

Minutes of Chester Boards of Selectmen and Finance Meeting Held April 12, 2022 by ZOOM meeting at 7:00 PM

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Call to Order and Seating of Members

Board of Selectmen Call to Order – Charlene Janecek, Ed Meehan, Tom Englert at 7:00 PM.

Board of Finance Call to Order – Rick Nygard, Virginia Carmany, Bill Bernhardt, Michael Joplin, Andrew Gardner, Deb Vilcheck (seated for John O’Hare), Michael Jordan (alternate, not seated) and Steve Cline (alternate, not seated).

Welcome and Introduction

Chairman Nygard welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approve Meeting Minutes for March 30, 2022

Motion by Carmany, seconded by ? , to approve March 30, 2022 Minutes amended by removing A. Gardner from attendance. Unanimously Approved.

Audience of Citizens

Susan Wright thanked all members for their work and lots of hours.

Budget 2022/2023

Discussion/Wrap Up 2022/2023 Budget

Budget Adjustments Updated 4/11/2022 were reviewed in detail (Revenue, General Fund, Capital, Region #4, Chester Elementary). Total Revenue \$15,522,567 and Expenditures of \$15,456,005, difference to the good of \$208,898.

Lease with Essex Savings Bank was reviewed. It was a 10 year Lease with 5 year renewal. Lease is up in November. We will sit down with the Bank in September and discuss renewal.

It was noted the issue with Masonicare comes up in Court in October.

Peter Evankow reviewed General Fund Open Items as follows –

Assessor \$5000 and P&Z \$6000 was added to expenses for increased hours. All items were reviewed in detail according to the Budget Adjustments sheet updated 4/11/2022. Selectman Meehan reviewed the Steap WiFi Grant. It was noted this was in General Operating and not Capital. General Fund was up 4.56%, Capital was up 30.34%, Chester Elementary was up 5.66% and Region #4 was down 3.7%. Projected Revenue was up more than Expenditures.

Possible reduction changes in the Operating Budget was reviewed by Selectman Meehan.

Hazardous Waste Management was \$11,900 last year. This year’s info was \$3,855. We should clarify how this is charged. Constable Private Duty Resident Trooper was negotiated down to \$22,500. Last few years was higher because of Main Street work. First Selectwoman Janecek

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noted CL&P will be doing extensive tree work starting in the Fall and will be using Police Officers for traffic control. The Town pays it and gets reimbursed by CL&P.

Virginia Carmany reviewed payroll increases for union employees and maybe not giving elected officials the full amount of 4.7%. Selectman Meehan suggested talking to Town Counsel. Chairman Nygard suggested maybe getting a salary study from other towns to see what they pay. First Selectwoman Janecek noted CCM has information on this. She will contact them.

General Fund up 8.72%. Capital up 3.34%. Total Budget up 11.32%. Overall Town Expenditures Budget up 4.18%.

Capital was reviewed. \$10,000 was added to Tree Removal and \$25,000 was added to Matching Funds in the NRCS Matching Funds. Peter Evankow noted he spoke to Jeff Jacobson who indicated the \$90,000 paid out by the Town for the Streambed is not going to be reimbursed. This has already been paid. Selectman Meehan reviewed Grant Reimbursements for the next fiscal year which would be \$170,775. Not sure when this 22/23 work to be done. It will cost \$240,000 with the \$170,775 being reimbursed. School and Hose Company were reviewed. There was discussion regarding the amount for NRCS of \$245,000. Capital requests for 22/23 were reviewed. The WiFi Steap Grant for the center of Town was discussed. Infrastructure Village WiFi was \$10,000 for 22/23 and then borrow \$95,000 from Public Works.

General Fund up 8.72%. Capital up 1.27%. Combined up 7.83%. Overall Budget up 3.1%. Last year's Capital Budget was \$550,500. Revenue is up approximately \$648,000. There was discussion regarding mil rate and surplus.

Fire Chief noted in the next 4 years a regular fire truck could cost \$1,000,000. Perhaps this could be prefunded. Discussion followed. Not much in surplus for Fire Dept.

Discussion regarding possible purchase of cell tower in the future.

Vote to Send Budget to Public Hearing on May 10, 2022

Motion by Joplin, second by Gardner, to send Budget of \$15,331,571 to Public Hearing on May 10th. Unanimously Approved by Board of Finance members with Carmany abstaining.

First Selectwoman Janecek will notify newspapers of Public Hearing May 10th at Meeting House. Regular Board of Finance meeting on May 21st.

Discussion regarding Auditor coming in.

Audience of Citizens – JulieAnn Divis as if links were available for CCM.

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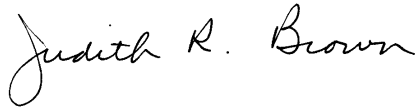
Adjourn

Motion made and seconded by Board of Finance to adjourn. Unanimously Approved.

Motion made and seconded by Board of Selectmen to adjourn. Unanimously Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary