

Public Hearing

The Town of Chester Council held a Public Hearing meeting on July 10, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

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

Members Absent: Tina Neer

Staff Present:

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)
Terry Tyler (Public Works Director)

Guests: Patty DeVries, Don Heimbigner & Gail Cicion (6:10)

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the Public Hearing to order at 6:01 pm
2. New Business: Budget Amendment Public Hearing Public Comment:
 - Don Heimbigner asked for clarification on the rate increase based on water usage. Mayor Dahlen clarified that the residential rate would remain as a flat base rate. That commercial rates would continue to be figured using the variable rate.
 - Patty DeVries asked how the council decided on the rate increase and what does it look like in the future as it is a large rate increase. Mayor Dahlen explained the project that is currently underway and the funding requirements requiring the town to meet a target rate that they determine.
 - Patty DeVries asked about the towns water system and what that looks like, will the town be connecting to the North Central Reginal Water Authority in the future. Mayor Dahlen stated that the decision to connect is unknown. Scott Decker stated that it is probably at least 10 years away from being in this area. Mayor Dahlen stated that the town may not be able to afford to not connect, however it is unknow at this time. She does not want the town to be part of it, Don Heimbigner agreed. Not knowing what the cost would be and who would be in charge of it is a concern. Scott Decker said that Tiber County Water is providing water to South Chester Water users through the Nor Central, and this might give an indicator of what the price would be, however prices will just continue to go up.
 - Gail Cicion came in late. She asked about the sewer rate being based on water usage. Mayor Dahlen explained that the residential rate would remain a flat base rate. The increase would be from \$32.81 to \$36.81. The variable rate was only for commercial users.
3. Sonja Dahlen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:13 pm.

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on July 10, 2024, at 6:14 pm.

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

Members Absent: Tina Neer

Staff Present:

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)
Terry Tyler (Public Works Director)

Guests: Don Heimbigner

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:14 pm
2. Sonja Dahlen asked for clarification on line #3 in the minutes. We will not be putting the skating rink property on the ballot this year. Jim Sivils asked if we have heard anything more on the city court fines, Ashley hasn't heard any updates. Scott Decker noted incomplete sentence on #12. Ashley will correct this. Sonja Dahlen made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting, June 12, 2024, with a correction listed above. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all voting ayes.
3. Claims were presented to the council for approval. Ashley Wickum informed the council that the check for MET was paid prior to the July meeting as it was received after the June meeting. There is still a balance of \$8,000 that will be paid after the system is up and running without any issues. Rachel asked about the MMIA Liability claim. For the year Town Liability, this is separate from the monthly employee benefits. Jim Sivils asked about the Garbage truck repairs/tools. Terry clarified that this was for maintenance and filters and to have filters on hand for future maintenance as well. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 20318, 20320-20353, electronic payments -99975--99973 & Payroll Advances Ck #20354-20356. Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
4. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in June. Scott Decker made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
5. Public Comments: Don Heimbigner asked if the Town was planning to do something about the curb and gutter north of his house on the west side of 1st St West. The water backs up and doesn't drain. This has been an ongoing problem. Mayor Dahlen stated that that valley gutter is on the SLIPPA project. Don Heimbigner stated it isn't the valley gutter but the gutter next to the curb. The ordinance states that it is the property owner's responsibility to fix and maintain the curbs and sidewalks. Terry and Mayor Dahlen will look at the area.
6. Sheriff's Office Report: was provided to the council.

7. New Business:

1. Approval Resolution # 01-2025 Increasing Sewer Rates: Sonja Dahlen made the motion approve Resolution #01-2025 increasing sewer rates. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
2. Approval Resolution #02-2025 RELATING TO \$594,117 SEWER SYSTEM REVENUE BONDS (DNRC WATER POLLUTION CONTROL STATE REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM), CONSISTING OF \$291,117 SUBORDINATE LIEN TAXABLE SERIES 2024A BOND AND \$303,000 SERIES 2024B BOND; AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND FIXING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS THEREOF: Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve Resolution #01-2024 RELATING TO \$594,117 SEWER SYSTEM REVENUE BONDS (DNRC WATER POLLUTION CONTROL STATE REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM), CONSISTING OF \$291,117 SUBORDINATE LIEN TAXABLE SERIES 2024A BOND AND \$303,000 SERIES 2024B BOND; AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND FIXING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS THEREOF Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
3. Approval Resolution #03-2025 Participation in Bear Paw Economic Development District: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve Resolution #03-2025 Participation in Bear Paw Economic Development District. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
4. Approval to purchase flags for American Legion flagpole and power to the pole when that is put in. The original estimate for flags was not correct. It would be closer to \$100 per flag, every 3 months. They American Legion is paying for the flagpole and to put the electricity to it. Discussion on who would be responsible for putting the flags up. Will this be the town's responsibility? Jim Sivils made the motion to table this item until next month to see if there is any progress on the project before a decision is made. Sonja seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes. Item was tabled.
5. Approval Building Permit:
 - D. Hull- Replace Back Deck and New Front Dormer-
 - D. Belman- New Fence (extension on previous building permit)
 - E. Harstad- Replace Old Deck
 - J. Kammerzell – Fence Repair
 - Carl Mattson – Concrete Pads and shed
 - CJ Maan- Concrete and Addition

Building permits were presented to the council. Elaine Harstad and David Belman's permits are not in the floodplain and are okay. John Kammerzell doesn't need a permit, as he is just repairing a section of the existing fence. Ashley Wickum spoke with DNRC floodplain and the permits in the floodplain need to be addressed, completed in full and can be submitted to the state for help in approving them. D. Hull's permit was received this month, and his project is already completed. His project doesn't appear to be a problem for the floodplain, Ashley will make sure. CJ Maan and Carl Mattson's applications will need to have more details provided and be approved by the floodplain before the applications can be approved by the council. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve E. Harstad, D. Belman, and

D. Hull's permits as presented. C. Maan and C. Mattson's permits are not approved. Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

6. Setting Date and Time for Budget Building & Preliminary Budget Meeting: Set for July 16, 2024. Budget building at 4:30, Preliminary Budget Approval Meeting at 5:45, Special meeting to approve advertising for bids for the SLIPPA grant project at 6:00.

8. Old Business: none

9. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: none

10. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that the portion of the sewer project on the north side is completed. They are now concentrating on the lagoon. He is continuing to discharge and is working with RPA to insure it doesn't affect the permitting. DEQ has been involved with the project from the beginning and the permitting wasn't discussed. Dennis with MET will be up again to work on a couple more items on the SCADA system, but it is working well. Jim Sivils asked Terry if he had seen the roads on the north side and if he is going to work on them after the construction. Terry stated that the contractor just finished, and they will put the gravel back in the alley, and the town will take care of the main road. Scott Decker asked if the filter media test was completed. Terry updated the council that it was, and the sample was sent in. Once the results are sent back, they will be forwarded on to RPA for help with what the next steps need to be.

11. Clerk update: none

12. Council: Scott Decker attended a Rural Water webinar where they were discussing standard operating procedures for when routine checks are done by DEQ. This is something that would be good to have.

Jim Sivils wanted to know why nothing was getting done and stated that he doesn't see the guys out working. He wanted to know why the curb at the school wasn't done and when it was going to be completed, as well as the pave patching and flushing hydrants. Terry stated that they will be completed. Jim Sivils also wanted to know why the stump at the park took so long to remove. Terry explained that there were other tasks that came up, and then the weather didn't help with the rain. It has been removed now. Terry responded that he is and will continue to work on these things.

13. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor