



**Chesterfield Select Board Minutes**  
**Monday, August 30, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**  
**Town Office Building - 422 Main Road**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Fuller.

**Select Board Members Present:** Roger Fuller, Trish Colson-Montgomery and Donald Willard

**Select Board Members Participating Remotely:** None

**Select Board Members Absent:** None

**Town Administrator Present:** Brenda Lessard

**Public Officials Present:** Jeff Fish-Acting Police Chief, Larry Holmberg-EMD, Matt Smith-Highway

**General Public Present:** Skip Valencik, Richard Carnell-Whip City, Charles DeSimone-TPX Communications

General Public Present Via ZOOM: Anthony Gentile-Eversource Field Engineering

**Recorder of Minutes:** Brenda Lessard

**Common Acronyms:**

ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act

BOH: Board of Health

CARES: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

COA: Council of Aging

DCR: Department of Conservation and Recreation

DEP: Department of Environmental Protection

DHCD: Department of Housing and Community Development

DLTA: Direct Local Technical Assistance

DOT: Department of Transportation

EMD: Emergency Management Director

FSA: Fiber Service Area

FRCOG: Franklin County Council of Governments

HCDC: Hilltown Community Development Corporation

HRHS: Hampshire Regional High School

ISP: Internet Service Provider

MLP: Municipal Light Plant

MPO: Municipal Planning Organization

PILOT: Payment in Lieu of Taxes

PVPC: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

RFP: Request for Proposals

RFQ: Request for Quotes

WCPO: West Chesterfield Post Office

WG&E: Westfield Gas & Electric

**Video Conference Hybrid Meeting:**

Mr. Fuller stated that this Select Board meeting is being conducted in a hybrid model but with access consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of June 16, 2021. Governor Baker signed into law An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. This Act includes an extension, until April 1, 2022, of the remote meeting provisions of his March 12, 2020, Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The new law has two major parts:

First, the new law allows public bodies to continue providing live "adequate, alternative means" of public access to the deliberations of the public body, instead of holding meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public. "Adequate, alternative means" may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body in real time.

Second, the new law authorizes all members of a public body to continue participating in meetings remotely; the Open Meeting Law's requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location remains suspended.

**Eversource Pole Hearing, 23 Bissell Road:**

Mr. Fuller called the Pole Hearing to order at 4:00 P.M. Anthony Gentile, a field engineer with Eversource was in attendance of the Pole Hearing via Zoom and Skip Valencik, the property owner of 23 Bissell Road was in attendance in person. As no abutters responded to the postcards that were mailed out and there were no objections made by the public, Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Willard and unanimously voted to approve the Petition to install three jointly owned poles (3/6, 3/7, 3/8B) on Bissell Road as submitted in the Plan submitted by Eversource Dated 5/25/21. The Pole Hearing was adjourned at 4:07 P.M.

**VOIP Phones:**

Mr. Carnell and Mr. DeSimone attended to discuss their proposal for installing VOIP Phones in the Municipal Buildings in Chesterfield. The current phone system is outdated and in need of replacement. Mr. Carnell gave an overview of the process and how the phone system would work. The phone would be working off the same incoming line. The phones would transfer to the intended line and current phone numbers will remain. Mr. DeSimone brought in one of the phones to look at. There will need to be a survey with departments on how many phones are needed, what type of service is needed and what type of phone is needed. There would be a Web-X account with every user. Once the town has the survey information, Whip City can give a better estimate of the monthly costs. The phones would plug into the computers. If there are no computers a line would need to be installed or a repeater line from a computer.

Larry Holmberg voiced his concern in the EMD being able to control the lines in an emergency. Mr. DeSimone noted that it was not a problem and he would work with Mr. Holmberg to ensure that ability in an emergency.

**Larry Holmberg, EMD:**

Mr. Holmberg noted he has been approached to do a cell coverage mapping survey to identify “dead areas”. Ms. Colson-Montgomery opined that the cell companies will be trying to sell something and does not think he should put much time into it.

Larry Holmberg spoke about the variable signs and Goshen getting turned down on using CARES money for the signs. All purchases need to have prior approval from the State for use of the CARES money. Mr. Holmberg is suggesting possible purchase of some tents. He also suggested some further equipment for hybrid meetings. He suggests Bluetooth microphones, as with masks being worn, the Select Board can be hard to hear via ZOOM.

#### **Additions to Agenda:**

##### **Surplus Property:**

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard and unanimously voted to declare the 2011 Crown Vic and the Highway Roller Surplus Property.

##### **Landscaping at Town Properties:**

Mr. Willard reported he had met with Peter Bowlby to discuss the landscaping and what Mr. Bowlby is expected to accomplish. They discussed the area driving up to Town Office needs trimming, the bush behind the town offices needs trimming, and some branches need trimming at that location also. There is a bush that is encroaching on a town sidewalk that needs trimming back. It is impeding full use of the sidewalk. Mr. Bowlby will trim that back to the edge of the sidewalk. The community center has two bushes that Mr. Bowlby usually trims. One is at the rear of the building and the other is on the street side of the building. Mr. Willard agreed that Mr. Bowlby can trim those bushes.

It was noted that another 13 hours was done at Vets Park which now has seen over 26 hours of work since July. Ms. Colson-Montgomery will call Dee Cinner to discuss what further work needs to be completed at Vets Park. The Select Board agree that the majority of the work should be completed with the landscaping hours put into the park. More money will need to be put into this budget line for FY23.

##### **6 North Road:**

Mr. Fuller wants a meeting set up with the Fire Chief, Police Chief, EMD and the Select Board to discuss 6 North Road and what to do with the house and barn. An appraisal of the property has been done. The Select Board requested this meeting be put on the agenda for the next Select Board meeting.

#### **Warrants Reviewed:**

The Select Board reviewed and approved the payroll WP22-05, and WT22-05 warrants.

#### **Minutes:**

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard to accept the Minutes of August 16, 2021, as amended. Motion unanimously voted.

## **Town Administrators Report:**

### **Part-time Administrative Assistant to Boards:**

Advertisement has been placed in Post Office, Town Website and Town Face Book page. There has been no response to date. It was suggested by the Select Board to put this out in a reverse-call to residents along with Hampshire Regional School Committee members needed.

### **FRCOG Bidding Service Intergovernmental Cost:**

It appears no money was budgeted for FRCOG bidding fees for fuel, gravel, tar, stone, etc. Ms. Lessard did reach out to Larry Cervelli & Lee Manchester on the Finance Committee and they said it was not requested by the Select Board earlier in the year for the FY22 Budget. Ms. Lessard let them know that if the town uses FRCOG for the bidding service, there are yearly fees associated with that process. It looks like \$4,000 was taken from free cash at the STM in September of 2020 to cover the shortfall last year for the same fees. They are putting this on their radar for next budgeting season and the town will need to figure out where these fees will get paid from. The FRCOG bidding fees may need to be requested from free cash if we have a fall STM.

### **Fire Extinguishers:**

Inspections were done on Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. All extinguishers were inspected except the Library. There was an issue with access to the Building. Fire Control will return when in the area to do that inspection.

### **Tennis Courts:**

Ms. Lessard sent a request for proposals (estimates) of work that is needed to repair cracks and seal tennis courts. VT Tennis Court Resurfacing could look in October but not do any work until Spring (email). Ms. Lessard has not heard back, as of today, from Advantage Tennis (they were the company who did work last time). Ms. Lessard will request VT Tennis come look in October to give a proposal of the work needed and a quote of the cost.

### **Tree at Russell Park:**

Ms. Lessard reported she was notified by Rory Zononi about a large tree limb down on bench at the park. This must be the same branch that Don noted before he left. Ms. Lessard had Matt Smith look at it, and Highway will remove it. It did land on a bench, fence and the building also. It is hard to tell how much damage at this point. MIIA will be notified and a claim filed.

### **Long Term Borrowing:**

Mr. Fuller had an online meeting with David Eisenthal about the long term borrowing. It is unclear yet how much will need to be borrowed for the Broadband project. Mr. Eisenthal had some opinions on how this borrowing should be applied for. As it stands now, the borrowing amount may be lower than first anticipated. Mr. Fuller opined that the CAFII money that will be coming in over ten years should be applied to paying off the debt.

### **IT Issues:**

#### **IT Services:**

Ms. Lessard had a meeting with James Saccento, who provides IT service to the town and he is suggesting the town look into contracting IT services with an IT Company. With

today's internet threats of viruses, hacking, etc. he opined that the town should be better protected than they are now. The town is backing up to Carbonite in the cloud but he also thinks we should be looking at a server. He will stay on until the town finds someone else or hires a company but wants this to be a priority and for the town to be actively looking.

The Select Board would like Ms. Lessard to ask Mr. Saccento's opinion on companies that provide IT Service. She will reach out again to him to get suggestions. Mr. Fuller will check with another IT person to get his suggestions also.

**Laptop Issues:**

As far as the laptops, he did speed tests on the town administrator computer, laptop, zoom laptop and his own laptop. The town administrator laptop and the ZOOM laptop are very slow and not very reactive in the speed test. This is more likely the problem with the voice drops and inability to hear during a meeting. He said the ZOOM laptops are sufficient but does suggest a new laptop for the town administrator and any other of the Select Board as we do more with them than just ZOOM. He gave me several possible options for replacement: Microsoft Surface Book Pro, MacBook Pro or Dell XPS Pro. All come in various screen sizes. They are costlier than what we presently have though, starting at \$1,200-\$3,000 each. He has the Microsoft Surface Book Pro and his speed was off the charts here in the office. One other solution is to do the video with the laptop but do the voice with the telephone.

Ms. Lessard will reach out to the State to see if the CARES Act funding can be used to replace the four laptops and Bluetooth microphones as suggested by Mr. Holmberg.

**ARPA Funds:**

There was another bill for \$60,930 submitted through ARPA Funds this week for Broadband construction. On the last warrant \$191,207.91 in Broadband construction costs, were billed to these funds and the total used far is \$252,137.91. This will leave \$121,197.09 in that budget line.

**Personnel Policy:**

The final version is done and the Select Board has been given a copy to look over to possibly approve at a future meeting.

**Out of the Office:**

Ms. Lessard reported she will be out of the office on the following dates:

September 9<sup>th</sup>=STAM meeting in Northfield 9am-4pm

September 23<sup>rd</sup>-Conference in Springfield 8:30am-4:45pm

These are both warrant weeks. Ms. Lessard will let everyone know the warrants will be due by 2 pm on Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> to submit to Accountant.

**Fall Special Town Meeting Items:**

The Select Board hope to hold a Special Town Meeting this fall to possibly include warrant articles involving: adoption of the Municipal Modernization Act, 6 North Road Property, Sugar Hill Road layout, funding for new phones at Municipal Buildings, Tennis Court Repairs, Town Server, FRCOG Bidding Fees, and an increase in budget for grounds maintenance.

**Jeff Fish, Acting Police Chief:**

Mr. Fish came in to speak to the Select Board about several issues. He asked about communication with Goshen regarding regionalization for the Police Department.

**Talk with Goshen re: Regionalization of Police Department:**

Mr. Fuller noted he had spoken with Angela Otis prior to the meeting. She told Mr. Fuller that the Goshen Select Board did not want a Chief selected prior to discussions with the two boards. She will be back in touch to set up possible further discussion.

Mr. Fuller opined that a Police Commission Board would need to be set up as it would be difficult for a police department to be taking direction from two separate Select Boards. This will all need to be discussed.

The Select Board noted that if Goshen and Chesterfield's discussions do not progress, the town may want to look at regionalizing with Cummington.

**Police Chief Pay:**

Mr. Fish noted that his pay will need to be addressed due to the pay cap that was lifted due to COVID expires at the end of the year. Mr. Fuller will reach out to Town Counsel to discuss salary vs. hourly pay.

**Bridge Academy:**

Mr. Fish said he had bad news for the town. There will be more costs to cities and towns for the Bridge Academy. All the classes will be held in the eastern part of the state and this will also include PFAT (physical Fitness) testing. All officers that need to attend will be required to attend full-time and most of the officers have other jobs. All of the classes must be completed by June 30, 2022.

**2011 Crown Vic:**

Worthington is interested in purchasing the cruiser. They need to replace a cruiser. Mr. Fish asked if the car can just be sold to them or does it have to go through the surplus bidding process. This will be investigated.

**Payroll Tracking System:**

Mr. Fish would like to submit payroll through a software program rather than providing hand written time sheets. The road work is already submitted that way. The town already pays for the

software and it would make submitting time sheets easier as the calculations are already done. Mr. Fish would still approve the sheets and make sure the time submitted was actually worked. Ms. Colson-Montgomery looked at the road work pay sheets and sees the benefit of this but questions whether it will be approved by the accountant. Mr. Fish will submit the next payroll through the software system to see if it gets approved.

**Action Items:**

**Building Supervisor:**

Mr. Willard made a motion, seconded by Ms. Colson-Montgomery and unanimously voted to appoint Ron Loven as Building Supervisor.

**Reprecincting Letters of Approval:**

After the 2020 Federal Census, the state is doing re-precincting of the state. Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard, and unanimously voted to approve the Town of Chesterfield to remain one precinct. The letter to the state approving Chesterfield remain a single precinct was signed.

**Edwards Library:**

Mr. Fuller spoke with Mr. Hicks. The specs are not completed yet but Mr. Hicks should have something this week.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.