

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL JOINT BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BOARD OF FINANCE
Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Community Meeting Room

CALL TO ORDER

CALL TO ORDER

Virginia Carmany, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. In attendance included: Jon Joslow, Rick Nygard, Virginia Carmany, First Selectwoman Gister, Selectman Grzybowski, Selectwoman Janecek, Liz Milardo, First Selectwoman Haddam, Chief Brainard, Kim Brainard, and Scott Martinson, Acting Director of Health, CRAHD and one audience member.

HEALTH DISTRICT REPORT

Lauren Gister reported that Lee Vito, Sanitarian/Health Director retired on January 1st but is willing to extend his services temporarily. Dr. Kotrady has also retired but will be available until July 1, 2018.

Currently, Chester does not meet the standards established in a 1998 law that requires all towns to have a Health Department working at least 35 hours per week and various other parameters of that law including a Health Education program. If Chester joins a Health District, all of the above criteria can be met. Any decision to join a Health District must be approved via a Town Meeting (note that joining the Health District was soundly defeated at a Town Meeting vote approximately 10 years ago).

Lauren continued that this is an opportunity for the Town to review options for Health Department services including joining the Health District, or continuing with a town health department. Currently Chester's Health Department costs are approximately \$30,000 per year and between \$6,000 and \$9,000 in revenue is received via health department fees. The Health District charges a per capita fee and would cost approximately \$60,000 per year. To adequately staff an in-house Health Department would cost substantially more than currently budgeted.

The BOS/BOS discussed services of the Health District vs. a Town Health Department and the possibility of sharing staff with a neighboring town. It was reported that if Chester joined the Health District, permit fees would go to the District not the Town. Services that would be provided by the District would include: health education (required by state statute and currently not provided), restaurant inspections, and sanitarian inspections. Chester's Health Department does currently provide restaurant inspections and sanitarian inspections. It was reported that the local health departments typically provide a better response time to residents.

Both Lee Vito and Dr. Kotrady recommend joining the health district (CRAHD).

Lauren reported that the BOS has done extensive research on the pros/cons of joining a Health District and has been impressed with the information provided by the Health District. Said documentation done by the BOS was distributed to BOF members, including a proposed MOU with the Health District. The MOU will include access to a full-time Registered Sanitarian in the area servicing Deep River, Chester and Haddam and land use records will remain on site. There would be no contract with CRAHD;

however, per state statute, the town may leave the District after one year. As previously reported, the decision to join a Health District must to a Town Meeting for approval.

Liz Milardo, First Selectwoman Haddam provided a history of Haddam's experience with Health Districts. Haddam recently transitioned from the Chattam Health District to CRAHD. To date, Haddam has been extremely pleased with the services provided by CRAHD.

Scott Martinson, Acting Director of Health, CRAHD, was present at the meeting and provided extensive information on the District to BOF/BOS members including CRAHD's response in Deep River during a contaminated well incident.

Jon Joslow requested a copy of CRAHD's recent audit.

James Grzybowski reported that he would be supportive of Chester joining CRAHD.

The Boards thanked Ms. Milardo and Mr. Martinson for their time this evening.

FIRST REVIEW OF DRAFT BUDGET REVENUE, EXPENDITURES AND CAPITAL

The BOS/BOF reviewed the proposed Operating Budget through the Public Works Department. Several questions were raised and will be researched.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk