TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes –October 29, 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 October 29, 2024, at 6:30 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; Mike Tatro, National Grid; Bob Tetlow; Peter Traub; Whitney Flynn; Emile Zaniboni; Liseann Karandisekcy.

S. McGrath called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:30 p.m.

Summary of Votes:

Vote to approve the Pole Petition as presented (Wells Road)	5-0
Vote to approve the Facilities Request Form for the Community House 11/23 and 11/24	5-0
Vote to approve the Town Clerk, Custodian and Groundskeeper Job Descriptions	5-0
Vote to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m.	5-0

Pole Hearing

S. McGrath opened the pole hearing at 6:30 p.m. stating that Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England requests permission to locate poles, wires and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting figures, along and across the following public way; Wells Road – National Grid to install 3 JO poles on Wells Road beginning at a point approximately 0 feet Northeast of the centerline of the intersection of pole 28 and Wells Road and continuing approximately 150 feet in a Northeast direction. Install midspan pole 28-05, 150
North of the existing pole 28, side of road. Install midspan pole 29-05, 150 North of existing pole 29, side of road. Install midspan pole 30-05, 150 feet North of existing, 30, side of road in Cheshire.

Mike Tatro, National Grid was present and shared that the mid-span poles are being installed to shorten the current distance between poles. He was asked if this was going to be the practice of National Grid and he shared that he would like to add mid-span poles in multiple locations. There was a question from Emile Zaniboini regarding the location of the poles, he was satisfied after seeing the map.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the pole petition as presented
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

- FY26 Budgeting - The Town Administrator noted that the draft budget timeline was in the packet for review though changes will be made to reflect the HVRSD budget schedule. J. Levesque requested that a letter be sent to HVRSD stating that the board is looking for an increase of no more than 1% taking into consideration the substantial increase to the budget last year and the amount of additional aid and grants received. There board discussed requesting all documentation including grant funds, E& D funds, revolving account funds and rural aid funds, when the preliminary budget is received from the district. Discussion turned to the five-year district agreement committee and the Town Administrator was asked to inquire when those discussions would begin, she reminded the board that John Tremblay, Ron DeAngelis and the Town Administrator are all appointed to that committee. Bob Tetlow, School Committee Representative said that the School District has been discussing improving communication and transparency.

  The Town Administrator shared that she has been attending a Department of Revenue training on Financial Forecasting for the Fiscal Year 2026 budget season.

- Facilities Use Form - The Town Administrator reviewed the application for a Holiday Craft Fair, hosted by Randy Cormier on November 23 and November 24. The fee will be $200 for the event.
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the facilities request form.
  Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes ; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
  Motion Carries: 5-0

- Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) Complaint Procedure Review - The board reviewed the procedure sent by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Discussion ensued on adding that the ZEO will acknowledge the written complaint when received and will act on the complaint within 3-4 business days. Board members discussed who could submit a complaint, that it should not just been limited to abutters . The Town Administrator is concerned about written complaints only and requested that complaints be accepted through Town Officials explaining that sometimes the situation is sensitive. The policy will be discussed further at a meeting with the ZEO.

- Per Diem Winter Road Driver - The DPW Director requested that a position be posted explaining that in the past the town utilized contracted services which was not cost efficient. Last year a DPW employee was able to fill in, currently there are no additional employees with the required DOT physical. There has been some interest internally in the position and it was noted that the policy does allow for internal posting for seven days. It was determined that the position will be posted both internally and to the public. The position does require a DOT physical, ability to drive a one-ton vehicle, ability to work up to sixteen hours on an on-call basis.

Classification and Compensation Review - Town Clerk, Groundskeeper, Custodian

The job descriptions were reviewed, it was noted that the Town Clerk position cannot require education and experience as it is elected, it was noted that the town clerk should have the ability to perform the tasks within the

job description. Groundskeeper should be changed to not exclude high school students over the age of sixteen from applying.
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the Town Clerk, Groundskeeper and Custodian position as edited.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes ; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Town Administrator Updates
Bylaw Update - The attorney is working on a revision to the zoning bylaw that was discussed at the last meeting pertaining to fowl. She recommends an amendment to the zoning bylaw and the creating of a new general bylaw that put the enforcement and permitting within the jurisdiction of the Board of Health through the inspectors.

One- Day Liquor License for Whitney's Farm Market for November 2, 2024
A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the one-day liquor license for Whitney's Farm Market for November 2, 2024.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes ; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

911 State Communication Center Transition - The Town Administrator and Executive Assistant attended a meeting regarding the transition of the dispatch center from the Berkshire County Sherriff Office to the 911 State Department. The 911 State Department is solely funded through the 911 surcharge and is not dependent on any state appropriation or funding, the towns will no longer be charged an assessment. They do not expect callers to notice any changes with the transition and pointed out the benefits which include future upgrades to infrastructure, increased staffing and improved working condition. An intermunicipal agreement will be presented to the board in the future, there is no set timeline it is dependent on legislation, they expect the transition to occur prior to June 30, 2025.

Consent Agenda
- Minutes - October 1, 2024, October 16, 2024, October 21, 2024
- Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the consent agenda as presented.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes ; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Public Comment
Bob Tetlow inquired about the recent newspaper article regarding grant funding through the One Stop Program noting that the town only received $25,000. The Town Administrator shared that three applications were submitted through the program with only one award and that last year the Town was awarded $860,000 and the prior year $600,000+ through the same programs.

The DPW Director mentioned that he is exploring a wood burner to heat the Highway Garage, he believes it would save money in the winter and the town would save money within the tree warden expense line as well since the contractors would leave the wood instead of removing it in most cases. A conversation ensued on taking brush at the Transfer Station and the DPW Director stated that residents were abusing the program, it is meant for brush not for full trees. There was discussion on options to open during spring cleanup and possibly bringing in a contractor to chip on site once a quarter for a fee. The DPW Director stated that it was taking up to four-man hours a week to chip the brush and that road projects takes a precedence. The DPW Director will get more information regarding an outside contractor to provide the service.

Adjournment

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 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
November 8, 2024

Document List

1. Agenda October 29, 2024
2. Pole Hearing Petition
3. Budget Timeline- DRAFT
4. ZEO Complaint Procedures
5. Draft Job Descriptions
6. Draft Minutes – October 1, 2024
7. Draft Minutes – October 16, 2024
8. Draft Minutes – October 21, 2024
9. Highway Bi-Weekly Report

Approved: 11/26/24