

**Chester Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen
Budget Meeting Minutes, February 23, 2022
7:00 PM by Zoom Meeting
Page 1 of 5**

1. Welcome

2. Seating of BOS and BOF

BOF, Chairman Nygard called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Members present and seated were Nygard, Bernhart, O'Hare, Joplin, Carmany, Gardner. Vilcheck and Jordan, non-seated alternates were also present.

BOS, Janecek, Meehan and Englert were present, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Janecek noted this was a Joint Board of Selectmen/Board of Finance Budget Workshop.

3. Audience of Citizens – no one spoke.

4. Ongoing Business – Review of following tabs in budget binder: General Government, Health and Welfare, Miscellaneous

Chairman Nygard asked First Selectman Janecek the status of the revenue budgets and capital proposals. Janecek noted they are working on capital a little today. Chairman Nygard noted Liz will be working on revenue tomorrow with Peter Evankow.

Virginia Carmany asked Peter Evankow to put together a list of all line items that come in late that are still open before the next meeting; insurance, medical, etc.

Board of Selectmen

General Legal – went up \$2000 to \$7000. Janecek noted the town has hired a new Town Counsel. Charges are more than what the town was paying so legal was increased by \$2000. This was based on same kind of work load in the past. Carmany noted it should be higher because actuals last year were \$6257. \$7500 was suggested.

Community Events – Carmany asked if the town would be doing community events. Janecek replied yes, probably tractor parade. Meehan noted hopefully we will have more events now that covid is behind us, maybe Halloween, Xmas, tractor parade and maybe others. It was raised to \$4000.

Mileage – zero.

Finance

Data Processing – accounting system up 4%, also payroll up a little from adding employees, therefore, more payroll. Wages for the whole town will not be known until the contract is ratified. Discussion regarding non-union and union increases. Union employees – 6, non-union employees 30+.

Town Office Operations

Service Contracts – significant increase to \$55,000. The IT contract was reviewed. The Town will have to get cyber security insurance. That will be added to the service contract for the IT people, CT COMP. Payroll is cloud based but that includes all offices in Town Hall. Jordan noted the Board should discuss this at another time. Meehan asked if the increase of \$15,000 would cover the CT COMP quote of Feb. 11th, \$29,900 yearly total. Peter said he had a figure of \$56,622. Janecek noted that was the total IT budget. She also noted part of the \$56,000 was support for the body cams, \$9,888 yearly. That may be eliminated if we work together with Deep River. Janecek noted the only item in the \$29,000 we are discussing tonight is the \$6,420 which is part of the \$15,000 increase for cyber security. If we go in with Deep River, \$9,000 will come out. Janecek noted the total is \$66,622, \$10,000 is capital and \$56,622 is operating. Evankow noted the Library has a yearly total of \$4,620 which they pay so it should be reduced by \$4,620.

Town Clerk

It was noted salaries for new people should be discussed at another time. Carmany noted the town should check with other towns to see what they are paying Town Clerks. Selectmen Englert noted he agreed with Carmany that there needs to be a salary policy when office holders change. There is a difference between people hired and those that are elected.

Microfilming and Storage was discussed. Microfilming is for storage of maps. Discussion regarding microfilming and data processing. There is a grant available for Town Clerks, we should check the amount of the grant.

Treasurer

Chairman Nygard noted bank fees have doubled and mileage has gone up. Janecek noted there are multiple banks to go to and gas prices have gone up.

Tax Collector

Bank fees have gone down. No other discussion.

Tax Assessor

First Selectman Janecek noted the town hired a new Assessor who works 3 days, 18 hours. She is playing catch up and doing a great job. Grand List will be available soon. Evankow noted vehicles have gone up 27%. They are re-evaluated annually. Cost of used cars has gone up 40%. Houses are reassessed every 5 years according to State Statute. Full reval every 10 years. Professional Development is for new Assessor training. Discussion regarding GIS and 190 costs.

**Chester Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen
Budget Meeting Minutes, February 23, 2022
7:00 PM by Zoom Meeting
Page 3 of 5**

Evankow will put together list of expenses for 10-01-06-1000-190. Meehan suggested adding \$5,000 for GIS.

Board of Assessment Appeals

Elected Officials get \$50.00 each per State Statute.

Board of Finance

Contingency – at \$47,025 right now, maybe that could be used for cameras (no town meeting). Janecek noted that would be helpful given time constraints. Increased to \$80,000 but maybe trimmed back if not needed. Last year's budget for Contingency was \$70,000.

Outside Contractor

Auditor – this year there is an additional bill because of State and Federal audit required for 2021. Janecek will contact the auditor and confirm amount.

Postcard cost if \$400 for postage and graphic is \$500. This year's figure is \$1,000.

Janecek noted if the legislature passes early voting that amount will go up.

Building Dept.

Covers the building inspector and permits. Inspector is a contractor not employee. Joplin noted there are 55 building inspector jobs open in the State and most salaries are too low. Inspectors have a significant impact on the long term safety status of a commercial building or the durability of a house, fire code. Meehan noted building officials have to be certified under the State Building Officials Code.

Harbor Management

Chairman Nygard noted there is \$200 for supplies. Didn't spend anything last year. Spent \$87.00 so far this year.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Planning & Zoning contracted with a company to be ZEO \$36,000. Regular payroll increased \$1,040 for clerk based on 10 hours a week.

Inland Wetlands

There currently is no Inland Wetlands Officer. Janecek met with Chairman Bisacky and has advertised the position. A few people applied but not qualified to handle the position. Perhaps we can use another town's IWO who is working part time. Evankow noted this is \$36.00 per hour with limited hours per week. Salaried position or outside contractor? Outside Clerical is in

Chester Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen

Budget Meeting Minutes, February 23, 2022

7:00 PM by Zoom Meeting

Page 4 of 5

the Planning & Zoning budget. Janecek noted there will be a notice on Facebook that the Town is looking for someone to take minutes. Notices of Public Hearing and Decision are published according to State Statute, §200.

Zoning Board of Appeals

It was noted the ZBA holds about 4 meetings a year. Outside Clerical \$400.

Economic Development

Straight line budget for this year. To be reviewed.

Park & Rec

Janecek noted they are adding \$23,000 for additional person part time. That amount will be covered by revenue. Salaries are covered by what is collected from participants. Janecek will ask Lawn Science if their bid was competitive and if so, how often is it bid. Meehan noted anyone working on a public recreational field has to be certified and licensed.

Library

Chairman Nygard noted the Library budget has been reduced. Telephone is \$3,300. There is a State Library System connected to CEM for internet for libraries \$1,500. Library Consortium \$4,100.

Health & Welfare

Health District \$48,757. Public Health Nursing \$15,000.

Human Services

Estuary Council requesting less money \$9,479. Multi town senior services in Old Saybrook.

Tri-Town Youth Services, the same at \$33,957. Carmany noted she would like to see more detail regarding Tri-Town Youth Services.

Discussion regarding ARPA funds.

Employees Benefits

No discussion.

Retirement Board

Brief discussion regarding VESAP and 457 Plan. It was noted there are many people nearing retirement. Discussion regarding moving to a 401K Plan.

Payments to Organizations

Everyone was flat except for Saybrook District Probate Court that went down to \$1,463 (-137.00) and Transit District that increased to \$7,955 (155+).

Evankow noted he and Liz will work on revenue tomorrow. Revenue and Public Works would be discussed at the next meeting.

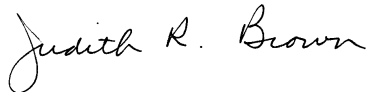
5. Audience of Citizens – none.

6. Adjourn

Motion by Carmany, second to adjourn. Unanimously Approved.

Motion by Meehan, second by Janecek, to adjourn. Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary