

Special Meeting-

The Town of Chester Council held a Special Council Meeting on October 6, 2026, at 5:15 pm.

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

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Dave Ghekiere (PWD)
Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Attorney Bill Hunt
Engineer Chris Hayes, Robert Peccia and Associates

1. Mayor Dahlen called the special meeting to order at 5:17 pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Role Call
4. Reminder Meeting Is Audio Recorded
5. Public Comment: None
6. New Business:
 - Review and Discussion of Water and Sewer Policies, User Classifications, and Rate Structures: Meeting discussion was led by Chris Hayes. Chris began by discussing the Town's current water rate structure and use of a modified EDU system. Most communities do not use a modified system.
 - Discussed the key components of the water policy and connection fees, recommending an additional inspection fee and that the homeowner/business installing the new connection be responsible for all cost associated with the installation. Garrett Graff likes this as it will simplify the process.
 - Additional discussion included that the water policy is currently included as part of the building permit and helps the contractor follow all codes. The current connection fee is \$1250, this needs to be increased.
 - The different user types and requirements for the Colony billing were discussed, including using the current EDU system or the EDU per dwelling unit. Chris Hayes stated that most are by EDU dwelling unit, and Jim Sivils believes the Town needs to do this. Bill Hunt believes a lot of Towns are billing by single dwelling, but he is not as familiar with the EDU system. Chris Hayes believes both types of billing can be justifiable.
 - Water restrictions and legal responsibilities if there was a water restriction were discussed and the council reviewed the current water conservation plan. The Town could develop an inter-local agreement/water purchase agreement with the Colony outlining who is responsible for what and all the details.
 - More in-depth discussion of the EDU multiplier, charging single units or per dwelling unit and the benefits for this.
 - The Council discussed a Sewer policy. Chris Hayes presented information from other communities that utilize an EDU system for the sewer. Dave Ghekiere will call the public works directors from Havre and Shelby and gather information about their billing. Hill County Water District bills by dwelling unit. Bill Hunt believes that Shelby currently bills like the Town does, one base rate per unit off of line size.
 - Garrett Graff asked about nominated capacity and if there was any information on what the Town will be billed for, the amount requested or the amount used, what will happen if we go over. We need to know this, so we know how much to request.

- Chris Hayes went over having a flow restrictor and a shut off valve for the connection going to the Colony. Additional information can be included in the agreement regarding a probationary period or a requirement that only a certain number of gallons (like 20,000 gallons per day) would only be allowed until the Town is connected to North Central.
 - The council will continue to review these items, and Ashley will work the Chris Hayes and Bill Hunt to start making these changes in the policy. It was noted that these changes would be considered a rate change, and public notice and public hearings would have to be held.
 - Bill Hunt gave a brief update on North Central. The line from Chester to Shelby may be in the works and this will be beneficial to Chester. North Central's next meeting will be held at the water treatment plant at Tiber, and a tour will be given.
7. Rachel Ghekiere made a motion to adjourn the special meeting. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. The special meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor