

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, February 23, 2022  
ZOOM Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Janecek called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Englert, Selectman Meehan, Terri Englert, Susan Wright, Cindy Lignar Deb Vilcheck, Rick Nygard, BOF Chairman, Julieanne Divis, Scott Mills, Virginia Carmany, Bill Bernhardt and Michael Cressman.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Harbor Commission is re-organizing their membership and requests that Meredith Devaney be “seated” as a full member to replace “Gordon”. Jim Bearington will become an alternate member of the Harbor Commission. Note that there will still be an alternate seat, D, open.

Ed Meehan made a motion to appoint Meredith Devaney to the Harbor Commission (full member) with a term to expire 10/3/25. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DREDGING PROJECT BUDGET

Charlene reported that the Town is ready to move forward with the contract for the dredging of Chester Creek. The Harbor Management Commission has requested that the BOS and BOF transfer funds into the Chester Creek Dredging account. The majority of the funds will be reimbursed by a grant when the project is completed. A spreadsheet, developed by Virginia Carmany was distributed to BOS members and discussed. The Town’s “share” of the project is \$25,000.00. It is estimated that the project will cost \$109,000.00. Costs (approximately \$16,000) associated with work done by Docko, overseen by DEEP and the CT Port Authority, will be clarified vis a vis work completed prior to a signed agreement.

Ed Meehan made a motion to approve the release of \$100,000 for the Chester Creek Dredging Project and to forward to the BOF for further action. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Englert made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/9/22 BOS meeting, as presented. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

POLICE BODY CAMERAS

Charlene read the following letter dated 2/17/22:

“Dear BOF Members,

The town has an emergency situation due to the Accountability Act enacted by our legislature last year. All town and city police are required to wear body cameras and have cameras in their vehicles by July 1,

2022. If this date is not met, there will be a daily fine and our officers, except for our Resident Trooper, will not be allowed to work.

Along with the camera purchase, there is the requirement that storage and retrieval abilities be maintained. Ideally this service should have been provided by the state, but it was not. There is a possibility however, that the legislation will be changed requiring the state to supply this storage and retrieval.

To this end, the town needs to purchase cameras that will be compatible with the state system. Telrepc is the company that the State uses and should be the company that the town uses so that we only need to purchase cameras once. Timing is the issue since the lead time on delivery of these is two to three months out. Having to go to bid will add at least a month to the process and could possibly mean we will not have them installed by July 1.

Therefore, the BOS has determined that the emergency warrants procuring the cameras and associated technical equipment without requiring competitive bids.

Thank you,

Charlene O. Janecek, First Selectwoman”

Charlene has discussed the matter with the Town Attorney who agrees that this is an emergency situation and the bid process may be bypassed. At this time, the BOS requests that the BOF consider the use of surplus funds in the amount of \$40,750 for the purchase of the cameras. Note that the use of surplus funds will require Town Meeting approval. Charlene continues to work with Deep River and the RST relative to the possibility of a “shared” program for storage. It is estimated that a “shared” program would cost Chester approximately \$10,000. The BOS is requesting that the BOF hold a special meeting to discuss this matter.

Ed Meehan reported that there are grant funds available for up to 30% for the purchase of cameras. He continued that it is imperative that the Chester police are able to continue to perform their duties on July 1, 2022.

Virginia suggested that the BOS consider one year as opposed to three years in the quote. In addition, she suggests that perhaps ARPA funds be considered for this purchase. Charlene reported that the ARPA Committee does not meet until mid-March and time is of the essence in ordering the cameras for installation before the 7/1 deadline. In addition, Julieanne Divis reported that ARPA funds may not be used to reimburse towns for expenses. Charlene noted that the ARPA rules recently changed and she will look into the possible reimbursement of costs with the ARPA funds.

Ed Meehan made a motion to request that the BOF approve the amount of \$40,750.00 for the purchase of Police Dept. cameras. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### FACE MASK MANDATE

The consensus of the BOS was to keep the face mask mandate in place for town buildings and to discuss further at the next BOS meeting.

#### SELECTMEN REPORTS

Tom Englert reported that a status report on the JW entrance security project (approximately \$1 million) was provided at the last meeting. The architect reported that there is some concern relative to the project's classification and state reimbursement amounts. Originally, the project was classified to allow a 46% reimbursement; however, the Dept. of Education changed it to a 26% reimbursement. With the help of Legislators, that decision can be overturned. In addition, the rising costs of materials; i.e. steel, windows, glass, etc., and lead times for ordering materials may affect the project.

Charlene reported that the Lt. Governor visited Chester. She is reinstating a program recognizing Korean War and Vietnam War veterans. A Recognition Program will be scheduled in May for Chester veterans.

#### AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

At the request of John O'Hare, Charlene reported that the Phase II on the Skyview property has been completed and she is waiting for the report. It is anticipated that some Brownfield remediation will be required but until the report is received, the extent of same is unknown.

Julianne Divis reported that regarding the police cameras, the CT DAS overrides the need for the competitive bidding process. Telrepco is a CT State DAS Certified Vendor.

At the request of Mike Joplin, Charlene clarified that the cost of the cameras is \$40,750. She is working with Deep River regarding the costs associated with storage and the possibility of sharing these costs (\$10,000 for each town).

Susan Wright stressed the importance of receiving bids for the purchase of the police cameras. All bids received should be compared. She provided information on other vendors; i.e. Axton and Watch Guard. This information will be forwarded to the First Selectwoman. Charlene reported that it is important to use the same equipment that is used by the State and that time is of the essence in order to have the cameras operational by 7/1. Julianne Divis reported that the Old Lyme website has information on the purchase of their cameras.

John O'Hare offered to and was authorized to contact the Madison Police Chief relative to the police cameras.

Virginia offered the use of BOF Contingency for the purchase of cameras, if necessary.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Tom Englert made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m. Ed Meehan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk