

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on February 14, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

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

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Pat Ludwig, Susan Yurman, Ron Augustine

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm
2. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to accept the minutes from both the Regular Council Meeting, January 10, 2024, with corrections to the name on line #4. Tina Neer seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all voting ayes.
3. Claims were presented to the council for approval. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 20073-20097, electronic payments -99980 & Payroll Advances Ck #20100-20102. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
4. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in January. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
5. Public Comments: Ron Augustine asked the council if there was a way to address parking on the one way? When there are cars, large pickups, and other large vehicles parked on both sides of the street it leaves no room to drive down the one way from HWY 2 to the law office. Would there be a way to require one side be parallel parking & the other side be angled parking? Mayor Dahlen responded that the town has looked into this before. Pat Ludwig suggested only having parking on one side. Ron Augustine suggested painting lines for parking. Mayor Dahlen will talk to the Sherriff about options to help control the issue.
6. Sheriff's Office Report: was provided to the council.
7. New Business:
 1. Chester Garden Club- Gazebo: Susan Yurman and Pat Ludwig presented the council with building plans for the proposed gazebo at the City Park. They will ask the city crew to help remove the dead apple tree and place the gazebo there. It is a kit from Gazebo Depot and would be 12 feet by 18 feet. It is made from a no maintenance material and will be placed on a cement pad. They have a quote of \$1,000 for the cement pad, and \$14,800 for the gazebo. They are looking for volunteers to put the gazebo together. They want to work closely with the town to make sure it fits with the park layout and to make sure all the groundwork is right, specifically working to

make sure it is wheelchair assessable. It will only have one entrance, but because it is not fully enclosed it meets the fire code. Scott Decker verified that it is a kit, and it is. Jim Sivils asked about the price of a metal roof instead of shingles, this would be about \$2,000 more. Rachel Ghekiere and Jim Sivils suggested going with a metal roof for less maintenance. The building would be insured by the Town under their property insurance. The Garden Club would like a letter stating the building permit is approved so that they can apply for grants to assist in the purchase. They have received about \$2,000 in donations so far. Donations are to be made out to the Chester Garden Club. Jim Sivils made a motion to approve the Garden Club Building Permit with the final building plans for a gazebo. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

2. Approval Resolution #04-2024 CALLING FOR AN ELECTION ON THE QUESTION OF CONDUCTING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve Resolution #04-2024 CALLING FOR AN ELECTION ON THE QUESTION OF CONDUCTING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW. Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

3. Matt Wicks: Water connection at 716 East Washington Ave: This is for water to the shop located between the old Tastee Freeze and the Roadhouse Bar. It had water at one time as there is a spigot inside the building and curb stops outside the building. There is no sewer connection with the building. Matt Wicks plans to use the shop as stated in a letter to the council. “The shop will be used personally for basic vehicle maintenance and storage of vehicles and equipment during winter months. Some of the reasons I would like to have water at the address are as follows:
 - Rinsing off vehicles in front of the shop prior to pulling them in to be worked on.
 - Filling up RV water tanks
 - Filling mop bucket for cleaning
 - Wash bucket for cleaning vehicle interiors
 - Basic hand rinsing
 - Filling up hand sprayers for controlling weeds around the building
 - Filling refillable water fire extinguishers
 - Basic fire suppression in the event of a fire
 - Watering grass around the buildingThe uses listed above seem to be no different than an external water spigot at a residential address. For example, somebody washing their vehicle in the driveway of a residence, where water use does not require sewer hookup.” Jim Sivils asked about the previous owner not being able to have the water turned on. Mayor Dahlen addressed that the previous owner was planning to use it as a business not as a residential. The business was looking to use water in a different manner. Terry Tyler found two curb shut offs. The building is heated, and the spigot is inside the building. Matt Wicks will be required to pay the reconnect fee of \$1250. He knows that he will need to connect to sewer if his plans for the building change. Mayor Dahlen stated that there is no ordinance against this type of use. It was suggested to do a pressure test first before turning it on to make sure there isn't a leak as we are unsure of when it was last turned on. Terry Tyler stated that there will need to be some plumbing done by Matt Wicks before a meter can be installed. If there is a leak in the service line, it is up to the customer to fix it. Jim Silvis made the motion to approve water be turned on at 716 East Washington Ave. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

4. Temporary/Seasonal Employment Wages: The current starting wage for a lifeguard is \$10/hr. Minimum wage is now \$10.30/hr. Discussion for the need to up each position to match the increase in min. wage. Increase lifeguards to \$12.00 and keep summer help and landfill attendant at \$12.00. In the past each returning lifeguard, summer help, and landfill attendant received a \$0.50 raise. The pool manager position is starting at \$16.00/hr, discussion if this should be raised as well. If so, how much as the starting wage for an operator is currently at \$17.00/hr. Mayor Dahlen suggested tabling this item until the March meeting. Council all in favor.
8. Old Business:
 1. HB 355 Final Project: Mayor Dahlen suggested that the final project be focused on valley gutters and drainage from the priority list. Jim Sivils inquired about using the funding for filter media at the water treatment plant. This is a possibility; however, the water fund can pay for that as a maintenance item. The street fund does not have as much financial freedom to do this. Other areas discussed were putting curbing in on Monroe Ave from HWY 223 to 7th Street West, and as well as on 7th Street West from HWY 2 to the Airport. Terry Tyler suggested that doing the valley gutters would be a good project as it would finish the project that was started with the BaRSSA funds. When he was looking at the ones on 1st Street East by the law office, he thought this might help with the drainage. Mayor Dahlen stated that we should budget for gravel for the northside. The council agreed that doing the valley gutters would be the best use of the funds and the public hearing will be held before the March meeting and the application completed with valley gutters as the project.
9. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items:
 1. Jim Sivils inquired about the town helping with the gazebo. Is the Town going to proceed with the splash pad with the Amtrak money or is the splash pad out? Scott Decker suggested the town help with some of the gazebo, but not all of it. The Amtrak money can be used at the park and Mayor Dahlen recommended that the council think about an amount to put towards the gazebo and other projects for the park. The Amtrak money needs to be something the public can use and have access to.
 2. Jim Sivils stated that he heard that Dave Ghekiere is leaving the Town. He was wondering if we would need to fill the position. Mayor Dahlen confirmed that yes, Dave Ghekiere has resigned. He discussed that having four licensed operators is something that the council has looked at multiple times and at this time it is in the Town's best interest to have all four positions be licensed operators. Further discussion about the best time to hire for training purposes. Specifically looking at hiring and training prior to the busy time and sewer project going to start.
 3. Mayor Dahlen asked Terry Tyler about putting up the snow guards and gutters, Terry will order them for the main shop, and they will get them on at all locations.
 4. Jim Sivils- inquired about whose property the road is that goes under the tracks by the creek west of Remedies. Mayor Dahlen and Terry Tyler confirmed that that road is private property. There are two big potholes and Terry Tyler will look into fixing them. This road needs to be kept low so the ambulance can go under.
10. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that the SCADA system is doing well. It is not completely up and running and Dennis will be back next week to continue working on it. They are continuing to discharge from the lagoon to get it as low as they can to help with the sewer project. Lakeside construction called and are looking for dirt to use for a project. They are going to test some from the landfill and then work with Terry on trading for it.

11. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum reported that the Audit is set for February 26-29, 2024. Ashley spoke with Bob Mattson, with the Lions Club, about the skating rink property. He believes that the transaction was done before the current Lions Club was formed. Ashley also gathered the documents from the Clerk & Recorder's office and sent them to Bill Hunt for him to review.
12. Council: Scott Decker gave an update on the North Central Regional Water. The cost of buying in has increased significantly. He hasn't seen the cost/gallon yet.

There was a question about the cost of material for the filter media, Terry Tyler and Mayor Dahlen reported that it will be about \$36,000 for both trays for the material per RPA. Terry Tyler did report that this will need to be engineered, as another system is having difficulties getting their project through DEQ because they didn't, and Terry wants to make sure the town doesn't run into this. Scott Decker brought up the concern of a drought year and the need to ensure that we can clean the water well and be able to get started on this project before the busy time. Mayor Dahlen suggested that if we know it needs to be engineered, it may be in the town's best interest to get started with the process. The water fund can handle this maintenance cost. Mayor Dahlen and Terry Tyler will talk to Chris Hayes with RPA about this.

13. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tina Neer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor