



**Chesterfield Select Board Minutes  
Monday, February 12, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.  
Town Office Building - 422 Main Road**

Mr. Fuller called the Select Board meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

**Select Board Members Present:** Trish Colson-Montgomery, and Don Willard III

**Select Board Members Participating Remotely:** Roger Fuller

**Town Administrator Present via ZOOM:** Brenda Lessard

**Public Officials Present:** Larry Cervelli and Joe Gazillo, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Executive Comm.; Larry Holmberg, Emergency Management Director (EMD) and MVP Executive Committee; Fred Drake, Planning Board

**Public Officials Present via ZOOM:**

**General Public Present:**

**General Public Present via ZOOM:**

**Recorder of Minutes:** Brenda Lessard

On March 29, 2023, Governor Healey signed into law a supplemental budget bill, which, among other things, extends the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025. Specifically, this further extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings. The language does not make any substantive changes to the Open Meeting Law other than extending the expiration date of the temporary provisions regarding remote meetings from March 31, 2023 to March 31, 2025.

This meeting was conducted with ZOOM access for the public.

**Warrants:**

Mr. Willard and Ms Colson-Montgomery reviewed and signed the warrants W24-17, WP24-17, and WBB24-17.

**Minutes:**

Ms Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard, and unanimously voted to accept the Minutes of 01/16/2024 as amended, contingent on an approved rewrite of the paragraph under Public Meeting of North Road and Damon Pond Road.

**4:30 P.M. MVP Updates:**

Joe Gazillo, Larry Cervelli and Larry Holmberg were in to give an update on the MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Committee. There was a review of the budget for the upcoming Winter Fest. It was determined that not all the targeted monies may be available to help pay for the costs in the budget. For example, the \$1500 listed from the Action grant has been already used for costs related to the Tighe and Bond on-site visit. Monies from that source may be needed for future Tighe and Bond events. Mr. Gazillo reported that there were other areas that could be utilized to pay for the bills for the event. One possible avenue is \$6,000 from the liaison line in the 2.0 grant. There was a discussion of the future events being not as costly as the kick-off event. There was a discussion of what food will be at the event. Proposed menu included soups, cookies, brownies and hot drinks. There will be representation from Town departments, boards and some state agencies.

Larry Cervelli reported that the first gathering of the five liaisons which incorporated training led by PCPC (Pioneer Valley Training Commission) has happened. Two of the liaisons have backed out due to time demand. The remaining three are enthusiastic. Those liaisons include Jeane Anastas, Mason Willard, and Therese Brigley. The committee will need to recruit two more liaisons to replace the two who will not participate. State required additional training will take place in March.

Tighe and Bond did a property assessment at the Town Office, Fire Station, Russell Park, Town Hall and the 6 North Road property on Thursday, February 8. Don Willard, Larry Holmberg and Trish Colson-Montgomery participated with the walk-throughs.

There was a discussion about the video that PVPC did to show the current conditions of Town Offices and the Fire Station. All are in agreement that the video production was terrible and was a waste of the DLTA grant. It is unusable to show at the Winter Fest. The video needs to make the case to the Chesterfield residents about why a new Fire Station and Town Office are needed. Larry Holmberg and Ms Colson-Montgomery will speak with Catherine Ratte from PVPC about their misgivings concerning the video.

The Town Public Safety Committee has met with Trish attending that meeting. The Town Office Building Committee was disbanded years ago and has not yet been reinstated. It was noted that constructing a Municipal Complex would be more expensive than building two separate buildings as there are more costly requirements for public safety building that are not required for Town Offices. If only one building is built, those requirements would carry over into the construction of the Town Office area.

Mr. Holmberg stated he had spoken with the Firefighter's Association about participating in the Winter Fest and having a table to show the condition of their building and being there to answer questions. He also spoke with them about holding an open house. Mr. Cervelli also noted having different boards and departments represented at Winter Fest, would be beneficial. Mr. Fuller stated that a Town Buildings open house was done years ago on a Saturday that resulted in only 20 people total attending. It was very disappointing to have such a small amount of people show up.

**Addition to Agenda:**

**Mount Road ROW Layout:**

Mr. Fuller spoke with Larry Holmberg about the possibility of doing a Right of Way (ROW) layout of a portion of Mount Road from the Town line past the Wood property. Mr. Holmberg

will report back with the cost. Mr. Holmberg opined it would be difficult to monument on the ground. Mr. Fuller would like to have an established ROW on file with the Town. Mr. Holmberg will give a proposal to Mr. Fuller.

**Center Cemetery Parking Area:**

Larry Holmberg stated he had spoken with Dee Cinner about surveying the Right of Way (ROW) and Easement at the Center Cemetery. Mr. Holmberg stated she had said getting the pricing was for budgeting purposes. Mr. Holmberg opined that Mr. Fuller can grant a ROW to the Town for the cemetery along the same twenty foot ROW that Wyman and Gage has along what was Breen and now Fuller land. Mr. Holmberg noted that cars cannot legally block a portion of a ROW when parked. This would need a release from the Wyman/Gage family. The ROW is 20 feet wide heading west from North Road to the Wyman property. Mr. Holmberg reported that the travelled way appears to have shifted southerly. According to Mr. Holmberg, there needs to be a minimum allowance of a nine and one half foot by 18 foot area for a parking spot.

**Ireland Street Cemetery:**

Larry Holmberg stated, that Dee Cinner has contacted him to do the survey work establishing row markers at the Ireland Street Cemetery. Ms Colson-Montgomery noted that any money left in surveying articles from prior Town Meetings was to survey plots at Mount Cemetery and Ireland Street Cemetery. Dee cannot divert the budgeted money to do surveying of the proposed parking area.

**Planning Board Request for Expanded Emails:**

Fred Drake came to the meeting to ask about the Planning Board emails. The Select Board had previously discussed the request to get separate town emails for all the Planning Board members. The Select Board decided to have the emails forwarded to the members own emails like the MVP Executive Committee does. It works well. It was noted that the Planning Board members could create new personal emails for themselves for just the forwarded emails from the Planning Board email. Mr. Drake will report back to the Planning Board.

**Upcoming Planning Board Hearing:**

The Board asked Mr. Drake about the upcoming public hearing regarding cell tower set-back in the Town centers. The proposal would expand the area to restrict cell towers 750 feet from the Chesterfield Historic District as accepted by the National Park Service. The Select Board opined that setting a new zoning map to restrict cell towers in an expanded zone that has not been accepted by the Town, and the process sounds backwards to them. They opined that the Historic district should be accepted to be included on a zoning map first before setting restrictions in that proposed zone.

**Master Plan Grant:**

Mr. Drake reported that the Planning Board applied to PVPC for a grant to do a Master Plan for the Town. They were awarded \$10,000 to do the plan. He asked if the Planning Board or Select Board needs to accept the grant and be the signatory. The Board noted they would need to sign the acceptance of the grant.

**Cemetery Budget:**

Ms Cinner reported to Ms Colson-Montgomery that she can only meet at the next meeting to discuss her FY25 budget as she will be working Mondays at the Library in March.

**Free Procurement Training through OIG:**

Ms Colson-Montgomery reported on a pilot program for free procurement training for one individual in each municipality and that person would become certified. This is through the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). It is an online course. There are three core classes. Then there is a five week self-paced course of classes. Then there is a three week course via a webinar for design and construction. Mr. Fuller noted that he likes the Town to follow best business practices for all projects regardless of cost. He expects three prices for most anything the Town purchases whether for goods or services.

**Speed Zone Signs:**

The two speed zone signs by the school were found to be damaged due to being shot at. Both signs were taken down and the bullets will be retrieved by the Police Department. They are conducting an investigation into the damage. The signs were not listed on the insurance company.

**Presidential Primary Warrant:**

The Town Clerk had brought in the Presidential Primary Warrant for signing. The Presidential Primary will be Tuesday, March 5, 2024. Mr. Willard made a motion, seconded by Ms Colson-Montgomery, and unanimously voted to sign the warrant.

**Fire Department:**

Mr. Willard spoke with Chief Hewes about the Sentry Uniform bill. The bill was for a dress uniform for a firefighter who attends events. He also spoke to him about the firewood at 6 North Road. The Fire Chief will not allow any wood used for construction to be burned.

**Highland Ambulance:**

Mr. Fuller wants to meet with Mike Rock to discuss the HAEMS budget.

**Reports:**

**Dunham Building:**

Mr. Fuller reported that he has not had the building appraised yet.

**MIA Revaluations of Town Buildings for Insurance:**

Mr. Fuller, Ms Lessard and Mick Garrold had a meeting to discuss the revaluations. Cabot Risk upped the price per square foot which was very low. It is a blanket policy for all three buildings. The policy is for \$3.9 million and would cover any one of the buildings. Mr. Fuller opined that even with the increase per square foot in the revaluation, the price per square foot is still low. Mr. Fuller thinks the Board should accept the higher revaluation estimates for the Town Office, COA and Highway Garage. The Board agreed with Mr. Fuller's assessment. Mr. Fuller will sign the paperwork accepting the revaluations.

**Internet Issues at Town Offices:**

After a meeting with Mr. Fuller, Ms Lessard and Westfield Gas and Electric, and Entre, an access point was installed in the Select Board Office. Tom LaRochelle suggested not giving out the password to anyone but the Select Board computers. There is a dedicated bandwidth in the

office now. When he started his wireless connection in the office was between 40-50mbs. With the new AP it is now 100-200mbs. Mr. Willard noted that Mr. Fuller lagged twice but has not seen the unstable internet connection that he usually sees.

**Recreation Committee Updates:**

Mr. Willard reported that there will not be the usual baseball program this upcoming spring. There are not enough kids interested and the Mohawk League told them they have to team up with Ashfield which has been difficult. They combined four grades to make a minor league team, which then resulted in the teams questioning the ages of the kids on the teams. They may reach out to Goshen and see if they can get enough kids to make two teams to play against each other. Skills and drills for baseball may be another option. Mr. Fuller commended Mr. Willard about the good job that he and his wife does with the town recreation program. He noted they need to do what works best.

**School Updates:**

Mr. Willard reported that there is only a preliminary school budget at this time and there are a lot of holes in the local and regional budget. He also opined that the budget needs to come down significantly. The school committee did not receive the budget for review prior to the meeting. They voted in the preliminary budget with the understanding it will need to come down considerably.

**Town Administrator Report:**

**Police Department Room:**

The framing for the wall is up. The Town is waiting on Whitely Electric to come rough the electrical wiring in the new wall. The furniture has been delivered.

**North Road and Damon Pond Road Layouts:**

The signed layout sheets were scanned and put on a flash drive at Paradise Copies. Ms Lessard has sent them to Town Counsel along with the certified Special Town Meeting vote and the Order of Layouts.

**Mount Cemetery Land Donation:**

Ms Lessard sent the Special Town Meeting vote along with the plan to Town Counsel to draw up the deed for filing. There were several questions from the Town attorney and Ms Lessard was advised to speak with Larry Holmberg about the questions to see if further work needs to be done.

**Library Update:**

Cindy Squier is returning home at the end of February. She is hoping she will be back to work in March.

**Tree Warden Update:**

Nothing to report

**Generator:**

Thomas Mann still has not picked up the generator despite several phone calls.

**Heat at COA:**

Three technicians from Sandri were able to get the heat fixed at the Council on Aging (COA). There was a check valve in the system that needed replacement. It took the technicians some time to find the issue.

**WOLA (Wright Ostermier Landscape Architects):**

WOLA prefers to start at 7:00 pm on February 27<sup>th</sup> for the public forum. Don Willard and Larry Holmberg are working on a plan for the audio so everyone can see and hear and to allow ZOOM access. Emily Wright sent her preview for the Select Board to review. The Select Board

reviewed the documents. Ms Colson-Montgomery wants it to clearly say what percentage of the Town responded to their survey and would like to see an additional option removing the 6 North Road house so there are two options removing the house and two options keeping the house.

**Laptop for Highway:**

Matt Smith has asked for a newer laptop so he can download the data from the speed signs near the school. His laptop is unable to and he has been having some issues with his current laptop. A new laptop with the required hardware will be ordered so he can do the data downloads to send to the state.

**FY25 Budget:**

The Board reviewed the FY25 budget. There were administrative and executive budget lines that increased and some that decreased.

**Increase in FY25 budget over last years budget:**

Outsourced Accounting Services: \$1,200

Accountant Expenses: \$500

IT: \$11,000

Website Annual Support: \$200

Lawn Mowing: \$1,100

CodeRed: \$250

General Insurance & Bonds: \$4,743

Town Report Coordinator: \$300

Ambulance Service: \$16,552.43

Veteran's Services: \$283

FRCOG Bidding Service: \$75

Select Board Stipend: \$12,300

**Decrease in FY25 Budget over last year's budget:**

Legal Services: \$5,000

Major Repairs: \$55,000

Computer Replacement: \$2,000

Electricity: \$1,000

Heat: \$5,000

Telephone: \$1,000

**Accounting Contract:**

Mr. Fuller and Ms Lessard met with Eric Kinsherf to negotiate a contract for FY25, 26 and 27. After discussion, terms were agreed to \$34,200 for FY25, \$35,100 for FY26 and \$35,700 for FY27. Ms Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard and unanimously voted to accept the contract with Eric Kinsherf for outsourced accounting services for FY25-FY27. Once the contract is received, Mr. Fuller will review and sign.

**Annual Report & Dedication:**

The Board decided to table discussion until the next meeting.

**Adjourn:**

Ms Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 p.m.