Town of Chichester
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2026 – 6:01 p.m.
Chichester Grange, 54 Main Street

Select Board Members Present: Jeremy Letendre, Chairman; Carrianne Wood, Selectman
Absent: Matthew Stolnis, Selectman

Voting Members Present: Carrianne and Jeremy
The posted agenda included Accounts Payable and the signature folder, Old Home Day 2027, policy review/adoption, IT support services, Budget Committee goals, tax-map updates, ADP/payroll implementation, Community Cupboard discussion, and ongoing business.

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1. Call to Order

Chairman **Jeremy Letendre** called the September 15, 2026 Board of Selectmen meeting to order at approximately **6:01 p.m.**, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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2. General Business

Accounts Payable and Payroll Manifest

The Board reviewed the Accounts Payable and Payroll Manifest. Discussion included the unusually large total, which was primarily attributable to the Town's ongoing transition of funds to a new bank. Approximately **$400,000** of the manifest represented a transfer to the new bank rather than ordinary municipal expenditures.

The Board also briefly discussed recent highway paving. Advanced was identified as the paving contractor after a competitive bidding process; another bid had not accurately reflected the requested scope and was more expensive. Work had occurred on Carpenter Road, Swiggey Brook Road and an approximately 600-foot section of Hilliard Road near the bridge. Additional corrective work and top coating are anticipated after the pavement has gone through a winter season.

Motion

A motion was made and seconded to approve the **Accounts Payable and Payroll Manifest for September 15–17, 2026 in the amount of $488,023.86**.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Carrianne – Aye**
- **Jeremy – Aye**
- **Matt – Absent**

Motion passed, 2-0.

Signature Folder – New Ambulance Registration

The Board reviewed documentation authorizing Acting Fire Chief **Ed Millett** to act on behalf of the Town for purposes of registering the new ambulance with the Division of Motor Vehicles.
The ambulance had arrived and was described as brand new and looking good.

Motion

A motion was made and seconded to **authorize Ed Millett to act on behalf of the Town of Chichester with the Division of Motor Vehicles for purposes of registering the new ambulance**.
Roll Call Vote:

- **Carrianne – Aye**
- **Jeremy – Aye**
- **Matt – Absent**

Motion passed, 2-0.

Municipal Audit / DRA Filings

The Board discussed outstanding municipal financial reporting.

The **2024 audit had been completed**, and a draft had been uploaded to the State portal. The Board must review, sign and re-upload the appropriate documentation acknowledging acceptance. Because the necessary document was not immediately available in the meeting folder, the matter was deferred to the following week.

Later in the meeting, the Board specifically discussed the **MS-535 Financial Report of the Budget**. Rather than immediately accepting it, the members agreed it should be reviewed line-by-line for accuracy. A PDF was to be uploaded to the Board's cloud storage for review by all three Select Board members, with the matter to return to the agenda the following week.

The **MS-1** was also awaiting one additional piece of information from the utility company. The Selectmen's Office has begun entering DRA and other municipal reporting deadlines into an internal calendar to provide advance reminders and improve timely filing.

No vote taken.

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3. Old Home Day 2027 – Justine Hayward

Justine Hayward appeared before the Board to discuss organization of **Old Home Day 2027**.

Hayward presented draft bylaws/guidelines for an Old Home Day Committee. She explained that during the years she previously organized the event, the lack of formal rules, procedures and clearly defined authority made the event unnecessarily difficult to administer.

She recommended that, if Old Home Day is to operate as a Town-funded and Town-sanctioned committee, it should have a structure similar to other municipal committees, including clear expectations regarding:

- committee authority and responsibilities;
- membership and organization;
- expenditure of Town-appropriated funds;
- vendors and contracts;
- volunteers;
- communication;
- recordkeeping; and
- responsibility for various aspects of the event.

Hayward expressed an interest in serving as **Chair of Old Home Day 2027**, provided the committee has clearer rules and organizational support. She also reported that former committee member **Carol Fricke** had expressed interest in assisting and could provide historical knowledge regarding the event.

Earlier Planning and Budget Process

The Board agreed that planning should begin significantly earlier, potentially during the winter and before Town Meeting. Early planning would allow the committee to establish larger goals and determine whether additional funding should be requested rather than attempting to operate within a predetermined amount supplemented by donations.

The Board also acknowledged that prior organizers had sometimes used **personal funds** to pay event expenses and then waited for reimbursement. The members agreed that better procedures are needed for access to appropriated Old Home Day funds.

Town Website / Communications

Hayward requested a dedicated **Old Home Day landing page on the Town website** to provide accurate information and a central point of contact for:

- committee participation;
- volunteers;
- vendors;
- event information; and
- public communications.

The Board indicated that creating a dedicated landing page should now be relatively straightforward and asked Hayward to consider the desired layout and information structure so Town staff could assist.

Board Direction

Because the draft committee guidelines had only recently been received, the Board **did not adopt them at this meeting**. Jeremy and Carrianne will review the document, work through potential revisions and return the matter to a future agenda.

No vote taken.

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4. 300th Anniversary – Initial Public Discussion

During the Old Home Day discussion, resident **Donna** asked whether people who previously signed up to participate in the Town's **300th Anniversary Committee** would be contacted.

The Board clarified that no current outreach had yet occurred and distinguished the proposed Old Home Day Committee guidelines from the separate 300th Anniversary planning effort.

The subject returned near the end of the meeting. Former Selectman **Frank** recalled that residents had previously signed up for a 300th Anniversary committee and that a budget line had been established, but he had believed a committee was already meeting after he left the Board.

Current Board discussion indicated that **no active formal committee was known to be meeting**.
Board Direction

The Board established the following initial steps:

1. Locate the prior list of residents who expressed interest.
2. Determine who remains interested.
3. Confirm appropriate appointment/signature documentation for committee members.
4. Once membership is established, allow the committee to hold an organizational meeting, select a chair and point of contact, and formally begin planning.

The Board noted that the 300th Anniversary Committee would likely be a limited-duration committee rather than one requiring staggered multi-year terms.

No formal vote taken.

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5. Community Cupboard / Food Pantry

Presentation by Frank

Frank, serving as the Town's Welfare Manager, provided an extensive presentation regarding the **Chichester Community Cupboard/Food Pantry**.

He provided background on the pantry and explained that when he became Welfare Manager, he learned that the pantry was expected to close because usage at Town Hall had dropped to approximately one or two clients per month.

Rather than close it, volunteers reorganized the pantry and moved operations from Town Hall to space provided at the Methodist Church. The church provides space but does not operate the pantry, and the pantry remains open to everyone.

The pantry currently attempts to operate **Thursday, Friday and Saturday**, depending upon volunteer availability.

Frank reported that use has grown dramatically, with approximately **30–40 pantry visits per month**, representing households that may include multiple individuals.

Donation Fund

Frank reported that donations had grown from approximately **$13,000–$14,000 to nearly $26,000**. He expressed concern about the accounting and operational structure of those donated funds. He emphasized that his comments concerning potential accounting issues represented his own research and understanding and recommended that any proposed changes be reviewed with the Treasurer, auditors and/or NH Municipal Association before implementation.

Current Purchasing Problem

The pantry receives certain State and federal food supplies but supplements those supplies with fresh and specialized items such as milk, eggs, bread and foods needed by residents with dietary restrictions. Currently, Frank or another volunteer may personally spend approximately **$100–$200 at a time**, submit receipts and then wait for reimbursement through the Town's manifest process. Frank said this commonly occurs approximately twice per month and described the arrangement as cumbersome and inappropriate for volunteers.

The system also makes responding quickly to emergencies difficult.

Options Presented

Frank presented several possible structures for consideration:

- a Town-issued debit/purchasing card with appropriate spending limits, authorized users, receipts and internal controls;
- an imprest/petty-cash fund that would be replenished after receipts are submitted;
- creation of an independent **501(c)(3) nonprofit** to operate the pantry;
- establishment of an expendable trust fund;
- transferring responsibility to an existing nonprofit organization; or
- continuing the current Town-administered reimbursement system.

He favored finding a more practical immediate solution while exploring whether an independent nonprofit could provide a sustainable long-term structure.

Frank emphasized that an independent nonprofit would require its own organizational structure and legal process and that transfer of existing municipal funds would require appropriate Town authorization. He also noted that an independent nonprofit could potentially increase access to grants and other charitable funding opportunities.

Board Discussion and Direction

Carrianne indicated support for exploring a **debit card as an immediate solution**, followed by consideration of a separate nonprofit structure for longer-term sustainability.

Jeremy agreed that an immediate mechanism should be developed so volunteers are not required to finance pantry operations personally, but wanted the Treasurer to review the available options and appropriate controls first.

The Board also emphasized the importance of continuity so the pantry can function regardless of who serves as manager in the future.

Next Steps

The Board's direction was to:

- continue discussions with Treasurer Robin regarding an immediate purchasing mechanism;
- review appropriate internal controls;
- have Frank continue discussions with potential nonprofit board members;
- investigate a possible 501(c)(3) structure; and
- return the matter for additional discussion, potentially within a couple of weeks.

No final structure was adopted and no expenditure was authorized at this meeting.

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6. Policy Review and Adoption

Criminal Charges/Arrest and Annual Criminal History Policies

The Board reviewed two related personnel policies developed following previous personnel issues:

1. a **Criminal Charges/Arrest and Annual Criminal History Certification Policy**; and
2. an **Annual Criminal History Disclosure**.

The policies require employees to disclose applicable criminal charges/arrests and periodically reaffirm their disclosure status.

The Board emphasized that disclosure **does not automatically result in termination or disqualification from employment**. Circumstances would be considered in relation to an employee's position and responsibilities.

The proposed policies had been forwarded to legal counsel for review. Counsel's principal implementation concern was that employees clearly understand that a positive disclosure does not automatically mean loss of employment or disqualification from a position. The resulting records are to be maintained confidentially.

The Board also discussed developing a more systematic policy-management process, including policy numbers, revision tracking and periodic review dates.

Motion

A motion was made and seconded to **adopt the Criminal Charges/Arrest and Annual Criminal History Certification Policy in conjunction with the Annual Criminal History Disclosure**.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Carrianne – Aye**
- **Jeremy – Aye**
- **Matt – Absent**

Motion passed, 2-0.

The Board directed that implementation include an appropriate rollout and explanation to employees and that disclosure information remain confidential.

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7. IT Support Services – Block 5

The Board revisited its recent IT service-provider decision.

Jeremy explained that the Board had previously evaluated competing IT providers in an effort to improve services and pricing. Following implementation efforts, however, the Board learned that changing providers created operational conflicts and potential impacts that had not been fully understood when the original decision was made.

Particular concern involved specialized departmental requirements. The Board noted that approximately **60% of the Town's IT costs relate to one department**, and that certain departments, particularly public safety, have significant specialized technology, security and support requirements.

The Board acknowledged that department heads had not been given adequate opportunity to evaluate and become comfortable with the proposed transition.

Accordingly, the Board determined that continuity presently required retaining **Block 5**, while continuing to review and competitively evaluate IT services in the future.

An initial motion was withdrawn so that the actual contract amount could be included.

Motion

A motion was made and seconded to **accept the Block 5 contract in the amount of $53,670 for the year**.

The Board stated that the amount includes the applicable maintenance/support services and that approximately $30,000 of the total relates to one department with significant support needs.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Carrianne – Aye**
- **Jeremy – Aye**

- **Matt – Absent**

Motion passed, 2-0.

The Board will continue to review pricing and available alternatives in future contract cycles.

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8. Updating Tax Maps / Avatar

The Board discussed updating the Town's tax maps through **Avatar**.

Staff had initially believed updating the maps could cost approximately $10,000. After discussing the matter directly with Avatar, it was clarified that the printed map book itself would cost approximately **$180**, with other costs depending upon the service agreement selected.
The maps are updated annually as of **April 1**. The Board also noted that the Town's next revaluation is expected in 2028, but the annual map update is separate from that process.

Because the contract/service options had only just been presented, Jeremy requested time to review them.

Decision: Return the matter to the **September 22 meeting** for further consideration.

No vote taken and no contract selected.

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9. Budget Committee Goals

The Board discussed goals requested by the Budget Committee following its recent organizational/kickoff meeting.

The Budget Committee had already received requested budget-versus-actual information, historical information and general-ledger materials. Its remaining request to the Select Board was for overall budgeting goals.

Jeremy's Proposed Goals

Jeremy identified three broad goals:

- identify opportunities to **offset unavoidable increases** elsewhere in operating budgets;
- identify opportunities to **consolidate services and shared purchasing**, including telecommunications, energy/propane and pest-management contracts; and
- **challenge the status quo** rather than automatically carrying forward prior-year spending simply because it has historically been budgeted.

Carrianne's Proposed Goals

Carrianne proposed:

- reviewing major capital assets and reserve funds to determine anticipated replacement dates and costs;

- calculating appropriate annual contributions so major expenses are funded gradually rather than creating sudden large funding requests;
- consolidating contracted services where appropriate; and
- identifying major infrastructure, equipment, facility and technology investments that must be addressed during the upcoming fiscal year rather than deferred.

Capital Improvement Program Connection

The Board noted substantial overlap between these goals and the reactivated **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**.

The CIP has begun gathering information from department heads regarding major projects, equipment and capital needs. Highway vehicle information has already been reviewed for expected life span, replacement costs and opportunities to extend service life through maintenance.
The Board specifically noted the importance of long-range planning for major Fire Department apparatus and other expensive municipal equipment so several major replacements do not unexpectedly fall within the same short period.

Board Direction: Consolidate the members' goals and communicate them to the Budget Committee.

No formal vote taken.

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10. ADP Payroll Implementation

The Board provided an update on the Town's transition to **ADP** for payroll administration.

A Fire Department implementation meeting was being planned for Thursday at approximately **2:00 p.m.**, subject to participant availability.

The Board explained that implementation is intentionally gradual. The Selectmen's Office is working through the system first before individual departments are brought into the process. The implementation date can be delayed as necessary until departments are comfortable with the system.

The transition is intended to replace numerous manual processes and improve accuracy. Functions discussed included:

- payroll processing;
- employee time-off balances;
- leave requests;
- scheduling/time-management functions; and
- employee access to individual payroll information.

The Board reported that considerable staff training had already occurred. The mobile clock-in/clock-out function was being deferred because of concerns regarding appropriate oversight.

The Board estimated that automation could save approximately **15 hours of office work** while improving accuracy and management oversight.

Status: Onboarding remains in progress. No new vote was required.

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11. Highway and Cemetery Work Updates

Highway Work

The Board reported significant road work occurring during the week and expressed appreciation that the contractor had been able to accommodate the Town late in the construction season.

The Board emphasized that the Town had used a competitive bidding process and that the selected contractor remained flexible while the Town completed that process.

Cemetery Tree Work

Cemetery tree work was underway during the week of **September 15–17**, consistent with the posted agenda.
Accurate Tree Service was performing the work. The Board reported that the contractor was located through a State bidding resource and that the competitive process resulted in approximately **$40,000 in savings** compared with other options.

The contractor was addressing hazardous trees previously identified through work by the Cemetery Trustees and had its own crane, operators and flagging capabilities.

The Board said the work was being funded through the cemetery-related warrant article approved at the prior Town Meeting, described during discussion as approximately **$35,000 and change**.

No additional expenditure was authorized during this meeting.

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12. Other / Follow-Up Matter

The signature folder contained a matter concerning follow-up on a **home occupation**. Because there was no immediate urgency and discussion could involve how the Board wished to proceed, Jeremy and Carrianne agreed it would be more appropriate to address the matter with the **full three-member Board present**.

Decision: Deferred until a full Board is available.

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13. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the September 15, 2026 Board of Selectmen meeting at **7:38 p.m.**

Because only **Carrianne and Jeremy** were voting members present, the transcript's additional audible "aye" should not be recorded as a third Board vote.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Carrianne – Aye**

- **Jeremy – Aye**
- **Matt – Absent**

Motion passed, 2-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Summary of Motions, Decisions & Follow-Up

Matter	Action
AP/Payroll Manifest	**$488,023.86 approved, 2-0**
Ambulance Registration	Ed Millett authorized to register ambulance for Town; **2-0**
2024 Audit / MS-535	Board to review before acceptance; return next week
MS-1	Awaiting utility information
Old Home Day 2027	Draft committee guidelines received; Board to review; Justine interested in chairing
300th Anniversary	Locate prior sign-up list, formalize membership and organize kickoff
Community Cupboard	Treasurer to review immediate purchasing mechanism; longer-term nonprofit option to be explored
Criminal History Policies	**Adopted, 2-0**
IT Services – Block 5	**$53,670 annual contract approved, 2-0**
Tax Maps / Avatar	Options to be reviewed; return Sept. 22; no expenditure approved
Budget Committee	Carrianne/Jeremy goals to be consolidated and communicated to committee
ADP Payroll	Department onboarding continuing; rollout intentionally gradual
Cemetery Tree Work	Underway Sept. 15–17; no new expenditure
Home Occupation Follow-Up	Deferred for full Board
Adjournment	**7:38 p.m., 2-0**