

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, February 26, 2020
Chester Town Hall
Community Room

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Gister called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance included: First Selectwoman Gister, Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert, Virginia Carmany, BOF Chairman and Terry Englert.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Charlene Janecek made a motion to appoint Robert Quale to the vacated seat on the Board of Fire Commissioners with a term to expire 11/16/21 (remainder of the 4-year term). Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to appoint Michael Sanders to the Regional Planning Committee. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note: The Regional Planning Committee is currently working on a Regional Plan of Conservation and Development.

20 WATER STREET AND SNACK SHACK RENTALS

The 20 Water Street lease expires in June 2020 (2-year lease). The Town has upgraded the property including digging a well and replacing the heating system. The current rent is \$7,500 per year, paid in two installments. The tenant is responsible for electricity and the Town maintains the parking lot. Lauren has scheduled a meeting with the tenant (Dr. Bird) to discuss renewal options. BOS members agreed that the current terms of the lease (\$7,500 per year) should remain the same.

The Snack Shack has a yearly lease @ \$500 per year (the prior rent was \$750 per year). Since they have introduced concerts, the Snack Shack has increased hours as people attend the music events. As a result, the Town has had to provide a police presence to enforce the rules for beach use (no alcohol, no dogs, etc.). The BOS agreed that the Snack Shack is a benefit to the community and the concerts are well received by the Town.

The BOS discussed options to fund the police officer during the music events including raising the rent or Private Duty fees; however, the Private Duty calls for a 4-hour minimum costing \$240.00. The Park & Rec lifeguards are not on duty during the concerts. BOS members agreed that an increase in the rental fee would be appropriate. Lauren will meet and negotiate the terms of the lease with the operators.

BUDGET DISCUSSION AND REVIEW

Budget information was distributed to the BOS.

Budget Requests include:

Visiting Nurses – Several years ago, the funding to the Visiting Nurses was decreased to \$15,000 after a review of their services that are provided to Chester residents. They are requesting an increase to \$30,000 per year.

Per State Statute, the Health Director (Dr. Kotrady at the time) was the official Camp Director. The Health District does not provide this service. Lauren has discussed the matter with Dr. Bird and funding has been requested for same.

Public Works – additional hours for part-time seasonal employee requested (was 20 hours for 20 weeks, request for 25 hours for 22 weeks), 110 hours - \$3,450.00 – no benefits.

Part-time Building Official – the position has been posted twice. There is a shortage of Certified Building Officials – additional funds (\$6,000) requested to attract a qualified candidate; also funding for mileage has been requested.

Tree Warden – The Tree Warden has experienced increased hours to address the state-wide tree crisis. An additional \$2,500 has been requested to accommodate his increased hours.

Capital

Dredging – Chester Creek – funding for the project has been approved by BOS and BOF. Subsequent to approval, it was determined that the project must be completed by 4/1. This is not possible and the funds for the project, currently housed in the General Fund, will be gone as of 6/30/20. Peter Evankow suggested that the funds be transferred into Capital. Also, the Town's portion for the stream repair as a result of the flooding is approximately \$55,000. Without the Town's portion, NRCS will not provide the 75% of the project.

The BOS had an extensive discussion of the proposed budgets.

- BOF General Contingency – reflects encumbered money and remains “flat”
- Registrar – election year
- Building Dept. publications – cost of updated books – note Building Official and Fire Marshal share books.
- Harbor Commission – update of Harbor Plan
- Park Equipment Maintenance – decreased by 50% - due to recent flood repairs
- Personnel requests are not included in this proposed budget.
- Highway General Maintenance – increase due to purchase of tires for payloador
- Water testing – decrease due to Chester joining the Health District
- Environmental Study (Skyview) transferred into Outside Buildings and Grounds account
- Police Protection – Resident Trooper reflects decrease due to State's decrease in fringe. However, we do anticipate a new Resident Trooper and figures may change.
- Streetlights – costs continue to decrease.
- Emergency Communications – Valley Shore – “firm” figure not yet available; 3% placeholder added to the budget.
- Health Insurance – “firm” numbers not yet available.
- Municipal Insurance – estimate expected next week.

- Crime Insurance - \$0 – paid every 3 years.

Lauren reported that the budget does not include funds for a Town Planner/consultant or funds for equipment to provide live streaming/recording of meetings. Lauren is currently exploring the costs associated with cameras, equipment, etc.

Funding for Deputy Treasurers (2) was discussed. Currently, the Deputy Treasurer is an unpaid position. The Deputy Treasurer position will be discussed with the Auditor.

The BOF will meet to discuss/review the budget on Thursday, 2/27/20.

SELECTMAN REPORTS

As previously reported, the South Meadows Waste and Recycling facility, located in Hartford, is in disrepair and requires extensive refurbishment. The plant is publicly owned and operated. The costs to redevelop and renovate the plant total approximately \$330 million. The towns are being asked to voice their interest in continuing membership in MIRA (30-year commitment) and the redevelopment of the plant (non-binding). The Town's current contract with MIRA expires in 2027. At the 2/10/20 BOS meeting, the BOS moved to authorize the First Selectwoman to sign the non-binding Information Statement of Interest with MIRA as presented dated 1/27/20.

Charlene Janecek attended the recent RiverCOG meeting where the status of MIRA was a topic of discussion. Options include a "pay to throw" program and residents would "purchase" a garbage bag(s) to dispose of their garbage, building a new plant or shipping garbage to landfill in another state. Note that the City of Hartford does not want the facility to be located in Hartford.

Lauren expressed concern that a commitment from the Town(s) will be required prior to all financial implications being known and the State, DEEP and MIRA may not take any action until commitments are in place. Charlene reported that the COG is not recommending that the Towns commit before more is known.

The COG also offered a presentation about a community rating system relative to flood insurance.

Lauren reported that bids for Main Street are due on Monday, 3/2/20. Interested parties (merchants, residents, town staff) will begin meeting to work on the details of maintaining the vibrancy of downtown during the project.

Lauren provided an update on the Meeting House floor project. Historical artifacts uncovered during the project have been given to the Historical Society.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charlene Janecek made a motion to approve the 2/10/20 BOS meeting minutes. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Charlene Janecek made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regular Session resumed at 9:15 p.m.

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlene Janecek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk