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

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes –February 6, 2024

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Tuesday February 6, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Jason Levesque, Vice Chair
Ray Killeen, Member
Ron DeAngelis, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Lynn Melchiori; Liseann Karandisecky; Peter Traub; Bob Tetlow; Karen Drain; Mary Ellen Baker; Christine Emerson; Sean Lydon; Laura McGrath; Avery McGrath; Bob Galisa; Norm Richardson; Corey Swistak, Highway Foreman.

Summary of Votes:

Vote to approve Order of Layout of Sand Mill Road	5-0
Vote to approve the Consent Agenda	5-0
Vote to approve ARPA Funds for upgraded Harpers Payroll System	5-0
Vote to approve the OML Response to Cathy Foster, Attorney General and Revision to Minutes	5-0
Vote to approve Credit/Debit Card Policy	5-0
Vote to sign the support letter for the HLD Dredging Grant Application	5-0

S. McGrath opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Vote- Order of Layout of Sand Mill Road

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the Order of Layout of Sand Mill Road, according to the plans to be recorded at the registry of deeds "Plan and Profile of Sand Mill Road Over Dry Brook" dated May 31, 2024, as amended.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Consent Agenda

a. Minutes – January 11, 2024 & January 23, 2024
b. Warrants – Payroll and Accounts Payable
c. Agricultural Commission Appointment – Jacob Zieminski
d. Ingalls Road State Contract

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the Consent Agenda with edits to the January 23, 2024, minutes.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Paint Legislation
Tabled from the last meeting the Town Administrator shared the response to the question regarding how residents will dispose of the paint? Small paint retail stores, such as Ace Hardware, Sherwin Williams, True Value, Aubuchon, and Carr Hardware stores volunteer to be collection points for unwanted liquid and oil-based paints. Any collection point does not care where the paint was purchased, when the paint was purchased or what state the person dropping off the paint is from. The store's only concerns will be that the paint is in the original can with the original label and still liquid.

The board had additional questions regarding the fee to dispose? What other states are currently operating this program? It was suggested that the Town help promote or publicize disposal methods instead of supporting the resolution. The Town Administrator will follow up with the bill advocate regarding the questions and will report back to the board at the next meeting.

Discussion/Decision Items

a. ARPA Fund Request - Harper Payroll System Upgrades
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the upgrade to the payroll system with funds being appropriated through ARPA for the remainder of this fiscal year, $1,400 +/-.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

b. Open Meeting Law Complaint from Catherine Foster and Response Review
S. McGrath shared that an Open Meeting Law Complaint was received on January 25, 2024, from Catherine Foster of Adams, MA. The OML complaint alleged that the Board of Selectmen violated the OML on December 26, 2023, by failing to include in its meeting minutes a conversation between two members quietly spoken and not heard by most people in the room. The minutes have been revised detailing the extent of the conversation between M. Francesconi, S. McGrath and Adams Chair Christine Hoyt and Open Meeting Laws guides were distributed to the board for review. It was noted that S. McGrath did make a statement regarding this conversation during the meeting, and this is now reflected in the November 20, 2023, revised meeting minutes. "Chair McGrath announced that although the agenda called for a vote, he did not feel that the board were prepared to make a decision therefore a vote would be taken up separately by the towns impacted by the issue."

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the Open Meeting Law Complaint response to Ms. Foster, Attorney General Office, and the meeting minutes of November 20, 2024.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

c. Credit/Debit Card Policy

The Town Administrator shared that a Credit/Debit Card Policy was reviewed by the accountants and is being presented to the board. This policy establishes the policy and procedures for credit/debit card use by department heads as allowed by the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen. The policy will be added to the personnel manual and the financial policies.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the Credit/Debit Card Policy.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

The Board PAUSED the meeting at 6:16 p.m. for the scheduled Special Town Meeting at 6:30 p.m. On conclusion of the Special Town Meeting the regular Board of Selectmen meeting resumed at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting with the Library Trustees

Karen Drain, Christine Emerson, Mary Ellen Baker, and Bob Galisa joined the board to discuss the rental spaces at Town Hall. The Town Administrator shared that the spaces were posted after the last meeting and there is interest at this time by two individuals. There was discussion about one potential rental space, the individual wants a reduction in the rent, the Town Administrator noted that the rentals will cover the expenses to operate the building there is very little revenue in the numbers. As the board moves forward the library will be updated to ensure good communication. The board assured the trustees that the only spaces being leased are on the ground floor and top floor and they can expand into the Town Clerk space. Christine Emerson asked if the other town buildings will be getting the same signs at the Community House and Senior Center, the cost associated will be budgeted in the next fiscal year and all town buildings will eventually have the same signage.

Meeting with the Hoosac Lake District re: Dredging Grant

Sean Lydon, Norm Richardson and Liseann Karandisecky joined the board to discuss a dredging grant opportunity through the DEP. Mr. Lydon thanked the Town Administrator for sharing the opportunity and informed the board that the Town is the official applicant and the HLD is asking for a signed support letter. He shared that the grant is due in three weeks making it a short turn around and that the HLD will prepare the application in its entirety with support of the lake management plan consultant . Mr. Lydon explained the three methods to control the weeds and that the consultant is suggesting this as part of the lake management plan, this grant is for the design and permitting of the dredging of the coves. The grant application is not complete at this time and will be shared with the board upon completion. Ms. Karandisecky shared that the HLD Prudential Committee has appointed an advisory group, hired a lawyer and engineer, they are making great progress.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to sign the support letter for the Inland Dredging Grant.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Discussion/Decision Items

d. Stewart White/Curran Road Estimates – Chapter 90

C. Swistak and C. McGrath joined the board to discuss two estimates received to be added to the bid package for summer paving 2024. Stewart White Road will be full depth reclamation is estimated at $118,250 and Curran Road will be a shim/resurface is estimated at $124,880. The board agreed to move forward with the Chapter 90 request . C. Swistak shared that he is getting an estimate on rubberized chip

sealing for Richmond Street, Dean Street and Church Street as well as the cost to rent a milling machine to process. C. Swistak thanked the Town Administrator for her work securing grants which enable the highway department to make road improvements.

e. Winter/Emergency Town Building Closure Policy
The Town Administrator shared that she had made the suggested revisions to the policy and sent it to the board for review, it has been distributed to the departments. There was discussion regarding the top priority being the roadways, followed by the parking lots and then sidewalks. Sidewalks are treated with salt as needed.

Town Administrator Updates

The Town Administrator shared her updates with the board in an email including status of ongoing grants/project, grants in progress, grants waiting on decision and other ongoing projects. She expressed that the Municipal Clerk/Assistant Treasurer/Collector was hired to work part-time in both offices and the Treasurer/Collector responsibilities have been taking all her time along with water department administrative duties.

Public Comment- None

Announcement from Board Members

The Family Valentines Dance is next week, there are approximately 180 tickets sold between the two nights.

J. Levesque thanked the Fire Department for the Ice-Skating rink noting that his family enjoyed it over the weekend, there were additional comments about its success.

M. Francesconi shared that she is disheartened by post on social media regarding a medical response in Adams, the person who started the post was misinformed, sharing incorrect information. C. McGrath shared that the last two calls he went on in downtown Cheshire, NBEMS beat him to the scene. There was discussion about requesting a quarterly or semi-annual update from NBEMS. The Town Administrator stated that unfortunately misinformation will continue to spread on social media and this page has the same people spreading the misinformation. She also shared the NBEMS is running a program in conjunction with Berkshire Hire to train and hire EMT's. Jen DeGrenier stated that is important to have good communication with the ambulance provider as their services are vital to the community. There was discussion on how fortunate Cheshire is to have First Responders and Medical Responders that are quick and well trained to be on scene until an ambulance arrives, they have all the tools at their disposal including AED's, Narcan and a Lucas Device. The Town Administrator will reach out to NBEMS to get an update on how the first month of service was.

Adjournment

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded by R. DeAngelis to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis - Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respectfully Submitted:
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
February 7, 2024

Document List

1. Meeting Agenda – February 6, 2024
2. Order of Layout of Sand Mill Road
3. Draft Minutes – January 11, 2024

4. Draft Minutes – January 23, 2024
5. Contract – Ingalls Road $890,000
6. Paint Legislation Resolution
7. Order of Takings and Notice of Takings – Sand Mill Bridge Abutters
8. Email and Documents regarding HLD Dredging Grant – Sean Lydon
9. Harpers Payroll Upgrade Quote
10. Open Meeting Law Complaint, Response Documents and Revised Minutes
11. Draft Credit/Debit Card Use Policy
12. Weather/Emergency Closure Policy
13. Highway Bi-Weekly Report

Approved: 2/20/24