



**Chesterfield Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.
Town Office Building - 422 Main Road**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Mr. Fuller.

Select Board Members Present:

Select Board Members Participating Remotely: Roger Fuller, Patricia Colson-Montgomery, Donald Willard

Select Board Members Absent: None

Town Administrator Present: Susan Labrie;

Public Officials Present:

Public Officials via zoom: Brenda Lessard (incoming Chesterfield Town Administrator); Goshen Select Board Members, Angela Otis, Wayne Glasser, Kris Bissell; Goshen Town Administrator Dawn Scaparotti

General Public Present:

General Public via zoom:

Recorder of Minutes: Susan Labrie

Video Conference Meeting:

Mr. Fuller stated that this Select Board meeting is being conducted without the public physically present but with remote access consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth because of the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus." In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The Order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment. For this meeting, the public may join by video or teleconference via the Zoom App as posted on the Town's Website identifying how the public may join.

Discussion of Possible Regional Police Services:

Mr. Fuller had previously called Goshen Select Board Chair Angela Otis to inquire if Goshen may be interested in discussing potential regionalization of the two towns' Police Departments. (The Police Chiefs in both towns gave notice of retirement effective this June.)

Mr. Fuller thanked the Goshen Select Board for agreeing to the joint meeting. He stated that with both Chiefs retiring, it was a good time to consider regionalization of our Police Departments. He noted that Chesterfield and Goshen already are regionalized with the elementary school and the Emergency

Management Director. He noted that other towns in western MA have regional Police Departments such as Blandford and Chester.

Mr. Fuller noted that Chesterfield posted the Chief's job internally, which is Chesterfield's policy to fill open positions. Mr. Fuller reported there was one internal applicant, Sergeant Jeff Fish. He noted that the Chesterfield Select Board was scheduled to meet with Sergeant Fish tonight. Mr. Fuller stated that the Chesterfield Select Board would like Goshen's opinion on regionalization before moving forward with appointing a new Chief and if they had any concerns regarding Sergeant Fish. The Goshen Select Board did not voice any concerns with Sergeant Fish and noted that he had been an Officer in Goshen several years ago.

Ms. Otis inquired if the Chesterfield Select Board had discussed regionalization yet and if so, what the opinions were of the other Select Board members. Both Ms. Colson-Montgomery and Mr. Willard stated they were in favor of investigating the feasibility of regionalizing with Goshen. Ms. Otis noted that the Goshen Select Board has not had the opportunity to discuss this yet amongst themselves.

Mr. Fuller stated that the Chesterfield Police Department is currently working under the supervision of the Sergeant and could stay that way for the short term while potential regionalization with Goshen was being discussed, but noted the Town would not want to delay more than a few months. Ms. Otis responded that the Goshen Select Board will be discussing this at their meeting on June 14th. She noted that this is a busy week for Goshen with their Annual Town Meeting coming up on Saturday, June 12th.

Ms. Otis inquired how the Chesterfield Select Board envisioned regionalization. Mr. Fuller responded that he hoped eventually there may be cost savings, but in the short term, that police coverage would be better. Ms. Colson-Montgomery agreed that by regionalizing, we may be able to provide better coverage between the two towns. Mr. Willard stated he was in favor of regionalizing, if it could better the Police force. He also noted that in light of the State's Police Reform legislation that takes effect July 1, 2021, regionalization may be a beneficial solution for both towns.

Ms. Otis noted a difference in the way the two towns currently appoint their Police Chiefs. She noted that Goshen has a strong Chief and Chesterfield does not appoint as a strong Chief. Ms. Otis inquired how much supervision the Select Board has over the Police Department. Ms. Colson-Montgomery responded that the Select Board members are also the Police Commissioners. The Police Chief meets with them once a month to provide a status report but that the Select Board does not dictate policy or how the Department operates.

Ms. Bissell stated she agreed regionalization is worth studying and that it could be a positive thing for both towns. Mr. Glasser noted he does not have a problem with exploring the opportunity of regionalizing. He opined that if there were cost savings opportunities, it should be studied. He inquired what would need to be done next. Ms. Otis responded that each town should put together a profile of their Police Departments and the two groups should meet again.

Mr. Glasser inquired about Chesterfield interviewing their Sergeant for the Chief's position. Mr. Fuller responded that if we agree to regionalize, then both towns need to agree on the shared Chief. Mr. Fuller noted Chesterfield could fill the position with an Interim Chief until a decision is made on potential regionalization. Ms. Otis suggested the two Select Boards move swiftly to working meetings, which

would be open to the public. Mr. Fuller noted that some action needs to be taken by June 30th because of the pending Police Reform legislation. Police rosters need to be submitted to the State by June 30th. Ms. Otis noted that the Goshen Select Board will be meeting on Monday, June 14th to discuss this and will get back to the Chesterfield Select Board regarding the next meeting of the group.

The Goshen Select Board signed off of zoom.

The Chesterfield Select Board continued discussion about how to proceed. Sergeant Fish is scheduled to meet with them this evening. It was decided that he would be offered an Interim Police Chief position until the outcome of regionalization has been decided with Goshen.

Meeting Adjourned

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.