M. Francesconi said she is waiting for invoices for the work done at Town Hall so the money will need to be carried over. M. Webber said that a request needs to go to the Town Accountant asking to carry over the money.

M. Francesconi also asked about supplemental heat to bathrooms in this corridor of the Cheshire Elementary School building and R. Navin said everything would have to be turned on.

8. **Any Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48-hours Prior to the Meeting -** None

9. **Executive Session**
   a. *M. Francesconi made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting ma have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating positions of the public party and the chair so declares (insurance settlement) and will exit session only to enter another Executive session – seconded by M. Biagini –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

At 8:41 pm, the Board reconvened the Open Session.

b. *M. Francesconi made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Town Administrator contract) and will enter Open Session solely to adjourn – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Cal Vote – All members yes – motion carried***

10. **Adjournment** – *M. Biagini made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 pm – seconded by J. Levesque –* ***Roll Call Vote – All members yes –*** *Motion carried*

Respectfully submitted,

Noelle M. Pandell