

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOF MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, April 18, 2019
Community Meeting Room
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carmany called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In attendance included: Chairman Carmany, Richard Strauss (not seated), Rick Nygard, Jon Joslow, Charlie Park, Jennifer Rannestad, Mike Joplin (seated for Dave Cohen), Peter Evankow, Finance Manager, Selectman Grzybowski, and two members of the Audience.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlie Park made a motion to approve the minutes from the 3/21/19 BOF meeting. Jon Joslow seconded the motion. The motion passed with Rick Nygard abstaining from the vote.

Note: Rick Nygard was not present at the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration of a Town-wide Postcard Regarding Tax Increase

The BOF had an extensive discussion regarding the pros/cons of forwarding a postcard to Chester residents regarding the proposed Town, CES and Region 4 budgets.

The BOF discussed the importance of the public's involvement in the budget process and strongly encouraged residents to attend Public Hearings. Items of discussion included:

- Region 4 proposed increase of 2.5% - the Town of Chester's share of the 2.5% increase represents \$424,685.00.
- Additional/continual increases to the education budget are unsustainable.
- BOF members encouraged the residents of Chester to be well informed of all budgetary matters and the implications that will result as education budgets continue the trend of yearly increases even as enrollments decrease.
- The BOF's continued disappointment with the information and transparency provided by Region 4 was discussed.
 - The letter sent from the BOF to Region in March 2018 did result in the receipt of projections and the formation of a Region 4 Capital Plan.
 - The Town's Auditor will review the Cafeteria Reports.
- The Region 4 referendum is scheduled May 7, prior to the Town of Chester's Public Hearing on the Budget, May 8.
 - It was suggested that in future years, the Town should schedule their Public Hearing on the Town's Budget prior to the Region 4 Referendum.
 - It was suggested that Chester meet with neighboring Town's BOF to discuss the Region 4 budget early in the budget process next year.

Jamie Grzybowski reported that First Selectwoman Gister has been interviewed by the Valley Courier reporting that the proposed budget includes: Town/Capital, \$70,364.73 (9.77%), Region 4, \$424,685.00 (58.99%) and CES, \$224,849.27 (31.23%).

Virginia will draft a postcard to be forwarded to Chester residents. The postcard will be informational in nature and include meeting dates, time, locations as well as pertinent budget data and related information. The postcard will encourage residents to attend the Public Hearing on the budget scheduled for May 8, 2019.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Susan Wright commented that others throughout Town support the BOF in their efforts. She too will forward information regarding the budget. She continued that most residents do not know that the Town/BOF has no control over the Supervision District budget and little control over the Region 4 budget. She expressed frustration that as an audience member at BOE meetings, “they don’t listen to you”.

Consideration of Property that has become available

Virginia reported that there are no funds available to purchase property.

REPORTS

Monthly Financials

Monthly Financials were included in the BOF packet. Of interest, the Tax Collection rate is 100%. The OF had no additional comments on the Monthly Financial reports.

First Selectwoman’s Report

Jamie Grzybowski, in Lauren’s absence, reported that letters have been sent to property owners relative to the Main Street Project. Property owners have been invited to the next Main Street Committee meeting and will also have an opportunity to meet individually with the Main Street Committee to discuss their property. Discussion with the State is on-going regarding the “void” areas.

OPEN ITEMS IN OLD BUSINESS

POCD – the POCD is complete.

Finance and Accounting Manual The document has been published and was distributed to BOF members electronically.

Rick Nygard made a motion to approve the Finance and Accounting Policy and Procedures Manual as presented. Jennifer Rannestad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Peter Evankow and the BOS are currently in the process of reviewing the document. Virginia requested that any changes to the document be forwarded to her in writing.

ADJOURNMENT

Jon Joslow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk