

Chester Board Of Finance minutes June 16, 2022 Prepared by Mike Jordan

Call to Order and Welcome:

Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Seating of Members:

Present at the meeting: Rick Nygard (RN), John O'Hare (JOH), (VC), Michael Jordan, (MJ), Bill Bernhart (BB), Deb Vilcheck (BV) seated for Andrew Gardner. Also present was First Selectwoman Charlene Janecek, and Selectman Ed Meehan, and Peter Evankow.

Audience of Citizens:

None

Review of May 19th regular meeting minutes and May 26 special meeting minutes:

No changes requested. Bill Bernhart made a motion to accept. Motion seconded by Deb Vilcheck. Approved by the board unanimously.

Presentation of FY 2020-2021 audit by Mr. Joseph Centofanti, Partner, PKF O'Connor Davies:

No major issues were found.

Unassigned General Fund Balance increased by approximately \$450,00

Long term debt decreased by \$77,000 due to scheduled principal payments.

Revenues were over budget by \$225,498. Major contributors to this surplus were building permits, conveyance taxes, and an increase in contracted police services.

Expenditures were under budget by \$207,739 mainly due to \$102,540 less than anticipated being spent by Chester Public Schools.

Review of monthly financials and year-end projections:

Peter Evankow presented an updated budget status - not many changes from last month.

Skyview Grant for \$104,000 received for cleanup. An assessor placed the value of the Skyview property at \$300,000

ARPA Review:**Chester Land Trust Preservation Project:**

The Chester Land Trust has requested \$25,000 in ARPA funds for remediation of Japanese Knotweed, an invasive species.

Rick Nygard noted that the land trust is technically a private non-profit entity.

Bill added that land trust land is intended to be preserved for public use. Deb mentioned that the land could be deeded to the town in the event of dissolution of the trust, we should verify the structure of the trust.

Use of funds would be for contractors and equipment.

Charlene stated that the funds should be moved to a separate account managed by the town.

Issue tabled pending a presentation by the land trust regarding use of funds and trust structure.

Town Website:

Town is requesting \$11,500 from ARPA funds for initial setup and development, \$X additional in maintenance following years. Website will be set up such that the town can manage their own content and site structure. Vendor is the same that implemented the Essex, Deep River, and Old Saybrook websites.

Training of town employees was discussed.

John O'Hare made a motion to endorse the \$11,500 expense from the ARPA funds for town website.

Deb Vilcheck seconded the motion.

Motion was approved by the board unanimously.

Town Hall Generator:

BOS requests \$128,000 from ARPA funds for a full backup generator for the Town Hall. Review of smaller generators showed that anything less costly would not be sufficient to support the anticipated peak load. Allows the town to supplement John Winthrop as a shelter.

Existing generator will be relocated potentially to the town garage, library, meeting house, or 20 Water St.

Bill Bernhart made a motion to approve funding for full service generator for total cost not to exceed \$128,000. Motion was seconded by John O'Hare.

Motion approved by the board unanimously.

Town Road Inventory:

BOS requesting \$30,000 from ARPA funds to have an inventory of the status of all roads to be conducted by an engineering firm. This will maintain information about the composition, drainage condition, annual drainage cleanings, and status of our roads in order to better schedule maintenance and allocate capital. May help to qualify the town for additional grant money for road repairs.

Discussion was had regarding whether this would need to be put out to bid or if it would qualify for an exemption.

John O'Hare made a motion to approve the town expenditure of \$30,000 of ARPA funds for road inventory survey project. Motion was seconded by Mike Jordan

Board Unanimously approved the motion.

First Selectwoman's Report:

Charlene Janecheck updated the board that the town has received grant money to repair the dam on upper Jennings pond. Other dams have been classified as in good condition.

NRCS Project Update: Deadline will be extended and Army Corps of engineers will be engaged on the project soon. Interviewing for Public Works position.

Discussion of process for filling vacancies and selecting Chair and Clerk for BoF Adjournment:

Virginia Carmany's vacancy needs to be filled, Rick Nygard indicated that he would be stepping down at the end of June.

2 individuals have expressed interest, a special meeting of the board of finance will be called in order to interview candidates and discuss replacements.

John O'Hare requested to read the following into the minutes:

“Richard Nygard has been a staunch supporter of the town of Chester through his words and deeds. Rick has been a member of the Board of Finance for the last 10 years and is finishing his tenure as Chairman of the Board of Finance. He and his moderate position on issues will be sorely missed. Rick doesn't say much but when he does it behooves one to listen. We will miss his silence and his wisdom. Thank you Rick, for your service to the town of Chester.

John P.O'Hare
Vice Chairman Board of Finance”

John O'Hare made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Jordan Seconded. Board voted unanimously in favor to conclude the meeting at 8:50pm.