



**Chesterfield Select Board Minutes
Monday, February 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.
Town Office Building - 422 Main Road**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Mr. Fuller.

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

Select Board Members Participating Remotely: Roger Fuller

Select Board Members Absent:

Town Administrator Present: Brenda Lessard

Public Officials Present: Larry Cervelli, Finance Committee; Joe Gazillo, Energy Committee; Larry Holmberg, EMD (Emergency Management Director); Lee Manchester, Finance Committee; John Follet, Conservation Commission; Sandra Wickland, Town Clerk; Mike Malouin, Police Chief; and Lenore Pittsinger, Tax Collector

Public Officials Present Via ZOOM: Dee Cinner, Historical Commission; Justin West, MLP Manager; and Meg McWherter, Treasurer

General Public Present: Charlene Biardi; Sarah Hamilton, Greg Meister, Nancy Rich, and C. Gilman Smith

General Public Present Via ZOOM: David Christopolis, HCDC (Hilltown Community Development Corp.); Erica Larnier, PVPC (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission); Denise Cormier, Eileen McGowan, and Judy Lyons

Recorder of Minutes: Brenda Lessard

On July 16, 2022, Governor Baker signed into law An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, which, among other things, extends the expiration of the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2023. Specifically, this 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 Act does not make any new changes to the Open Meeting Law other than extending the expiration date of the temporary provisions regarding remote meetings from July 15, 2022, to March 31, 2023

This meeting was conducted with ZOOM access for the public.

Minutes:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard to approve the Minutes of 2/6/2023 and 2/13/23 as amended. The motion was unanimously voted.

Warrants:

The Select Board signed the W23-18, WP23-18, WBB23-18 and WPH23-18 warrants. Ms. Colson-Montgomery had a question about an invoice for the Cemetery Commission. As Ms. Cinner was in attendance, Ms. Colson-Montgomery received an answer regarding Ricki Chick's research on Trust Funds.

Additions to Agenda:

Possible Town Beautification Committee:

The Select Board had previously discussed forming a committee of volunteers who would help with gardening, weeding, and planting at the town buildings and areas. Specific areas would include the Old Town Hall, Russell Park, Library and Dunham Building. Ms. Colson-Montgomery reported she had spoken with Kessie Warlow-Harry who might be interested being on the committee. The Select Board discussed getting a committee active before spring. It was suggested to get someone in charge and then advertise times and dates to meet to get some volunteers.

Eversource Tagging Trees for Removal and Trimming:

The Tree Warden reported that Eversource is tagging trees for removal from the Post Office on South Street, to North Road, a portion of Willcutt Road and Damon Pond Road. Lewis Tree Service is doing the tagging. Eversource plans to cut growth within 15 feet of the wires.

Email Received re: Dunham Building:

An email was received regarding use of the Dunham Building for Cultural and Art purposes. The resident would like to submit a Citizen's Petition for the Annual Town Meeting. The Select Board will discuss this issue further at their next meeting.

Highway Budget Finance Committee:

Mr. Fuller reported that he had attended the Finance Committee on Wednesday, February 22 to present the Highway budget with the Highway Superintendent. Due to winter weather, the Highway Superintendent was unable to attend. Mr. Fuller reported that the only changes were putting in a separate budget line for Foreman Wages that is separated from the truck driver/equipment operator wage line.

Finance Committee Request:

It was reported that the Finance Committee were questioning the wage compensation data and how it was determined. The Finance Committee requested to meet with Susan Labrie to ask her how the data was gotten and how the numbers were determined.

Capital Plan:

Mr. Fuller shared the Capital Plan with the Select Board and reviewed the data.

Reports:

Hilltown Junior Olympics Bills:

Mr. Willard reported that another check has been issued to Kerri Baldwin as the first check was never received. He also reported that the Holyoke Sporting Goods check was added into a reimbursement check to Megan Shiels-Willard and he has written a check out of his personal account to pay the bill to Holyoke Sporting Goods for the t-shirts.

Mount Cemetery Possible Land Donation:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery reported that she has heard nothing back from Larry Holmberg regarding any communication with the land owner. Ms. Lessard had provided the Select Board with a summary of the minutes regarding the previous communication about the possible donation from the 2019 Select Board minutes. Ms. Cinner opined that Larry Holmberg has a conflict of interest as Mr. Holmberg drew up the plans and should not be the one to negotiate with the landowner. The Select Board disagreed there was any conflict.

Hilltown Ambulance EMS Budget:

Mr. Fuller reported that he has not spoken with Mike Rock yet.

Cash Reconciliation Meeting with Eric Kinsherf:

Mr. Fuller reported he has heard nothing back about a proposed meeting with the Treasurer Eric Kinsherf and himself regarding setting up a meeting to discuss the reconciliations of deposits.

Fire Chief Truck:

Chief Hewes has sent his specifications for a new Fire Chief truck to the board. Mr. Fuller had asked Matt Smith to get pricing from the State bid list but has not gotten any pricing yet.

5:00 PM: MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Program) Grant Presentation with CarrieAnne Petrik:

The Select Board moved over to the Meeting Room for the presentation. ZOOM access had been provided and there were people that attended in person and present via ZOOM. Ms. Petrik gave an overview of what the MVP grant provides and what is expected of a town to apply for the grants. Chesterfield first started the process in 2019 with a Community Resilience Workshop with the towns of Goshen, Cummington and Worthington. Ms. Petrik reported the MVP Action grants can range from \$25,000 to \$3,000,000. They are a match grant and the match can be through cash or in kind work.

There are three phases of the process in applying for the grants. The town needs to move through each phase and each phase could take up to two years. The phases can be piggy-backed. Phase one is the planning phase, phase two is the action grant and design and phase three is implementation and construction. Ms. Petrik noted that the grant has a point rating system in giving out the grants. Fifteen of the 100 points comes from community engagement. These engagement sessions are things that bring the community together. The town has no limits in the amount of grants that can be applied for. The grants need to be used for climate resilience and addressing the needs of the community in regards to climate change. Ms. Petrik noted the one of the greatest risks for Chesterfield is water and could include flooding or drought depending on how climate change affects the town. The Town will need to think of nature based solutions to deal with any design. The Town can do planning and design in the same grant and can apply when in a certain phase. They do not need to apply for all three phases but need to show that all three phases have been done. Final design and permitting could be done together. Mr. Willard asked if the town is successful in getting a grant in one phase, does that provide an indicator that the town would be successful in other phases. Ms. Petrik opined that answer could be no if the final design does not receive enough points to get a grant. That will depend on the nature of the project.

Mr. Follet asked if the town can apply for another grant even while working with a previous grant that has not been completed. Ms. Petrik noted that is possible. The projects need to address the town

adapting to climate change with a solution to adapt to that change. There was discussion of a dual purpose building, storm water management and solar projects.

These grants are a reimbursable grant and once a task is completed, the town is able to file for reimbursement. The bill does not necessarily need to be paid up front and reimbursement usually takes less than six weeks.

There was discussion of communication and how to get communication to town residents more reliably. It was noted the town has the Code Red system, a Facebook page and the town website, the new variable signs and mailings but maybe a mass town email could be a solution. Ms. Rich opined that the beginning of the project should include a discussion of how to reach all town residents.

Another problem raised was that parents of young children tend not to engage in community forums due to childcare. It was suggested the town provide childcare to increase the younger generation to attend some of the community meetings.

Mr. Follet noted that the Town does not have a Master Plan and that maybe the time has come to see what the residents of Chesterfield would like to see the town look like in 50 years and implement a plan.

Ms. Cormier noted community engagement sessions are more successful if the people who attend feel their viewpoints are being heard.

Joe Gazillo and Larry Cervelli:

After the presentation by Ms. Petrik, Joe Gazillo and Larry Cervelli had asked to speak to the Select Board for a brief time. They requested the Select Board to make a decision if the town wants to move forward with the MVP grant process. The Select Board would like to proceed. Mr. Cervelli opined that the Select Board have a conversation with Dave Christopolis as he has shown an interest in writing the grant. Mr. Cervelli and Mr. Gazillo would like the Select Board to appoint a Steering Committee. There would be a requirement to meet monthly and to give a two-year commitment. It was agreed 12 members would be ideal but no more than 12. They presented some names to the Select Board and the Select Board also gave some suggestions. These appointments will be on the agenda for the next Select Board meeting. Mr. Cervelli thinks there will need to be 6-8 public sessions. There was a discussion of a Master Plan which Mr. Gazillo and Mr. Cervelli are not comfortable doing. They opined that is beyond their scope. They would like to launch the steering committee in March and get to work.

Mr. Fuller asked if the reason for applying for this grant was to help build a Public Safety Complex and Town Offices. Mr. Gazillo and Mr. Cervelli answered yes, Mr.. Fuller asked what part of the construction would the grant pay for and they stated they did no know but would ask CarrieAnne Petrik. Mr. Fuller would like Mr. Gazillo and Mr. Cervelli get a list of approved building projects through the MVP.

Mr. Cervelli and Mr. Gazillo would like to have an accessible online area for documents to be shared with committee members. Ms. Lessard will look to make an area available on the town website that could be viewed only by committee members. Mr. Cervelli would like the Fire Department, Police Department, Highway Department, and Council on Aging all involved. A list of all the town properties that could potentially be used for town offices or public safety complex need to be looked at with the pros and cons of each.

Town Administrator Report:

Hazard Mitigation Plan Contract:

The signed contract from PVPC has been received and Ms. Colson-Montgomery signed the contract on behalf of the Town.

Streetlights:

Ms. Lessard has been notified by Eversource that the streetlight on Main Road has been fixed.

WGE Credit:

Kinsherf asked for the MLP to submit a voucher to the town and send them to her to adjust the credit without involving WGE. Ms. Lessard will send those requests with the bills to the MLP.

Easement at Russell Park:

Ms. Lessard sent an email with the paperwork to the Keenan family (Joan and Alan). Ms. Lessard told them she would mail the paperwork if needed, if they provide a current address. Mr. Tom Keenan responded back and asked if he could sign if they cannot get a notary to go to his mother's residence. Due to her age, she does not leave the house very often. The paperwork would need to be signed to reflect that change on the easement if he signs on behalf of the Trust. Mr. Fuller asked if the agreement could be for ten years instead of five and instructed Ms. Lessard to reach out to the family.

Drainage Easement for 37 Stage Road:

Ms. Lessard has been in contact with the Wainscott's and is trying to secure a time when they can come in to sign the agreement. Ms. Lessard has been unable to locate the Mylar and has been in touch with Larry Holmberg who did up the plan.

Entre:

Ms. Lessard had a meeting with John Drake from Entre regarding the status of some of the town computers which are not compatible for backing up to the server. Some of the town computers are running Windows 10 Home Edition and those cannot connect to a network. The list of computers was reviewed and Entre will provide an estimate for the computers to be replaced. The cost may be a town meeting article to replace those computers. The Town Clerk's computer was ordered for replacement.

Crawl Space under Police Department:

The area is still looking dry. The Building Inspector looked at the Police Station floor to see if he can see what is going on. He thinks the issue is from the radiators. Ms. Lessard will have Jamrog check and test them when they come fix the other radiator.

Action Items:

Planning Board Letter and Final Version of Proposed Cannabis Bylaw:

The Planning Board Chair, George Sturtevant, had sent a letter showing the final approval from the Planning Board on the Version 8 final proposed cannabis bylaw. The vote was 4-1 in favor.

He requested the Select Board set a Special Town Meeting to take the bylaw to town meeting. The Select Board acknowledged they had received two letters from residents requesting the Select Board wait on sending the bylaw to Town Meeting. The Select Board opined that was not in the best interest for the Town. The dates of March 29th, March 30th and April 6th were discussed. The Select Board prefers the March dates. The Select Board also has several other articles to add to the warrant. The dates will be given to the Planning Board, the Moderator and Town Clerk to set a date. The warrant will be signed at the next Select Board meeting.

Personnel Policy and Wage and Compensation:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard to approve the final body of the Personnel Policy. The motion was unanimously voted. The appendices will be reviewed and voted n when ready.

Correspondence:

Correspondence had been received from Niki Dawson regarding the Town's lack of public transportation. The Select Board acknowledged that they have nothing to do with the route of the PVTa (Pioneer Valley Transportation Authority) buses. They suggested that Ms. Dawson reach out to the PVTa or the HCDC (Hilltown Community Development Corporation) to see if they could assist her.

Meeting Adjourned:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Ms. Willard to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. The vote was unanimous.