

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING  
June 15, 2022  
Community Room  
Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Janecek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance included: First Selectwoman Janecek, Selectman Meehan, Selectman Englert, Chief Grzybowski, Deb Vilchek, Lucian Bouffard, Terri Englert and Aaron Ruben, Press.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS/COMMISSIONS – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ed Meehan made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/25/22 BOS meeting as amended. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note: Page 2 – change “The BOS briefly discussed the ARPA Committee’s approval of \$25,000 to address weeds on Land Trust Property” to “The BOS briefly discussed the proposal for use of ARPA funds to address weeds on Land Trust Property”.

CHESTER HOSE COMPANY JOB POSTING

A copy of the comprehensive Full-Time Paid Ambulance Staff Job Description/Duties, developed by Chief Grzybowski was included in the BOS packet. The position is consistent with the Town’s Policy Manual. Funding for this position was included in the budget effective 7/1/22. Chief Grzybowski outlined the 40 hour per week position; currently staff is needed to cover the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. shift (Sunday through Thursday) but the position allows for flexibility of hours as needed. If approved, the position will be posted this week with an anticipated hire by 7/1.

Ed Meehan made a motion to approve the Full-Time Paid Ambulance Staff Job Description/Duties as presented. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CES FORMER SOLAR ARRAY SYSTEM BID SALE

Ed Meehan reported that 2 written bids were received for the array; \$2,000 (only wanted the panels and optimizer) and \$5,000 for the entire array.

Mr. Lucian Bouffard, Morning Glory Farm, reported that he intends to use the solar array for farm operations.

Ed and Chief Grzybowski will provide all appropriate paperwork relative to the array and, if located, will provide the brackets for the array.

Note that the system will be sold “as is” with no warranty. A bank certified check to the Town of Chester will be provided and the buyer will schedule a date for removal of the array.

Ed Meehan made a motion to accept Lucian Bouffard’s bid in the amount of \$5,000 for the purchase of the CES Solar Array System. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### ARPA PROPOSALS

Charlene reported that the ARPA Committee met on 6/14/22. Results of the meeting include:

- Land Trust Preservation Project - \$25,000 – Committee voted to forward the project on to the BOS and BOF for consideration.
  - Project amended to award the Land Trust \$25,000 to be used as they deem appropriate not for exclusive use at the Carini Preserve. It is anticipated that the removal of knotweed from the Carini property is a 4 to 5 year project.
- The intent is to develop a “project specific account”.
- BOS questioned the appropriateness of using ARPA funds at the Carini Preserve as it is privately owned and not a Town property.
- Prior to BOS approval of this ARPA request, the BOS will further investigate with OPM to determine if it is permissible to provide ARPA funds to the Land Trust (private property).

Topics of BOS discussion included:

- Determination of project eligibility for use of ARPA funds
  - BOS and BOF determine what projects move forward to Town Meeting.
  - The ARPA Committee’s role is to gather ideas and vet them against the qualifications.
- There is the potential that after a Federal audit of the spent ARPA funds, a determination may be made that the use was not eligible. In that instance, the Town would have to pay the funds back to the Federal government
- The Town Meeting approved \$100,000 for social services; however, restrictions on the use of the funds make it difficult to dispense to those in need.
- The BOS agreed that a policy needs to be put in place to ensure that all disbursements of ARPA funds, once approved, go through the Town’s Finance Department (similar to the way WPCA invoices are submitted to Peter Evankow).

The ARPA Committee approved the BOS’s request for \$ 11,500 for the website development (Civic Plus). This is a one-time expense and funds are budgeted for on-going expenses.

Charlene Janecek made a motion to forward to the BOF for consideration, an ARPA request in the amount of \$11,500 for website development. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The ARPA proposal for a full-service generator at the Town Hall was revised as requested by the BOF.

Ed Meehan made a motion to forward to the BOF for consideration, an ARPA request in the amount of \$128,000 for a full-service generator at the Town Hall. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The ARPA Committee did not approve the BOS's request for funds to facilitate a road inventory and maintenance schedule. They recommended that the project go out to bid as opposed to Jacobson developing the inventory.

The BOS discussed the potential of "waiving" the procurement protocol for going out to bid as Jacobson is a professional engineering firm. Jacobson, as the Town's long standing Town Engineer, has comprehensive information on Chester's roads. Any potential bidder would need to confer with Jacobson. In addition, if the project did go out to bid, the Town would request that Jacobson, as our Town Engineer, review the bids for completeness, etc.

Charlene will investigate further the "professional services clause" in the Town's procurement policy.

As previously discussed, the BOS did not approve the ARPA request for funding for an on-line permitting system in the Land Use Department. However, the ARPA Committee has invited John Goskowski, ZEO consultant, to the next ARPA Committee meeting to provide details on the importance of the proposal.

The BOS again expressed concern that the workload in the Land Use Department does not warrant the expense of the proposal. Note that it is estimated that on-going costs associated with the proposal are between \$7,000 and \$8,000 per year. These funds would become part of the Town's annual budget. In addition, individuals would still be required to come into the Town Hall to meet with officials and pay appropriate fees. Charlene has asked Peter Evankow to develop revenue received via permitting fees.

After Mr. Goskowski's presentation to the ARPA Committee, the request will need to come back to the BOS for consideration.

The ARPA Committee placed the request for funding for the War Memorial on hold. Note that the War Memorial is located on Town property but much of the materials used to construct the Memorial were donated. Clarification was requested relative to the eligibility of a 501C3.

The ARPA Committee has requested that the BOS reconsider their request for funds for postal mailings. They originally requested \$2,000 for post card mailings. They revised their request to \$700 for one mailing.

The BOS stressed the importance of an Informational meeting that includes outlining the parameters of the ARPA funds and requesting ideas for use of the money.

Tom Englert made a motion to approve the ARPA Committee's request for \$700 for a town-wide postcard mailing. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### WIFI STEAP

As previously discussed, the Town received a reimbursable STEAP Grant for WIFI in the downtown area. The BOS discussed the "usefulness" of this project, security, liability and had serious reservations relative to the future on-going costs (estimated at \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year) associated with managing public WIFI.

In addition, many downtown businesses already have WIFI and passwords that are shared with their customers.

Deb Vilchek commented that Sunday Market vendors use Square for purchases and without WIFI, they are unable to transact business. The BOS recommended that the Sunday Market organization provide WIFI “hotspots” to their vendors. Charlene will follow-up with Sunday Market organizers.

Ed Meehan made a motion that the Town of Chester informs DEDC of the Town’s decision to withdraw the STEAP Grant funds (\$95,000) and return the funds to the State of Connecticut. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charlene continues to pursue the potential for a cell tower on Town owned property in Chester.

SELECTMEN REPORTS

Charlene reported:

- The interview process has started for the Town Crew position. Several well qualified individuals have applied for the position. A meeting is scheduled on Monday to discuss further.

AUDIENCE

Lucian Bouffard reported that the Regional Farm Share program has purchased farming equipment to be shared within the 17 towns of the RiverCOG. He invited all to 15 Jacoby Road on Saturday, 6/18 to see a demonstration of the equipment. This event will be included in the town-wide email blast.

ADJOURNMENT

Ed Meehan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m. Tom Englert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk