

Chester BOS-BOF Meeting #1, February 17, 2022

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Call to Order

Board of Finance at 7:03 PM. Members present included Richard Nygard, William Bernhart, Michael Joplin, Andrew Gardner and Michael Jordan.

Board of Selectmen at 7:04 PM. Members present included Charlene Janecek, Tom Englert and Ed Meehan.

Audience of Citizens – none.

New Business

Presentation of initial budget estimates – First Selectwoman and Accounting Director
First Selectwoman Janecek noted they have been working on the budget for the last two weeks putting together the budget books. The proposed budget came in at \$15,308,517 which is an increase of 3% including placeholders for capital and education. Nothing yet for revenue. It was noted a couple areas were up and a couple were down.

Status of Education Budgets

It was noted as of right now the education budget was down \$162,000 from last year, a decrease of .38% \$4,964,000. Chester Elementary School is up 5.6% at \$5,441,000. Supervision District is \$1,700,000, up 1.32%. SVD will be voting next week. The increase for the SVD is because of the ADM. More details in a couple of weeks. Michael Joplin noted he finds that curious and hopefully we'll get more details on that.

First Selectwoman Janecek noted they have gone through the budget and answered any major questions. Adjustments were made accordingly.

Ed Meehan noted its early in the process. Time will be needed to digest the revenue budget. Reviewed contract numbers for medical and employee benefits, pension and insurance requirements. Peter Evankow noted salaries were kept flat unless departments requested additional hours. The Union contract will be up in June.

Budget highlights were reviewed by Peter Evankow:

Education was kept the same.

Capital budget was kept the same as last year. That may change.

Staffing was reviewed in the Assessor's Office and Zoning.

Public Works asked for an additional employee, additional hours for Building and Grounds Department.

Chester Hose Company adding full time employee.

Employee Benefits kept the same. Insurance was based on current staff levels. Savings this year is down.

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To be consistent everything was put in when asked by individual departments in order to see what the original requests were.

Police put in \$50,000. Last few years it's been high. Revenue has been high last few years. Park & Rec increased budget but offset by revenue. Peter and Liz met last week and pulled the revenue together.

Michael Joplin asked how many employees in Public Works now. Three full time and seasonal one or two. Twenty years ago there were 4 Public Works employees.

Michael Joplin asked how many full time employees in CHC. James Grzybowski noted they requested one full time and have 11 part time. They are taking some part time hours and putting them into full time. The Ambulance brings in revenue.

Michael Joplin noted the Grand List is up possibly substantially. He asked what generates that increase. Peter Evankow noted the Assessor has just started looking at that this week. Vehicles and Personal Property have gone up. Ed Meehan noted there will also be tax appeals adjustments, sales in real estate. Real estate will be reassessed after revaluation.

Michael Jordan asked if the Board could get some detail on each of the departments. Peter Evankow noted some departments included detail and back up. The Tax Assessor and Tax Collector use Quality Data. Jordan asked if the Town Clerk's office is still using microfich.

Michael Jordan noted the legal budget has gone up 100%. First Selectwoman Janecek noted the Board of Selectmen doubled the legal budget. Rick Nygard noted last year's budget was overshot. It was noted the town has hired Attorney Richard Roberts as new Town Counsel.

It was noted members need some time to look through the budget before starting discussion. Joplin asked what items were to be discussed next week. Nygard noted there is a schedule set out. Next week we'll go through the first half of the budget.

Audience of Citizens – none.

Motion by Joplin, second by Bernhart, to adjourn the BOF at 7:35 PM. Unanimously approved.

Motion by Englert, second by Janecek, to adjourn the BOS at 7:35 PM. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith R. Brown

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary