Public Hearing

The Town of Chester Council held a Public Hearing meeting on August 13, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

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

Members Absent: Scott Decker, Garrett Graff

Staff Present: Dave Ghekiere (Public Works Director)

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Chris Hayes- RPA Sam J. Mandel- New Miami Colony Peter J. Wipf- Twin Hills Colony David J. Hofer – Midway Colony Joseph J. Mandel – New Miami Colony Joseph A. Wery- New Miami Colony

Pledge of Allegiance

- 1. Mayor James Dahlen called the Public Hearing for FY 2024-2025 Budget Amendment to order at 6:0 pm
- 2. New Business: Budget Amendment- Public Hearing Public Comment: None
- 3. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:02 pm.

Public Hearing

The Town of Chester Council held a Public Hearing meeting on August 13, 2025, at 6:03 pm.

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

Members Absent: Scott Decker, Garrett Graff

Staff Present: Dave Ghekiere (Public Works Director)
Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Chris Hayes- RPA

Sam J. Mandel- New Miami Colony

Peter J. Wipf- Twin Hills Colony

David J. Hofer – Midway Colony

Joseph J. Mandel – New Miami Colony

Joseph A. Wery- New Miami Colony

- 1. Mayor James Dahlen called the Public Hearing for FY 2025-2026 Budget to order at 6:03 pm
- 2. New Business: FY26 Budget Public Hearing: Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Wickum reviewed the FY26 Budget document.
- 3. Public Comment: None
- 4. Tina Neer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:07 pm.

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on August 13, 2025, at 6:08 pm.

Members Present: Mayor James Dahlen Council Persons, Sonja Dahlen, Rachel Ghekiere, Tina

Neer, Jim Sivils

Members Absent: Scott Decker, Garrett Graff

Staff Present: Dave Ghekiere (PWD)

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Chris Hayes- RPA
Sam J. Mandel- New Miami Colony
Peter J. Wipf- Twin Hills Colony
David J. Hofer – Midway Colony
Joseph J. Mandel – New Miami Colony
Joseph A. Wery- New Miami Colony

- 1. Mayor James Dahlen called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm
- 2. Mayor Dahlen moved agenda item 1 to the beginning of meeting.
 - Discussion- Liberty Colony: Waterline: Sam Mandel with New Miami Colony began the discussion. The Colony is following up on a discussion from about 4 years ago regarding the Town of Chester supplying water to the new Liberty Colony. It has now been decided that the location will be east of Chester on Powerline Road, about 6 miles, and then north on Beulow Road. The estimated water per day is 50,000 gallons, with a possibility for more if necessary. The Colony is planning to have chickens and hogs as well as 75-80 people. There will be approximately 100,000 gallons of storage set up at the Colony. There was discussion about the Town's ability to supply the requested amount of water with the current system. Mayor Dahlen updated everyone that the Town is currently not sure about what will happen with the North Central Reginal Water Authority. There is no definite answer to a buy in costs for the Town, the last amount given to the Town was 3.5 million with 600,000 gallons of water, this increased from \$900,000. Other towns do not have to pay for water they have requested but only what is being used, Ashley Wickum reported that in the last meeting the Authority addressed this, and it may change in the future and towns would be required to pay for all requested water. The Town will be meeting with the North Central Reginal Water Authority soon to discuss this further. PWD Dave Ghekiere stated that right now the town is making 300,000-350,000/ day and it is taking a long time to fill the towers. Discussion on the line size leaving town and the number of buildings and dwellings that will be at the Colony. The line would belong to the Colony from the point it leaves the town. The Colony would have to have it engineered and DEQ would need to be involved. There is the possibility that an additional chlorination system and booster would be needed, and this would be at the Colony's expense. The Colony understands all of this and has licensed water operators. Chris Hayes with RPA has a water model that can be used to help work out the specifics for if the Town can supply water to the Colony. If the Town takes on the Colony as a customor then the Town will want to

make sure they are requesting the correct amount of water from the North Central Reginal Water Authority if they join. The Colony members left the meeting at 6:45. Discussion with Chris Hayes regarding setting up a EDU system for scenario. He can help the town develop it if the Town moves forward. Chris Hayes left the meeting at 7:15.

- 3. Tina Neer made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting, July 9, 2025, Special Preliminary Budget Building, July 24, 2025, and Special Preliminary Budget Approval Meeting, July 24, 2025. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all voting ayes.
- 4. Claims were presented to the council for approval. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 21067-21095, electronic payment -99942-99943 & Payroll Advances Ck #21096. Tina Neer seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
- 5. The council reviewed the additional adjustments and journal entries made in June and those made in July. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Tina Neer seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
- 6. Public Comments: No public comment.
- 7. Sheriff's Office Report: will be provided to the council
- 8. New Business:
 - Approval- Resolution#1-2026 FY 24-25 Budget Amendment: Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve Resolution#1-2026 FY 24-25 Budget Amendment as presented. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Resolution #2-2026 Fixing Mills FY 2025-2026: Tina Neer made the motion to approve Resolution #2-2026 Fixing Mills FY 2025-2026. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Resolution #3-2026 Adopt FY 2025-2026 Final Budget: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve Resolution #3-2026 Adopt FY 2025-2026 Final Budget as presented. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Assessment Letters to Department of Revenue: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the Assessment Letters to the Department of Revenue. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Letter adding delinquent water/sewer/garbage and mowing fees to taxes: Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve the Letter adding delinquent water/sewer/garbage and mowing fees to taxes. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Resolution #4-2026 Canceling Election: Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve Resolution #4-2026 Canceling the Election. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval- Engagement for year-end services: Craig Shepherd: Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the agreement with Craig Shepherd for assistance with the year-end services. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
 - Approval Resolution #5-2026 Resolution of Participation in the Bear Paw Economic Development District for FY 2025-2026: Tina Neer made the motion to approve Resolution #5-2026 Resolution of Participation in the Bear Paw Economic Development District for FY 2025-2026. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

- Approval for Records Destruction Document RM88: Ashley Wickum presented the
 council with Document RM88 to destroy old claims and bank statements from 20042015. Records will be shredded. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the Records
 Destruction Document RM88 as presented. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion.
 Motion passed with all voting ayes.
- Approval of Building Permits:

Clerk

- Kirk & Michelle Parge- 338 West Jefferson Ave- Install fence and replace siding.
- Dan & Sharlys Davis- 511 Berthelote Street- 12x13 covered patio.
- Pete Habel- 34 West Jefferson Ave- Prebuilt metal container.
- Ron Croy- 130 1st Street West- Replace addition and build storage shed. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the building permits as presented. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
- 9. Old Business:
- 10. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: Mayor Dahlen updated the council that there will be a meeting set up with the North Central Montana Regional Water Authority soon.
- 11. PWD update: Dave Ghekiere, PWD, updated the council that they have flushed the fire hydrants, and that the sprinklers are completed at the park. They installed a new water main valve in the street on Jefferson by the Prairie Homes Apartments. They will have more information tomorrow about the leak on Jefferson. The northside sewer main repair is completed and the lift stations were cleaned at the same time. They are still getting rags in the Ford lift station and might have to camera the line next time.
- 12. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum updated the council that the grant funds for the SLIPA project have been received. The pool received grant funds in the amount of \$25,000 that Lily Wickum applied for with the Treacy Foundation. This means that the new boiler and hot water heater can be purchased for the pool. The pool is closing today; however, Lily will be opening it for the football team Friday morning for a conditioning session. Ashley updated the council that the Liberty County DES has resigned but has given her information on how to get training for the Hyper Reach program and she will begin to work on this. She is also working on entering the state budget document and completing the annual financial report.
- 13. Council: Jim Sivils brought up a concern about the alley behind Adams Ave by the creek. The north part is not draining well. He has talked to NW Energy, and the utility services are too close to the surface to run a blade through this alley. Dave Ghekiere confirmed this as well. He has tried to go through this alley with the tractor to keep it in working condition.

14. Rachel Ghekiere made a r	notion to adjourn the meeting. Tina N	leer seconded the motion. The
meeting was adjourned at	7:51 pm.	
~		
Submitted by	Approved by	

Mayor