

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 1 of 6

1. Seating of Members

Board of Finance – O’Hare, Nygard, Bernhart, Carmany, Gardner, Jordan (seated for Joplin), Vilcheck (not seated). Board of Selectmen – Janecek, Meehan, Englert.

Others present included Netsch, Evankow, Wright, Meyer.

2. Welcome – call to order at 7:00 PM by both Boards of Finance and Selectmen.

3. Audience of Citizens – none.

4. Approval of Minutes – Boards of Finance and Selectmen, 3/2/22; Board of Finance, 3/17/22
Motion by Nygard, second by Meehan, to approve 3/2/22 Minutes. Unanimously Approved.

Motion by Nygard, second by O’Hare, to approve 3/17/22 Minutes amended as follows:

Present: Page 1, Cline was seated for Gardner, Vilcheck was present but not seated. Gardner arrived during the meeting but was not seated.

Page 2, 3rd paragraph, 1st sentence okay, delete rest of paragraph and replace with the following – If Masonicare wins the court case regarding its tax status, there is a potential risk of approximately \$603,000 to the town from the 3 previous years which might be paid out over future years, but not to say it’s going to be paid out over the next 3 years.

Page 3, 2nd paragraph change date to December 15th. 5th paragraph is deleted and replaced with the following – Rick moved to add two proposals to the agenda, seconded by Carmany, a vote to consider ARPA funds for \$98,480 for WPCA projects and a vote to consider the use of ARPA funds for the two IT hybrid meeting technical upgrade for Town Hall and Meeting House for combined \$64,000. Unanimously approved.

Page 3, 8th paragraph, delete and replace with the following – Carmany moved, Nygard seconded, to approve \$98,450 of ARPA funds for the WPCA projects as outlined in the ARPA document to Town Meeting contingent upon using normal procurement process of competitive bidding for the town’s policy. Unanimously approved.

Page 3, add the following to Police Body Cameras and IT Storage. Bernhart moved, seconded by Joplin, to forward to town meeting the 2 hybrid technology upgrade projects for the Meeting House and Town Hall not to exceed \$64,000 for ARPA funding contingent upon using the normal procurement process of competitive bidding for the town’s policy. Approved by all except Carmany who voted nay.

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 2 of 6

5. Detailed Review of Capital Budget Items

Nygaard noted the objective for tonight is to try to reach a decision on the individual capital programs and a total for capital if we can do that in about an hour.

Evankow noted we are working on the 22/23 proposed budget.

Farmland Preservation Open Space: Nygaard noted this was discussed last time and there wasn't a lot of overwhelming support for it. It was decided to defer it as lower priority.

Janecek agreed. No one disagreed. It was zeroed out.

Cedar Lake Watershed: Janecek noted this was for weed control and needs to stay in. It's for removal of weeds that grow in the Lake. They have to be cleaned out every year. Carmany explained it's in capital in order to keep the operating budget from spiking every 2 years. Bernhart explained weed suppression mats were purchased last year and installed in a section just outside the swimming area as a test run. It was successful so we ordered 12 more mats. It went out for bid today for installation and maintenance. The other method is the boat that harvests the weeds and that is being done every other year for the past few years. Those are the two methods we are currently looking at. The outgoing years was updated to \$10,000.

Town Hall Computer Replacement: This is for work stations and servers. Carmany noted numbers have been adjusted for the most current information. It was noted the life of the new body cams is 5 to 7 years.

Financial Software: Janecek noted nothing has been included for this. Carmany indicated this was discussed at the last meeting of putting in \$20,000 every year for 3 years as a place holder. This would cover either new or expanding software. Brief discussion followed. Carmany noted until there are hard numbers we won't know the answers to these questions. There is no specific software identified at this time. Carmany noted if we want something better we have to start putting money aside. There was discussion about having a cloud based system. Jordan noted he would like to get a list of the town's requirements first and then create a matrix of all the candidate systems and their features. Then settle on the top 3 candidates, get some recommendations from other towns in the area. Nygaard noted he liked Carmany's suggestion of putting in a place card holder of \$20,000 this year and then next year after an analysis, we can make a determination of what we really need. Jordan agreed that would be reasonable. It was suggested maybe we should look at more integrated systems. Maybe an ERP search for small towns. There must be municipality packages out there. Brief discussion as to what an ERP system would entail. Jordan noted an ERP would help everyone to work more efficiently. O'Hare discussed putting in \$20,000 now and \$20,000 next year and we can get this during 23/24 and then drop it down to \$10,000 every year after that. It was agreed to do the \$20,000, \$20,000, \$10,000, \$10,000.

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 3 of 6

Public Works/Highway Equipment: Evankow noted he inadvertently added \$75,000 twice but has since corrected that. He reviewed numbers in capital for several years which seemed like a lot. Brush Chipper and Payloader numbers were reviewed. Carmany asked Janecek if she had talked to Bruce about additional snow removal equipment for the Village regarding sidewalks. Janecek noted they are looking at getting a different person to do the sidewalks and that other changes are anticipated at this time.

Main Street Project: Janecek noted there are other phases for this project that need to be done in the future but in order to do so an engineering study must be done. Money needs to be set aside for this study maybe 3 years down the road for the next phase. Carmany noted there will be \$55,000 in 3 years. The Master Plan includes Liberty Street on the way to the Meeting House. It was noted perhaps the sidewalks might be an ARPA project if connecting the center of town to the Meeting House. Janecek noted there might be enough money to do the study but not the project. Construction and planning for this project is definitely a couple years off. \$5,000 was added for 4 years as a place holder.

Energy Efficient Projects: This is to replace the LED street lights. Evankow noted there is money in the General Fund for street light repairs. This is a major replacement. Brief discussion regarding adding EV charging stations. It was decided not to remove the \$2,400.

Road Sidewalk Bridge Repairs: Janecek noted in 2022/2023 the amount should be \$320,000. Bids have been received for road work that needs to be done in that year and that's the amount needed. Roads to be done are Bokum, Gorham, Spring from Rte. 148 to Straits and lower part of Goose Hill from Old County down to Route 154. Janecek noted in the following year they will do the rest of Spring Street, Baker Road and Goose Hill from the Treatment Plant to Old County. Meehan noted the need to look at grant money for Liberty Street. Sidewalk repairs were reviewed.

Meehan noted the Town should proceed with the pavement indexing project. Janecek has talked with Jacobson about this project. It could be done in 2 stages for \$30,000 or 1 year for \$27,000. This will give the Town a schedule of when these roads need to be worked on. The schedule shows when the road was built, drainage (culverts, easements, etc.), finish and an in depth study of the roads. Meehan noted this is useful for infrastructure planning. There has also been discussion about bringing back the Road Committee.

Maple Street Parking Lot: Evankow noted this project has been completed so that money can be used for something else.

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 4 of 6

North Quarter Park: Netsch reviewed drainage and a proposal for a formal drainage ditch. The amount for drainage work was \$9,037.00 and for the drainage crossing \$3,617.00 for a total of \$12,744.00. It was noted mowing needs to be done before July 1st and poison ivy treatment is in the Operating Budget. Some towns are using ARPA money for these types of things. Perhaps that should be considered for future years. The \$22,500 boardwalk can be done in stages.

Tree Removal: Budget has been overspent, need an extra \$10,000 in the current year. That should be done for the next Town Meeting. We will be spending a total of \$80,000 for this current year.

NRCS: Grants to clean out culverts along the brook from storm damage were reviewed. Work is scheduled for this summer. Evankow reviewed email from Jacobson. Not enough money was budgeted for the current year for engineering. Bills weren't getting paid. Outstanding bills of \$9,000 and another \$11,000 is needed for this year. Evankow noted he and Janecek are concerned there isn't enough, these are rough numbers. It was suggested estimated expenditures in the current year were \$25,000. He will reach out to Jacobson to see if that is enough. Carmany noted this is a reimbursable grant. She will contact Jacobson for more information. Janecek noted this has all been signed off on and the work is scheduled for end of July and beginning of August during the dry season. Nygard suggested \$12,000 for next year and \$10,000 for 2022/2023. A place holder of \$75,000 and the \$171,000 is reimbursable.

6. Review of Police Budget and Other Safety Budgets

Ambulance and apparatus replacements were reviewed. It was noted the brush truck is done. Truck replacement keep at \$75,000. Janecek noted cruiser replacement won't be needed until next year. Parking lot move out another year. Discussion regarding generator at the school \$120,000. Jamie noted this protects the systems and the building itself. Spread out over several years. Check to see if there is a reduction in insurance premiums due to having a generator. Jamie noted generator will run the entire building.

7. Salary Spreadsheet

The Salary Spreadsheet was reviewed. Evankow reviewed several open items. We are \$206,000 to the good right now. Still need to add in payroll increases, employee benefits, adjustments to medical insurance relating to additional full time employees and anything else related to payroll. Carmany reviewed a Salary Analysis from different towns.

8. Old Business

Discussion regarding STEAP Grant. Lighting, Internet and WIFI in the Village were reviewed. We should look at other towns in the area to see what they have done. Jordan suggested

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 5 of 6

\$10,000 annual cost for these items for now. Discussion regarding approval of the STEAP Grant. Janecek noted the Town is still waiting for the contract back from the State.

Evankow noted he would update the Capital Budget as discussed and add in medical insurance. So far, it is \$206,000 to the good.

There was discussion regarding holding tax payer dollars. Is it better to put money to the tax payers and bond for it or pay for it as we go. More discussion regarding bonding and inflation.

Operating is \$78,000 over last year or 1 mil increase before adding additional revenue or using any surplus.

C.E.S. was up \$291,500 and Region 4 was down \$26,000.

ARPA funds – Bernhart noted \$264,000 has been committed. Carmany noted there is \$359,000 still available for year's ARPA fund.

Updated numbers: \$5,000 for Tax Collector Security. \$63,250 for Town Hall roof, although the Meeting House roof is more urgent. \$40,000 for inside painting at the Meeting House in the current year. Roof needs to be repaired on Meeting House in order to solve inside painting problem.

Discussion regarding cost of Meeting House roof. Cost of wood shingles has gone up 130%. This money has not been released yet. Meeting House floor is done. \$107,881 has been released. This was approved back in May at Town Meeting. **Motion by Carmany and seconded (?), that \$107,881 has been reallocated from various town building repairs compliance detail to provide money to do the Meeting House roof in 2021/2022. Unanimously Approved.**

Town Hall roof is \$63,250 in 2023/2024. HVAC is \$106,000 but some has to be done this year 2022/2023. Town Garage boiler and windows in 2022/23.

Library: boiler, lighting, fence, plantings \$37,980 for next year. The fence should be done this year. Janecek to get an updated quote. The fence is a General Fund item. Replacement of furnace, lighting, plantings still remain. Library doesn't have a Building and Grounds budget, therefore, this was submitted as a Capital item.

April 6th is the next meeting. Next BOS meeting is the 18th.

**Minutes of Chester Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen, Special Budget Meeting,
Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Page 6 of 6

9. Audience of Citizens

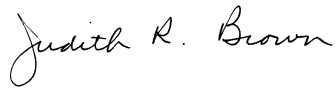
Susan Wright thanked the Town for fixing the Meeting House roof.

10. Adjournment

Motion by O'Hare, second by Carmany, to adjourn at 10:32 PM. Unanimously approved.

Motion by Janecek, second by Meehan, to adjourn at 10:33 PM. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary