



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
SELECTBOARD

Blandford Town Hall  
1 Russell Stage Road Suite 1  
Blandford, MA 01008

**TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
JOINT MEETING WITH TOWN  
OF CHESTER  
July 23, 2018**

**OPEN SESSION 5:00 pm**

**C. Letendre, Chairman; E. McVey, Clerk; W. Levakis, Member; Chester Board of Selectmen and J. Garcia, Pioneer Valley Planning in attendance.**

**Meeting called to order at 5:04 pm Meeting is recorded.**

**Cara Letendre opened the meeting with background information about our first meeting with the Chester Selectboard to talk about shared issues and ideas. This meeting was brought about by the Hilltown Collaborative. We have a unique opportunity to share as many services as we can in order to be more productive and efficient.**

**1. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

**None**

**3. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Regionalization of Police Department**

C. Letendre noted that a decision about this is not going to be made immediately. She notes that this is a huge decision which needs a great deal of research and cooperation between the towns. There will be a large-scale public meeting where we will look at the collected data and collected input from the residents to see what will be the best financial and safety decisions we can make going forward. The state is looking for opportunities for some of these small towns to utilize shared services and the potential financial opportunities available.

Joshua Garcia of PVPC spoke of the availability of District Local Technical Assistance. This is money that the legislature supports and governs and makes available to towns to provide technical assistance to the communities in the areas of planning ahead for growth and also shared services and regionalization projects from feasibility studies to technical support for implementation. The funding is there and we have 5 months to do it. Our next step should be a letter of request to the director of PVPC from both towns. Both Chester Board of Selectmen and Blandford Board of Selectment agreed to take care of this. Mr. Garcia recommended the towns put a committee together to pursue a consultant including selectboard members, community members and members of the finance committee. Both boards agreed that most small towns cannot sustain themselves financially going forward. This idea of exploring shared services is the wave of the future. We have to work together in order to be stronger.

**b. Appointment of Interim Chief**

Roberta Sarnacki was appointed for a 3-month term so when that is up we will post the position for acting chief for the Town of Blandford and we will make a decision at that time.

B. Levakis recommended we establish a policy that would send town residents who are interested to the police academy at no cost to the resident and ask that they stay with the town’s police department for a set period of time. Chester BOS stated they have done this a couple times in the past and it is a great way to encourage local people to join the police department and we could also consider sharing the cost.

**c. Town Administrator**

The Chester Board of Selectmen talked about the fact that they have posted an ad looking for a town administrator and there was discussion about sharing a part-time assistant town administrator. C. Letendre mentioned that our town administrator used to be part time but this was not enough for the town so the position is now full time. The boards discussed the various areas where there could be the possibility of sharing services between the towns.

**d. Health Insurance**

The Chester Board of Selectmen mentioned the rising cost of health insurance and the need to look at investigating more affordable insurance for the town.

**4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS**

None

**5. NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**6. OTHER BUSINESS, IF ANY:**

None

Meeting Adjourned at 6:15 pm

Submitted by: Joann Martin  
Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

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Cara Letendre, Chairman

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Eric McVey, Clerk

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William Levakis, Member