

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOF MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular Meeting
August 18, 2022
Community Meeting Room
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman O'Hare called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. In attendance included: Chairman John O'Hare, John Chillock, Steve Cline, Michael Joplin, Deb Vilcheck, Bill Bernhart, Roger Labrecque, and First Selectwoman Janecek, Michael Cressman, Lori Ann Clymas, Chief Grzybowski, Kimberley Megrath, and Allison Abrasom, Richard Sau and Emily Duffy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bill Bernhart made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 2022 BOF meeting as presented. Steve Cline seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Bernhard, cline - unanimous

Deb Vilcheck made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 23, 2022 BOF meeting as amended. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Note proper spelling: Labrecque

ELECTION

Bill Bernhart made a motion to appoint Deb Vilcheck as Clerk of the BOF. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Bill Bernhart made a motion to nominate Roger Lebreque as an alternate member of the BOF. Deb Vilcheck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Deb Vilcheck made a motion to appoint Roger Lebreque as an alternate BOF member. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Monthly Financial reports, developed by Peter Evankow, were included in the BOF packet and discussed.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

ARPA

Until the status of the ARPA funds is determined; i.e.; how much remains in the account and when will the remaining funds be received, the BOF determined that taking the requests as they were received was the appropriate manner in which to proceed (Land Trust, Estuary and Fire Dept.).

On a motion made and duly seconded, the order of the agenda was amended to change the order of the discussion and possible vote of ARPA requests. The motion passed unanimously.

Chester Land Trust - \$25,000 – Knotweed Eradication and Maintenance at Land Trust Properties

Michael Cressman updated the Board on the request. Proposed Land Trust projects are not just for weeding but include maintenance items at various Land Trust properties.

A motion was made to approve the Chester Land Trust's request for ARPA funds in the amount of \$25,000.00 as presented and forward the request to a Town Meeting for further action. Deb Vilcheck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chester Hose Company - \$136,894.00 – Radio Communication Infrastructure

The Chester Hose Company has requested ARPA funds to for a hybrid radio system that would allow the Hose Company to be part of the State's 800 mega-hertz system used by neighboring towns. This system would be used to cover "gaps" in coverage with the UHF system currently in place. Surrounding towns also use the UHF system in addition to the 800 mega-hertz system. Chief Grzybowski was available to address comments/questions posed by BOF members.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the Chester Hose Company's request for ARPA funds in the amount of \$136,894.00 was unanimously approved as presented and forwarded to a Town Meeting for further action.

Old Saybrook Estuary Council of Seniors - \$2,000 – Expanded Hours for Social Worker

Steve Cline made a motion to approve the Old Saybrook Estuary Council of Seniors' request for ARPA funds in the amount of \$2,000.00 as presented and forward the request to a Town Meeting for further action. Bill Bernhart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chester Community Partnership - \$100,000 (\$25,000 per year – FY23, 24, 25 and 26) – to support the Chester Food program. Note that Ms. Megrthe request was amended to \$25,000 at this time (one year's request with additional requests for funds in future years).

The Chester Community Partnership provided a detailed overview of the Food Program and the request for ARPA Funds. Documentation regarding the ARPA request for funds, developed by Ms. Megrath, was included in the BOF packet and discussed. If funded, the money would be used to provide food to households experiencing food insecurity; in particular, those households impacted or disproportionately impacted by the Pandemic. Ms. Megrath and Committee members were available to address comments, questions and concerns posed by BOF members. A letter received from Committee member and social worker Melissa Hayes was read by the BOF Chairman.

No action taken on this request. A special BOF meeting was scheduled on 8/23/22 to discuss this request further.

Charlene reported that the Community Fuel and Food Fund is funded via donations only. This fund has been used for the Chester Community Partnership's initiatives discussed above and has been depleted. The Rotary Club has donated an additional \$750 to allow the town's Social Service's department to assist with fuel/energy purchases and other emergencies in the upcoming months.

Deb Vilcheck made a motion to table the Chester Community Partnership request for ARPA Funds. Mike Joplin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charlene reported:

- Dredging funds have been received.

- STEAP Grant – the Town applied for a STEAP Grant in the amount of \$500,000 to facilitate sidewalks, road work and drainage from Rte. 148 to the Great Brook Bridge as included in the Master Plan for the Main Street Project.
- Charlene is looking into potential funding for the Chesterfields Wall.
- Documentation has been received relative to the potential of a cell tower.
- To date the pump out boat servicing surrounding towns/marinas has been self-funded. There will be a request for \$5,000 from each town in next year's budget.
- The IW Commission has filed a lawsuit against a property owner at 213 Middlesex Ave. The property owner installed a new driveway, culvert and removed plantings without an IW permit. All IW attempts to contact the property owner to discuss have been ignored. The C&D order was also ignored.

OTHER

Areas of Responsibility for BOF members – as follows:

- Roger Labrecque – Public Works
- Steve Cline – Public Safety
- John Chillock – Town Operations
- Deb Vilcheck - CES

Potential ARPA Funds to be Awarded to Capital projects

The BOF discussed Capital projects for roads vis a vis potential use of ARPA funds for same.

Increases in costs (than what has been budgeted) of fire apparatus was discussed.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk