

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, May 25, 2022
Community Room
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Janecek called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Meehan, Selectman Englert, Terri Englert and Pat Bandzes.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Rick Nygard, Chairman of the BOF, is resigning effective 6/30/22.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ed Meehan made a motion to approve the minutes of the 5/11/22 BOS meeting as presented. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

A copy of the Affordable Housing Plan was included in the BOS packet.

Pat Bandzes has participated in the development of the Plan for over 1 year and was available to address questions/comments from BOS members. It was anticipated that a Housing Committee, comprised of representatives from the Tri-Town area will be implemented in the near future. The map on page 11 of the document will be updated as appropriate.

Ed Meehan made the following motion:

WHEREAS, Section 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes require, as of July 1, 2017, that every municipality prepare or update and adopt a plan to increase the number of Affordable Housing Developments in that municipality every five years; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chester has opted to participate with the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) in developing a Regional Housing Plan, which includes a new Affordable Housing Plan Annex that satisfied the requirements of Section 8-30j; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chester, working through an ad-hoc Committee convened by the First Selectman, has conducted public information sessions and workshops in association with the update of this Affordable Housing Plan, including presentation and input of the Planning & Zoning Commission and a town-wide public information meeting in advance of consideration by the BOS;

WHEREAS, it is desirable and in furtherance of both Town and State principles to actively promote the creation and establishment of more affordable housing opportunities in the Town of Chester.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

That the Town of Chester adopt this update to the Town of Chester Affordable Housing Plan as part of the RiverCOG Regional Housing Plan and submit it to the State of Connecticut as an update to its statutorily required Affordable Housing Plan with an effective date of June 1, 2022.

Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF TOWN HALL GENERATOR

As previously discussed, the BOS has recommended that the ARPA Committee approve funds for the purchase of a Town Hall generator. Ed Meehan has been working with Dick Leighton, Building Official/Fire Marshal relative to the parameters of an RFP for a Town Hall Generator. BOS members agreed that it would be prudent to “power” the entire Town Hall to facilitate its use as a cooling/heating center, charging center, etc. in the event of an outage. Kilowatt data from the past several years has been provided and will be disseminated as appropriate and used in the RFP. In addition, confirmation of the current generator’s capabilities will be obtained. If funds approved, the current generator will be moved to the Town Garage. The ARPA Committee meets on June 14th.

Note that the BOS has the final “vote” as to what requests for ARPA funds are forwarded to a Town Meeting for town approval.

ARPA PROPOSAL

The ARPA Committee is requesting funds for Administrative Expenses (\$5,250) as follows:

- \$2,000 – Post Card Mailings
- \$2,250 – Meeting minutes transcription
- \$1,000 – Other expenses

A copy of their request was included in the BOS packet.

The consensus of the BOS was that the use of post card mailers, banners, flyers, etc. was not an effective method to promote attendance at town meetings. Charlene will relay the BOS comments to the ARPA Committee.

The BOS briefly discussed the ARPA Committee’s approval of \$25,000 to address weeds on Land Trust property.

WIFI

A draft of the RFP for WIFI in the downtown area was shared with Mike Jordan and the BOS. Mike provided comments relative to procurement of equipment. The BOS discussed the “usefulness” of the project, potential liability, monitoring, security risks and on-going costs associated with same. On-going costs could total \$27,000 to \$29,000 per year. These costs would need to be funded via the town’s budget. Ed will continue to reach out to Comcast relative to costs, licensing, etc.

The BOS briefly discussed the potential of a cell tower. Charlene will facilitate a survey of town owned property that may be appropriate for a cell tower.

WIFI will be discussed further at a future BOS meeting.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Ed reported that an individual interested in purchasing the solar panels requests permission to have his electrician inspect the equipment. Ed will present any written bids received to the BOS.

Charlene reported that the Town received the Grant for assessment of the Skyview Property. Atlas, per the grant, may not conduct the additional work at the property.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Pat Bandzes commented as follows:

- ARPA funds should not be appropriated to eliminate weeds at Land Trust Property
- Cell tower –the Town of Haddam researched a cell tower. She recommended that the BOS contact the First Selectman in Haddam for information.
- The generator is an important request and should be funded via ARPA.
- Technology – she recommended that town continue with ZOOM meetings and/or hybrid in-person ZOOM meetings. The BOS does support continuing with hybrid meetings when the technology is in place.
 - CT Comp is the Town’s IT provider. They are developing an RFP to facilitate ZOOM meetings, as required by the BOF’s Bid Policy.

ADJOURNMENT

Ed Meehan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectively Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk