

Special Meeting/Public Hearing

The Town of Chester Council held a public hearing on August 9, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

Members Present: Mayor James Dahlen, Council Persons, Sonja Dahlen, Scott Decker, Rachel Ghekiere, and Scott Ross

Members Absent: Garrett Graff and Tina Neer

Staff Present: Terry Tyler (PWD)
Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Jim Sivils

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the public hearing meeting to order at 6:02 pm
2. Scott Decker- Oath of Office
3. Public Comment: Jim Sivils asked about the Amtrak fees, Mayor Dahlen informed him that the rate will be raised beginning August 1, 2023, from \$5/car/day to \$25/car/day. Jim also asked about the purchase of a replacement CAT for the landfill. He has a few ideas and will talk to Terry about this.
4. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 pm

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on August 9, 2023.

Members Present: Mayor James Dahlen, Council Persons, , Sonja Dahlen, Scott Decker, Rachel Ghekiere, and Scott Ross

Members Absent: Garrett Graff and Tina Neer

Staff Present: Terry Tyler (PWD)
Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Jim Sivils

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:07 pm
2. Sonja Dahlen made a motion to accept the minutes from Minutes of Regular Council Meeting, July 12, 2023, Special Preliminary Budget Building July 18, 2023, Special Preliminary Budget Approval Meetings July 18, 2023, and Special Council Meeting July 21, 2023. Scott Ross seconded the motion with a correction to the July 21, 2023, minutes on Scott Decker's name. Motion to approve all minutes with the correction passed with all voting ayes.

3. Claims were presented to the council for approval with the addition of the Ward's bill that was entered after the report was printed. Scott Decker asked about the Energy Lab bill and how many samples are taken a month. Terry Tyler explained that there are about four samples taken each month. Scott Decker asked about Hach and the reagent cost. This is a quarterly cost. Discussed reagent less option. Scott Ross made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 19047-19075 & 19079 & Payroll Advances Ck #19076-19078. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
4. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in July. Rachel Ghekiere asked about the interest at Altana. We still have the account at Altana accruing interest. Ashley is continuing to work on the bank switch. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
5. Public Comment: none
6. Sheriff's Office Report: will be shared with the
7. Pool Manager Report: Emma Wickum, pool manager, provided the council with a written report. The Liberty County Community Development Committee is doing a free swim day on August 13, 2023. This is also the last open day for the pool as school starts on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. This summer went well, and she would like to thank the council for the opportunity to work for the Town.
8. New Business:
 1. Resolution #01-2024 Approval- Resolution # 01-2024 Adopt FY 2023-2024 Final Budget: Discussion of the value of Mills. The value of a mill has increased, and the number of mills the Town will be requesting will actually be less this year. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve Resolution #01-2024 to adopt FY 2023-2024 Final Budget as presented. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 2. Approval- Resolution #02-2024 Fixing Mills FY 2023-2024. The number of mills requested will be 146.66. The value of a mill is \$1,280.972. Scott Ross made the motion to approve Resolution #02-2024 Fixing Mills FY 2023-2024. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 3. Approval- Assessment Letters to Department of Revenue: The assessment letters for lights and street maintenance were presented to the council. The council discussed the need to increase the street maintenance assessment amounts as they have not been increased in several years. Discussion of plan to chip seal starting next year. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the Assessment Letters to the Department of Revenue. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 4. Approval – Letter adding delinquent water/sewer/garbage and mowing to taxes: There is one delinquent account 378-00. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to add the charges for account 378-00 to the taxes. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 5. Approval – Engagement for year-end services: Craig Shepherd: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the engagement letter for year-end services with Craig Shepherd. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 6. Request for address change: Joe Ludwig: The council reviewed the request for address change. Based on the Town ordinance, and email from Attorney Bill Hunt, because there is no entrance facing Monroe Ave, the address will need to remain at 411 5th Street, or he can request to change it to 411 4th Street. Ashley will send a

letter. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to not change the address based on the ordinance and 911 addressing. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

7. Discussion- moving skating rink & driveway/parking redesign: Council discussed the moving of the skating rink from across the street from the city office to the Park. Chad Hedges has said he is willing to help with the dirt work and would like to start soon. The current rink is 75 feet by 115 feet, when it is moved it will be 75 feet x 75 feet. There is a possibility of making it 80 feet long if we go closer to the trees on the north side. There will still be room for tents next to the building. Terry said we will need to move some trees and try and keep parking in one direction. Keeping the rink on the northwest corner of the park means there is easy access to a fire hydrant for filling the skating rink. The sprinklers will need to be extended on the east side and capped off on the west. Terry will work with Damon Lalum at Western Lumber to help design this. Scott Decker asked why the skating park would be moved. It would create a more inviting area for families to use the rink, with access to the pavilion as well. The lots across from the city office could then be sold for development. Moving the skating rink to the proposed location, still leaves an area for a splash park if that develops. Scott Decker asked if there would be very much excavation, and Terry doesn't believe there will be. Scott Ross asked if the size would affect the numbers. Most of the time, only ½ of the rink is used for skating, so it isn't anticipated that it will cause any problems. Terry stated they will need to make sure snow is cleared to not shrink the size. Parking would need to be designated and that still needs to be figured out. The gas line is done to the pavilion and the heater just needs to be installed. This will allow people to utilize the park year-round. If the pavilion is used during the winter, we may have to charge a fee depending on the cost of heating. Jim Sivils stated that the maintenance and cost for a splash pad are very high. The council directed Terry to move ahead on relocating the skating rink.

9. Old Business: None

10. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: None

11. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that the main break at the lake is repaired and the repairs went well. Jer Johnson was willing to help and responded quickly, as did John Kleinsasser. They guys did a great job, and it was fixed in 2 ½ days. Scott Decker and Matt with Core and Main also helped with getting the correct supplies. They replaced 32 feet of pipe. The original pipe was a steel pipe with cement and chicken wire around it. They were able to expose the line to a viable portion of pipe and make the connection. They haven't finished backfilling yet, as they want to make sure nothing surfaces, but so far everything looks good. The tower has been painted inside and out and Terry is working with the company to get it back online. Terry updated the council that he is aware of a taste and odor issue with the water. He is working to fix it. Terry has been in contact with Rural Water about options to fix it. Mayor Dahlen asked about bringing water straight from the lake into the WTP and bypass the holding pond. Terry said that John Kleinsasser is willing to help with the process. The WTP will need to be manually run and farmers will need to know that the pump may shut off if the tank gets full. Terry does not want to bring the new tower back online until the taste and odor issue is fixed. He also wants to focus on getting the valve fixed on the north pond to insure there is back up supply for when the pond is cleaned. Scott Decker asked what was causing the issue. Terry stated they are not 100% sure, however, they have treated and are currently treating the pond, cleaning filters, and have begun perchlorinating. Scott Decker stated there are teams with DEQ that can help if needed. Some additional steps would be to flush hydrants and replace the filter

media (this has not been done in close to 23 years). Scott Decker asked about the coal in the filter media, as this helps with taste and odor, and Terry is monitoring this and will continue. Terry is hoping that they will be able to start pave patching again in the next couple of weeks.

12. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum updated the council that the bank changes are going well. Peyton Cole has been in contact with the Town and is working to get all the permits and information in place for the Harvest festival September 22&23, 2023. She wants to close off areas a bit differently than last year and will work with Terry to ensure that emergency vehicles can still get through. There is a new HB 890 that will require 3rd class cities to audio record all meetings. Recording must be posted to a city webpage or social media page and kept online for one year. The effective date is July 1, 2024. Ashley will continue to work on this and would like to look into a more user-friendly website at the same time.
13. Council: Scott Ross requested that the Town purchase a flag and say the pledge before meetings. Ashley will work on this.
14. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Scott Ross seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor