

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on September 13, 2023.

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

Members Absent:

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

Guests: Susan Sprinkle and Jim Sivils

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 pm
2. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to accept the minutes of Budget Hearing & Regular Council Meeting, August 9, 2023. Correction to spelling on PWD report. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion to approve minutes passed with all voting ayes.
3. Claims were presented to the council for approval. 4J Farms claim is for Jeremiah Johnson. Scott Ross made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 19781-19808, & Payroll Advances Ck #19809-19812 (19810 voided). Scott Ross seconded the motion. Scott Decker asked about the modem at the lake fixed by MET. This was to fix the dial up to include the area code. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
4. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in August. Tina Neer made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
5. Public Comment: none
6. Sheriff's Office Report: Copied and presented to the council.
7. New Business:
 1. Harvest Festival September 22 & 23, 2023- Permits: Peyton Cole is in charge of the Harvest Festival. She was unable to attend the meeting but provided the council with the schedule for the two days and a map of the activities. She is working with PWD Terry Tyler to block off the streets and alleys as well as placement of extra garbage containers. The park will be used starting Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 5 for the smoking competition. The council discussed the use of generators. If someone needs to plug in to power at the park, they can do so instead of using a generator. The one-way will be blocked off starting at 5, Terry will talk to Peyton about making sure there is still access to Spuds as to not interfere with their business. Peyton Cole has secured an open container permit with the Liberty County Sheriff's department. She has proof of insurance for the CDC and a catering license for Beaver Creek Golf Course. Scott Ross made the motion to approve the permits for the Harvest Festival. Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 2. Approval Building Permit: Fence for Bob Naeseth at 323 West Monroe Ave: Building permit for Bob Naeseth to install a fence at 323 West Monroe Ave was

presented to the council. Bob has paid the reconnection fee for water and is aware that the sewer line has been abandoned and will need to have a new connection made. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the building permit as presented. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

3. Assignment of Committees: The current Committee assignments were reviewed. The following assignments were agreed upon.

1. **Water/Sewer/ Garbage**

~~Sonja Dahlen~~ Scott Decker
Scott Ross
Garrett Graff

2. **Streets**

~~Scott Decker~~ Sonja Dahlen
Scott Ross

3. **Administration**

~~Sonja Dahlen~~ Scott Decker
Rachel Ghekiere

4. **Equipment**

Scott Ross
Garrett Graff

5. **Public Safety – Fire/Police/Lights and Ordinance Reviews**

Rachel Ghekiere
Tina Neer

6. **Long Term Planning**

Rachel Ghekiere
Sonja Dahlen

7. **Parks and Recreation**

Tina Neer
~~Scott Decker~~ Sonja Dahlen

4. Discussion Garbage Rates/Landfill CAT: The CAT at the landfill needs to be replaced. A \$90,000 loan for 5 years with an interest rate of 6% would cost the Town over \$14,000 in interest. Garbage rates have not been increased since 2017, and landfill rates have not been increased since 2019. A \$5 increase in residential rates would increase revenues by about \$2185/month. Research into a CAT upgrade shows that it would cost between \$75,000 and \$90,000. The garbage fund currently has a balance of approximately \$400,000 and the town could use cash on hand to purchase the CAT and then increase rates, rather than paying interest. Scott Ross agreed this was a good idea. Scott Decker asked about CATs that have been researched. PWD Terry Tyler provided information on one, the other one he was looking into has since sold. Mayor Dahlen discussed staying with the same size so it will fit in the current shed at the landfill. Terry expressed the need for one as soon as possible to do their job. Scott Ross inquired about if there is information about the conditions it is coming from. Also, a question was asked about the cost to deliver it. Terry stated that one company said they could deliver for @\$2/mile, but he hasn't checked into that yet but will. Terry informed the council that they are babying it along as another hose inside has broken off and the tracks keep slipping. They are using it as little as possible. James asked if we could bring it in and do a full replacement of the hoses while taking the time to try and find a good replacement. Garrett Graff asked about looking at a loader with a sheep's foot. This might provide more compaction and thus get more life out of the pits. If the new piece is larger then the current shed, could look at putting up a new shed. Terry said this is an important piece of equipment, and we must have it to be able to follow all of the DEQ requirements. Scott Ross stated he is willing to look at anything that Terry

finds. Scott Decker asked about the State Surplus. Rachel Ghekiere stated that her husband Jim Ghekiere uses this a lot for the Weed Department, however, he said that there hasn't been any luck locating what Terry is looking for. James asked if it would work to rent something until we get the current CAT fixed and to give some time to keep looking for the right one. Garrett Graff requested that maintenance records be requested, research shipping cost and look at a sheep foot option. Tina Neer agreed that maintenance records would be good. If needed, we could look into renting from Dave Williams while we look at options. Terry will continue to research and gather information for the council. Garbage rates will need to be increased and Ashley will email rate options to the committee and council. A motion of intent to raise garbage rates can be completed at the next council meeting.

8. Old Business:

9. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items:

10. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that they will be cleaning the pond at the end of September or first of October. They plan to put enough in to hold the liner in place after cleaning it and continue to bring water straight from the lake until the water cools down. Once it cools down, they will fill the pond again, and hopefully that will help to avoid more taste and odor issues. The new tower's BT samples came back good. Terry is planning to keep it offline until the lake water is cooler as well. Things are going well bringing water up from the lake, and he would like to ensure that the water that is put into the tower is free of the taste and odor. Fish Wildlife and Parks would like to set up an inspection station at the Lions Park again for the hunting season. They would like to stay in their trailer and plug in if possible. Rachel Ghekiere said that that isn't a problem as a lot of people do it. Terry is going to try and get the heater installed in the park pavilion and get quotes on the lights. He doesn't think the skating rink will get moved this fall. The north pond won't be clean this fall. Scott Decker asked if we could spray for the flies. Terry explained that with the chemical we use we must be very careful of the bees and he would check to see if it was a possibility.
11. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum informed the council that a parent came to the office concerned about the parking at the school, specifically across from the elementary, on the north side of the school, on School Drive during pickup times. Ashley spoke with Bill Hunt and with superintendent, Luke Haggerty, about this. Mr. Haggerty said that they have been monitoring this, and it doesn't appear to be a problem. They are going to have a para-professional go outside at pickup time and help kids cross the crosswalks for safety. Homecoming is the week of September 25th, and the students would like to paint Main St. again if that was okay with Terry and the council. The council agreed with the students doing this. There have been several complaints regarding feral cats in town. A customer brought in an example of a flyer that could be sent to all residents to possibly help control the animals and would requiring them to be licensed. Looking at the ordinance, cats are also listed in the City Code, *Chapter 3 5-3 A-4: ANIMALS AT LARGE; PROHIBITED ANIMALS: A. It is unlawful for the owner of any dog, cat or other animal to permit the same to be "at large", as defined in section 5-3A-1 of this article.* Ashley will talk to Bill Hunt about this issue as well as what can be done regarding run down properties. Weed letters are being sent out and arrangements will be made to have properties mowed if needed.
12. Council: Mayor Dahlen suggested setting up a visit to the water treatment plant. Scott Decker, Sonja Dahlen and Tina Neer are all interested in this. Jim Sivils is also interested. Scott Ross informed the council that he meet with Terry to discuss what was being done for the taste and

odor issue so he could talk to his constituents. It was very helpful to be able to tell them what Terry was working on. Rachel Ghekiere stated that the water was better. Rachel Ghekiere also stated that there is an address located on 5th Street West that has an address listed as 407 Jackson Ave with no door facing Jackson Ave. Ashley will look into this. Scott Decker stated that Hill County Water District has meters that they are not using and will not be able to use. Terry will talk to Chad Hedges about the cost and types to determine if the Town would be able use any of these.

13. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tina Neer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor