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 – July 20, 2021

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church St (Cheshire Elementary School) on Tuesday July 20, 2021, at 6:30 PM.

Members Present: Michelle Francesconi, Chair
Jason Levesque, Clerk
Raymond Killeen (arrived 6:45 p.m.)
Mark Biagini
Shawn McGrath

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Michael Tatro, National Grid; Greg Fournier, Diana & Rob Thurston; Gail Lennon; Peter Traub. VIA Go to Meeting: Rebecca Herzog; Treasurer; Lynne Lemanski, Accountant; Mickey Biagini.

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

Ms. Francesconi acknowledged the members of the Board present and Town Administrator Jennifer Morse. M. Francesconi took a moment to make a sad announcement that one of the members of the Board of Assessors, Historical Commission member and long-time servant to the Town of Cheshire Everett "Gus" Martin passed away this week, we stand with the family as they go through this difficult time and we are sad for this loss, he will be greatly missed after many decades of service to the Town of Cheshire.

1. Pole Hearing -

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to enter the Pole Hearing in accordance with General Laws Chapter 166, Section 22. Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc. – Jenks Road. National Grid to install (1) JO pole on Jenks Rd. beginning at a point approximately 45 northwest of the centerline of the intersection of Jenks Rd and existing pole 13 and continuing approximately 45 feet in a northwest direction: side of road. Install anchor with guy to existing 13 poles.
Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes – Motion Carries

Michael Tatro from National Grid noted that this pole is to provide service to a new construction home at 880 Jenks Road.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by M. Biagini to approve the new pole request.
Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries 4-0

2. Minutes- July 6, 2021

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the meeting minutes of July 6, 2021.
Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Abstained, S. McGrath – Yes –
Motion Carries 3-0-1

3. Discussion/Decision Items

a. Berkshire Running Camp Facilities Use Request: M. Francesconi noted that the camp ran last year and was a very clean and well organized. J. Morse will contact the organizers to let them know to use the parking lots on the Eastern parking lots at the school. J. Morse noted that she had sent the request form to the department heads.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by M. Biagini to approve the event pending approval of the other department heads.

Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes – Motion Carries 4-0

b. **Time Sheet Implementation:** J. Morse noted that she had reviewed the payroll warrant with the Treasurer last week and noted that timesheets were inconsistent, in some cases, employees did not submit time sheets. The Treasurer has created time sheets for all hourly and salaried employees based on the current highway department timesheets. J. Morse noted that the sheets are protected so the employees will only need to fill in the date and number of hours worked, the rest of the timesheet has protected formulas. With a vote of the Board of Selectmen the Treasurer and Town Administrator will put the Time Sheet into place for this pay period.

A motion was made by M. Biagini and second by Levesque to approve the Time Sheet implementation.
Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries 4-0

c. DLS – Technical Assistance Bureau Financial Management Review – J. Morse shared that the Department of Local Services Technical Assistance Bureau (part of the Department of Revenue) provides free assistance to communities including Financial Management Reviews. This review will look at the current practices of the Town and will make recommendations for better financial management. With the board approval the Financial Review will take place around October in time for a finalized plan before the budget season. J. Morse will request that they review the budgeting process as part of the review.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to request that the Technical Assistance Bureau conduct a Financial Management Review for the town.
Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries 4-0

- *Member R. Killeen arrived at 6:45 p.m.*

d. **Special Event Permit Application** – The draft was reviewed. Discussion on changes to include adding roadside parking under "What requires a Special Event Permit Application" and adding Motor Cross and Off-Road Vehicle Activities to the list of examples. Discussion on a fee for the permit especially if there are damages to property, J. Morse will look to see what other communities charge. M. Francesconi said that she would like to adopt the special permit application knowing that it can be amended as needed.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by M. Biagini to approve the Special Event Permit Application with amendments.

Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes, R. Killeen - Yes Motion Carries 5-0

The application will be posted to multiple places on the website and will be available in the Town Clerk Office.

e. **Purchasing Policy** - J. Morse noted that FEMA requires a Purchasing Policy having not found a current policy the draft is based on Chapter 30B procurement laws and attached a three-bid tally sheet.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by M. Biagini to approve the Purchasing Policy as presented.

Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes, R. Killeen - Yes Motion Carries 5-0

3. **Town Administrator Update –** J. Morse had submitted a weekly report to the board prior to the meeting. Further J. Morse noted the following:
   - Robert Navin reported the Route 116 paving will start on Monday July 26.
   - Planning Board has been contacted about looking at a bylaw regarding motor cross and other off road vehicle events and they will talk about it at a future meeting.
   - The Town Clerk gave J. Morse the bylaws that were reviewed by "General Code" and are waiting for town counsel approval. Board members thought that he had reviewed, and J. Morse will reach out to him for verification.
   - J. Morse will meet with the regional coordinator of the MVP Grant program to get the Core Team started on the project noting that once completed the Municipal Vulnerability Plan will open the town up for more grants to culvert and road infrastructure.
   - J. Morse inquired about the increase to the van driver hourly rate in the spring. Members discussed that there was discussion at the time of hiring the most recent driver but no official vote to increase the rate to $18 per hour for all drivers.

     A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. Killeen to pay the van drivers $18 per hour.
   - ***Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes, R. Killeen - Yes Motion Carries 5-0***
   - The accountant notified Morse that the Cares Act Funding needed to be used by the end of October. J. Morse is waiting for the accountant to provide the information on the costs and where the account stands.
   - To give a donation to the Food Pantry the Town will need receipts, J. Morse will follow up with Carol Francesconi and Carole Hilderbrand to submit receipts to the accountant by July 26, 2021.
   - The wiring inspector inquired about a paper application fee and wondered if the board had discussed. The board had no memory of talking about such a fee and noted that all fees needed to be reviewed at a future meeting.

4. **Public Comment**

Peter Traub – Lake District inquired about the Harbormaster position and was given the update that the harbormaster job description will be approved at the next meeting and then posted. Mr. Traub also spoke about the Water Chestnuts in the lake and that they would like to open the removal of the invasive weed to anyone who is interested in helping. Mr. Traub noted that the water level is very high due to the recent rain, the dam was not opened until this afternoon since the lake was treated last week and they needed to let the chemical do the work.

Peter Traub – Planning Board noted that they are meeting on Monday evening to look at the current bylaws. If bylaws need to be rewritten, they will be looking for the support of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission which would come at a cost. Mr. Traub suggested a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss bylaws which was welcomed by the board. Prior to the meeting Board members will send their thoughts and suggestions to the Town Administrator to compile.

Rebecca Herzog - Treasurer inquired about the Van Drivers pay further noting that they had gone from $12.92 per hours to $13.50 in January due to the minimum wage increase. For the months of January – April they were paid $13.50 and then a new driver was brought on at $18 per hour. Ms. Herzog inquired if the pay for the other two drivers was going to be retroactive to April 1, 2021, noting that one driver would be owed for approximately 80 hours at the higher rate and the other less. M. Francesconi noted that she did not participate in the hiring of the most recent van driver due to a family relation but could discuss since this is regards to the other van drivers and the position. Discussion regarding the increase was due to the qualifications and responsibilities required of the van drivers.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by M. Biagini to pay the van drivers $18 per hour from April 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021.

Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Abstain, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes, R. Killeen - Yes Motion Carries 4-0-1

There was additional discussion about the van driver payrate and the increase of 2% so the hourly rate for Fiscal Year 2022 is $18.36 per hour.

A motion was made by M. Biagini and seconded by J. Levesque to pay the van drivers $18.36 for Fiscal Year 2022.

Discussion: R. Killeen felt that the 2% increase was generous considering they just got an increase from minimum wage. S. McGrath questioned why a van driver would get an increase after only working for a few months if hired in April. Discussion on merit raises instead of a percentage raise.

Roll Call Vote: M. Francesconi – Yes, J. Leveque-Yes, M. Biagini – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes, R. Killeen - Yes Motion Carries 5-0

5. **Announcements from Board Members**
   - Board members requested a discussion regarding Cares Act on the next agenda.
   - M. Francesconi will be absent for the next meeting and J. Levesque will chair.
   - M. Biagini wanted to know about minutes that have not been approved and released – M. Francesconi will meet with J. Morse later in the week to discuss.
   - M. Francesconi noted that there has been a request to use the Community Center on August 15, 2021. After discussion, the board decided not to open the Community Center to outside use at this time.
   - M. Francesconi noted that the Block Party is scheduled for Friday July 23rd at Town Hall. Church Street will be closed from the Town Hall to School Street, parking is at Saint Mary's.
   - M. Francesconi noted that the Fire Department will be hosting Cruise Night on Saturday August 14th at Cheshire School.

6. **Adjournment** - A motion was made by M. Biagini and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.
   Roll Call Vote – All members yes – motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
July 21, 2021

Document List

1. Agenda – July 20, 2021
2. Pole Application – Jenks Road
3. Minutes – July 6, 2021
4. Berkshire Running Camp Request for School Field use
5. Special Event Permit Application
6. Purchasing Policy