

## Special Meeting/Public Hearing

The Town of Chester Council held a Special Meeting on November 8, 2023, at 5:00 pm.

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

Members Absent: Tina Neer

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

Guests: Chris Hayes RPA, Neal Levang RPA, and Jim Sivils

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the special meeting to order at 5:02 pm
2. Public Comment: None
3. New Business:
  1. Sewer Rate EDU System: Chris Hayes presented the council with four options for the sewer rates. These options included base rate increases and implementing an EDU billing system. Discussion about how the amount needed to increase rates will be impacted by the requirements of the SRF loan to meet target rates, and by the Towns need to save for necessary maintenance. One option would be to do a yearly increase, another is to increase rates all at once. Other communities do a set percentage each year. Everyone agreed that the rates need to be looked at more often. Additional discussion about what the EDU system would look like, would it be modeled like the water EDU system based on the line size or based on the number of units. No decision needs to be made yet and the council will continue to look at these options to determine which is the best way for the town to proceed.
4. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Scott Decker seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 pm

## Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on November 8, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

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: Chris Hayes RPA, Neal Levang RPA, Dennis Burgard M.E.T. Automation & Controls, and Jim Sivils

## Pledge of Allegiance

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm
2. Sonja Dahlen made a motion to accept the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting, October 11, 2023. Scott Decker inquired if the CAT has arrived. James Dahlen updated everyone that it had. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all voting ayes.
3. Mayor Dahlen adjusted the agenda to skip ahead to the Public Comment section.
4. Public Comment:
  1. Chris Hayes let the council know that the contractors are asking about closer locations for the spreading of the sludge. The Town currently has an agreement with Wanken Farms to spread the sludge. A location closer to Town could potentially save money. Chris Hayes will contact the property owners and work with Bill Hunt to create an agreement between the landowner and the Town. Chris Hayes and Neal Levang left the meeting.
  2. Dennis Burgard with M.E.T. Automation & Controls thanked the Town for the contract to update the water Scada System. He has been working with the Town since 2006 and it is a great relationship. Dennis is currently working on updating the new processor and code, and it will be very expendable so that the Town will not have to worry about upgrading the processor for several years. Almost all of the hardware is in, including the valves and transmitters. The rewriting of the system takes a long time as they have to rebuild the new program and interface. Dennis anticipates being completed in December and is planning to have three people on site the week of January 8<sup>th</sup> to work with Terry to switch everything over. Scott Decker inquired about tech support. Dennis informed the council that they will have the ability to dial in and offer tech support, but because they are located in Helena, they can also drive up and do face to face tech support. Dennis Burgard left the meeting.
5. Claims were presented to the council for approval. The claim for RPA will be held until the ARPA funds are deposited. Scott Ross made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 19875- 19904, electronic payment -99985 & Payroll Advances Ck #19905- 19907. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
6. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in October. Rachel Ghekier made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
7. Sheriff's Office Report: will be shared with the council when received.
8. New Business:
  1. Resolution of Intent to Raise Garbage Rates: Final rate increase was presented to the council with a 15% increase on everything but the additional landfill items. Scott Ross made the motion to accept the Resolution of Intent to Raise Garbage Rates as

presented and to post the public notice for the public hearing in December. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

9. Old Business: None

10. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: Mayor Dahlen asked PWD Terry Tyler about the fire hydrant on the south side of the intersection of Jefferson and Main Street. It has a broken collar and is wondering if it can be repaired or if we need to replace the entire hydrant. Terry will look into it.

11. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that the crew is digging a new household garbage pit and new building material pit at the landfill. He is also working on getting the heater put in at the park pavilion. He hasn't gotten any additional quotes on lights. If the weather holds, they will try to sweep the main streets in town. Scott Decker asked how many pits a year the Town usually digs. Terry told him usually one a year. The current life expectancy of the landfill is +/- 20 years. The Town will need to look at a plan for a new landfill. There has been talk with the County about this. Terry requested permission to install remote start on the new pickups. Council was good with this.

12. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum updated the council that the election results are in, and the County will be holding a review on 11/16/23 @ 4:00 in the Commissioner's office. HB 355, The State-Local Infrastructure Partnership Act of 2023 ("SLIPA") is awarding incorporated cities and towns money. The Town will need to submit a list of projects by the end of the year. This will be on the December agenda. Ashley has been working on the website. If there are ideas or suggestions she would love to hear them.

13. Council: Scott Decker asked if the crew could use bags of the cold set to patch potholes in town to hold them until spring when they can be fixed. He also noticed that there were a couple of fire hydrants leaking oil, and the one on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and East Adams Ave is broken. Terry has one on hand in case of an emergency and he will look into ordering more.

Rachel Ghekiere updated the council on the training by MSU on October 17<sup>th</sup> that she attended. It was very good training and would be very helpful for the council. The Town will not have to record meetings, but all of the minutes will need to be posted on the website.

Scott Decker- The Town should check and make sure that if the ice-skating rink is moved, that the land will not revert back to the Hunnewell estate.

Scott Ross wanted to congratulate Jim Silvis on his election. Scott Ross thanked the council for the 15 years he served on the council.

14. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tina Neer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm.

Submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk Mayor