

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOF MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, December 19, 2019
Community Meeting Room
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carmany called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. In attendance included: Chairman Carmany, Rick Nygard, Jon Joslow, Richard Strauss, John O'Hare (seated for Jennifer Rannestad), Greg Merola, and Andrew Gardner. Also in attendance were First Selectwoman Gister and Selectwoman Janecek.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

John O'Hare made a motion to approve the minutes from the 11/21/19 BOF meeting as amended. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Corrections: Page 2 – under “Annual Report Dedication” – add “and will be added” after “The individual’s role as Chief of Police was discussed”.

Page 3 – correct spelling is Strauss

Page 4 - under “CES Cafeteria and Analysis and Admin Analysis of all Cafeterias”, 3rd paragraph – change “Region 4” to “Supervision”. Also, at the end of the paragraph, add “Virginia clarified bulk buying for the cafeteria would mean all orders would be combined into one order but the detail is still by school”.

NEW BUSINESS

2020/21 BOF Calendar

Richard Strauss made a motion to set the BOF Regular Meeting schedule as the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The February and March meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by budget workshops at 7:30 p.m. John O'Hare seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

BOF TASKS FOR THE NEW YEAR – COMMENTS ON PAST YEAR

BOF members considered the following tasks for the new year:

- Continued emphasis on the BOE
- POCD/Strategic Plan – prioritize initiatives of the plan(s). Lauren commented that more information on the POCD/Strategic Plan will be available at the next meeting.
- The possibility of appointing BOF liaisons to various Boards/Commissions relative to the budget process was discussed; i.e. state level, Main Street Committee, Public Works, Education.
 - A complete list of liaisons will be developed and discussed further at a future meeting.
 - Several BOF members reported that they have been and plan to continue attending BOE meetings.
 - The status of the R4 property purchase was discussed. Ideas for the use of the property; i.e. fields for the use of the 3 towns, not just schools, was discussed.

- Lauren has met with the Superintendent and the 3 area Selectmen regarding a tax strategy and strategic plan for the property.
- BOF discussed the process at last year's Town Meeting relative to the Annual Budget. To avoid the difficulties experienced last year, Virginia will develop a written outline to be followed at the meeting.
- Virginia will forward to BOF members the Region 4 and CES calendars.

REPORTS

Monthly Financial reports were included in the BOF packet.

As requested, clarification regarding TAR and LOTCIP funding was provided; Lauren reported that the Town does expect to receive these funds. Additional clarification was provided relative to the rental income at the Cedar Lake Snack Shack, reporting of Capital (the report is "collapsed") and the process for accounting for the Gwendolyn Ortner Jones trust.

A copy of the 2019/20 Annual Budget Status Report – December 16, 2019 was included in the BOF packet. Areas of discussion included:

- Park and Rec – costs associated with the September storm will be reimbursed.
- Public Works – additional costs incurred due to the drainage projects (part-time Public Work staff necessary due to the drainage work).
- Hazardous Mitigation Plan – Considerable savings realized by working with RiverCOG and area towns on the Plan.
- The Town is reimbursed by organizations that utilized police for Police Private Duty.
- Municipal Insurance – includes "crime insurance" costs that are paid every three years.
- Deep River's bill to the WPCA for repairs was discussed – Deep River would allow the WPCA to spread the payment out for 5 years; however, the WPCA's fund balance was used to pay the bill. WPCA is now in the process of building back their fund balance.
- Virginia reported that she would like the State's Budget Deficit to remain in the report.

BOF members will receive the budget information electronically and there will also be several "budget binders" made available.

FIRST SELECTWOMAN'S REPORT

Lauren reported on the following:

- Main Street Project – the State's response to the proposal has been returned. Their response included allowable items in the grant. A timber guardrail will not be funded, only steel. The Spring Street portion (appx. 250 ft.) will be the Town's responsibility. The State will cover Maple Street as they consider it a natural extension of the downtown area. The State will cover filling the voids but work on basement walls is the responsibility of the property owners; however, we have requested additional clarification on non-participating costs for private property. Because the stairs at the stone wall are not ADA compliant, the State will not pay for that portion of the project. To pursue the matter further with the State will delay the project. All temporary easements have been signed except for one and Lauren is pursuing same with the property owner.
- Volunteer Handbook – the handbook is being printed and is expected back next week. Upon receipt, it will be distributed to all Board/Commission members.

- The details of the RFP for the Meetinghouse floor are being finalized. It is anticipated that the work will be done January through mid-March.
 - The Kate donated 10 new chairs to the Meetinghouse.

OPEN ITEMS IN OLD BUSINESS

POCD/Strategic Plan – no new information.

R4/Supervision/CES– last two meetings were cancelled due to weather.

The R4 Business Manager has resigned and an interim is in place until February. From February until June another interim Business Manager will be hired with the anticipation of having a new Business Manager in place by summer.

Lauren will follow-up with the Superintendent relative to the BOF asking questions of the auditors. Virginia will follow-up with Kate Sandman, R4 Chair, on same. Richard Strauss discussed briefly a proposal to form a School Budget Committee that would include “observers” from the 3 towns.

AUDIENCE – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Jon Joslow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. John O’Hare seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk