

This meeting minutes have been corrected  
And approved at the April 16, 2020 Board of Finance meeting  
THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOF MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, February 13, 2020  
Community Meeting Room  
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carmany called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. In attendance included: Chairman Carmany, Rick Nygard, Jon Joslow, Jennifer Rannestad, Richard Strauss, Greg Merola, and alternates Michael Joplin and Andrew Gardner. Also in attendance were First Selectwoman Gister, Selectwoman Janecek and James Grzybowski.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

NEW BUSINESS

Vote to move \$25k dredging request to Harbor Management Outside Contractor line item 10-01-19-1000-365 (still contingent on pending final Army Corps of Engineers approval).

Jon Joslow made a motion to move \$25k dredging request to Harbor Management Outside Contractor line item 10-01-19-1000-365. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Army Corps of Engineers has tentatively approved the project.

Discussion and possible vote: To authorize the First Selectwoman to enter in an agreement for a Connecticut Energy Fund loan of up to \$35,000 at the interest rate of 0% for a 4 year term to fund the cost of LED lighting retrofits in the Town Hall and Chester Firehouse in conjunction with the already approved project with Earthlight Solar and Energy Solutions to replace the lights

Jon Joslow made a motion to authorize the First Selectwoman to enter in an agreement for a Connecticut Energy Fund loan of up to \$35,000 at the interest rate of 0% for a 4 year term to fund the cost of LED lighting retrofits in the Town Hall and Chester Firehouse in conjunction with the already approved project with Earthlight Solar and Energy Solutions to replace the lights. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and possible vote: for acceptance of and authority for the First Selectwoman to sign contractual documents for a Small Cities Block grant in the amount of \$800,000 to be used to update and improve facilities at the Cherry Hill housing complex.

Rick Nygard made a motion to accept and authorize First Selectwoman Gister to sign contractual documents for a Small Cities Block grant in the amount of \$800,000 to be used to update and improve facilities at the Cherry Hill housing complex. Jennifer Rannestad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lauren reported that the Town was awarded, on behalf of Cherry Hill, a Small Cities Grant in the amount of \$800,000 for rehabilitation projects including heating units, air conditioning, parking lot improvements, siding and windows. No Town funds are necessary. The Town was the applicant/sponsor of the grant.

Discussion and possible vote: To transfer \$24,500 from Capital – Assigned to Capital Main Street III Capital Project III

These funds were paid to Chester by Connecticut Water in lieu of final paving after the water main replacement on Main Street. Spring Street paving does not qualify for state funds as part of the Main Street Project. These funds will allow for partial payment of the non-participating costs, (Spring Street paving).

Virginia noted that the current condition of the Main Street is temporary and the street will be re-paved.

Jennifer Rannestad made a motion to transfer \$24,500 from Capital – Assigned to Capital Main Street III Capital Project III. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and possible vote: To approve the release of the remaining funds from the Main Street III Capital account in the amount of \$199,846.00 (includes the \$24,500 from CWC). These funds will be used to pay for the items in the approved Main Street III design that the DOT has determined to be “non-participating” and the responsibility of the Town

A copy of the funds request form for the Main Street project and the final DOT approved cost estimate for the Main Street Project was included in the BOF packet. Lauren clarified that this item refers to improvements to the Maple Street parking lot and the payment of the DOT non-participating LOTCIP costs.

Virginia reported that this request would put the remaining electrical tasks and the lights for the Maple Street parking into the Main Street Project III. While this project was included in the Main Street ‘master plan’, it was not in Phase III of the project.

Virginia recommended to segregate the money for the Maple Street Parking lot lighting from Main Street Phase III as \$30,000 was moved to it’s own line during last year’s budget process. The single bid for lighting is for approximately \$25k, adding an additional amount up to \$30K will allow for some flexibility in selecting lights and a contractor. This will allow for reporting on the current total of \$60,000 as part of the Maple Parking lot project. Approximately, \$21,000 has been spent to date on materials, tree removal and paving of new pathway to Main Street. The remaining \$39,000 will be used for lighting, new poles, installation and labor. Any remaining amount can be reassigned.

Rick Nygard made a motion to move \$30,000 from the Main Street III Capital project to the Capital Project Maple Street Parking Lot for improvement and lighting. Jennifer Rannestad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Greg Merola made a motion to release \$30,000 from the Maple Street Parking Lot Capital account for improvements and lighting. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Rick Nygard made a motion to approve the release of the remaining funds from the Main Street III Capital account in the amount of \$169,846.00. These funds will be used to pay for the items in the approved Main Street III design that the DOT has determined to be “non-participating” and the responsibility of the Town. The motion was seconded. Discussion followed.

The BOF had extensive discussion regarding the appropriate amount of funds to release for the Main Street project. The DOT estimate for parts considered Non-Participating is \$126.6K, plus \$12.7k for 10% Contingency and another \$12.7k for incidentals e.g. project mgmt. and traffic control. The release of the remaining amount in capital will add approximately \$17.9 k or 13% more for a total of nearly \$170k for the components the State will not pay for including: excavation, materials and labor, paving Spring Street, installing a guiderail and the rebuild of the stairway in the stone wall. To expedite the project in the event of unforeseen/change order items during the construction, the BOF determined that the full release of funds is an appropriate action to take at this time. If sufficient funds are not released and more funds are needed, a Town Meeting (and possible delay to the project) would be necessary to provide said funds. Any unexpended funds will be reassigned within capital.

The motion passed unanimously.

Review and vote to approve for acceptance the Town of Chester Annual Report for fiscal year ending June 2019. No action necessary.

Discussion regarding communications of the Chester BOF members on positions pertaining to public issues

The Board had a discussion of a recent article in the CT Examiner regarding Regional District 4 in which included information provided to the reporter by Virginia Carmany. The article implied that Virginia had a negative view of the recent work done by the Superintendent of School and the R4 board of education. It resulted in a letter from Superintendent Brian White to Virginia reflecting his concern that the article did not accurately reflect progress that has been made and could have a negative effect on the work that he and the R4 BoE are doing. Virginia responded in writing, indicating that the quotes in the article were (1) taken out of context from an interview that was informal and lasted more than 30 minutes and (2) did not include positive statements she had made about Superintendent White and the R4 BoEd.

Members of the BoF expressed their support for the work that the R4 Superintendent and BoE over the past year. The First Selectwoman and the Fire Chief both cited examples of where they had been quoted out of context and had “learned their lessons the hard way”. BoF members agreed that public officials are often quoted out of context need to be aware of this risk.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Jon Joslow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Rick Nygard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk