

**CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Chaplin Senior Center**  
**Chaplin, Connecticut**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**

**April 7, 2025**

Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. Board members present: Link Diwan, Linda Caron, Jeremiah Rufini, Victor Boomer; Alternate Peter Haines. Others present: First Selectman Juan Roman, Finance Manager Val Garrison. Audience: Jim Randall, younger Mr. Rufini. Absent: Bill Jenkins, Alternate Matt Foster, Alternate Izzy Alvarez.

**3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** Alternate Peter Haines seated for Bill Jenkins.

**4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:** None

**5. GUESTS: Budget Presentations**

a. Budgets from invited agencies: None

**6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None permitted

**7. REPORTS**

a. Board member reports:

1) **FY 2023-24 Annual Report:** Susan received everything needed to assemble Annual Report.

a) Consider and act on approval of FY 2023-24 Annual Report: None

b. Staff reports:

1) **Finance Dept.** – No Report

2) **BOE/CES** – No Report

3) **Tax Collector** – Tax Collections through March 2025 at 98.3%.

4) **Assessor - Review revised MV Grand List:** Reviewed last meeting.

**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. Regular/Special meeting(s): March 31, 2025

*Motion to approve March 31, 2025 special meeting minutes, made by Peter Haines with following correction:*

Item #5aa) should read – “asked if budget increase could be brought down, close to the schools at 3%”.

*Motion seconded by Link Diwan and carried with abstention by Linda Caron.*

**9. CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2025-26**

a. Review updated FY 2025-26 budget calendar:

CIP Committee expected at April 14<sup>th</sup> BOF meeting. Budget Public Hearing – April 28<sup>th</sup> followed by BOF Special Meeting to finalize the budget for Annual Town Meeting (will meet April 21<sup>st</sup> if needed). BOE approved their budget (numbers same as presented previously).

b. Continue review of FY 2025-26 CES, COS and RSD11 budgets and identify questions for BOE:

No changes since review last week.

c. Begin review of FY 2025-26 Town Agency preliminary budgets and identify questions for agencies:

\$62,730 earmarked to offset the mill rate (projected at 32.46). Current budget may have surplus of about \$25,000, and may have overruns for Registrars (early voting), Public Works, Fire Department (will look at financials next meeting). Board discussed how to approach review of budget.

- Link Diwan suggested checking bottom line for each budget allowing 3.5% maximum increase.
- Jeremiah Rufini expressed concerns about using percentage and suggested looking at each budget individually for merit of what they are asking for.
- Peter Haines clarified bringing projected expenditure down (includes \$100,000 deficit).  
General Government - 10% increase (Town Administrator); Accountant - 2.5% increase (Salary); Assessor – 9.14% increase (In-house Computer maintenance); Board of Finance – 11.9% increase (consider reducing Office to zero); Board of Selectmen – 3.43% increase (Salaries, Legal Notices); Building/Grounds Maintenance – 4.85% increase; Burning Official – 2.5% increase; \*Employee Fringe Benefits – 3.38% increase (consider reducing \$5,000 from Annuity – Revisit); Fire Marshal – 2.5% increase; Historic District – 2.5% increase (Clerk); Inland/Wetlands Commission – 2.5% increase (Agent); Library – 1.39% increase; Planning & Zoning – 2.12% increase (Agent); Public Works – 3.23% increase; \*Recreation – 20.5% increase (Special Activities, \$2,000 reduction made last year not intended – Revisit); \*Registrars and Elections – budget doubled (2 Registrars and Early Voting – Revisit). Budgets with minimal or no increase – Board of Assessment Appeals, Bicentennial Arboretum, Building Official, Community and Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness. **\*Revisit**

- Link Diwan asked if there's a way to look at Electricity for the whole Town (each entity has their own bill with several components used in different ways – asked Val for budget vs actuals report on all utilities for the past 2 years).
- Peter Haines asked if cost for Town Administrator Salary would be defrayed from cost of 1st Selectman Salary (Juan will followup with Peter to explain the program).
- Dick Weingart suggested renaming Public Works 38102 to Ice and Snow Removal OT, and asked the Board to think about Registrars budget based on assessment of early voting (worst case scenario vs what most likely to happen).
- 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Juan Roman noted Public Works structuring work using materials in-house for remainder of fiscal year (very tight budget), and believes \$8,000 is reasonable for Recreation Special Activities (reaction to \$2,000 reduction wouldn't have been the same from other agencies).

Board presented comparisons of Grand List, Budget, CIP Funding, Mill Rates for FY 2018-2024 (Algonquin, CL&P). Biggest push to budget is education (most of cost from Parish Hill).

- Linda Caron predicts voting won't be like last year.
- Jeremiah Rufini expressed concerns with flat percentage creating incentive to operate a certain way.
- Juan Roman noted Chaplin Library/Senior Center provides services not offered in other area towns and would like to see how many people served from Chaplin and how many from other towns (monthly stats in Library Board minutes).

**d. Continue review of PRELIMINARY FY 2026-30 CIP Plan and determine potential available funding:**

Public Works - Drainage Infrastructure (deferred), Pumpkin Hill and S. Bear Hill bridges (looking at line of credit); BOE - CES Roof Replacement (can't expect to fund through CIP). Net funding is \$246,050 – postponing projects highlighted in pink would leave about \$65,000 plus \$315,000 transfer from Unassigned Fund Balance to fund remaining projects. Can defer \$60,000 for 2 bridge projects and leave everything else in Public Works. There is nothing in the budget for CIP.

- Link Diwan suggested funding half of CIP from budget, half from General Fund (would increase mill rate), and presented changes that could reduce deficit to \$32,000 – ask BOE to find \$50,000 savings (CES - \$20,000, RD11 - \$30,000), hold to 4% increase (Fire Department, Recreation, Building Grounds), Employee Benefits (\$5,000 reduction), Assessor (\$410 reduction), Registrars (\$7,000 reduction). Town has no control over RD11 or Central Office Budget (Link suggested town direct BOE to withdraw from Central Office - check with Town Attorney).

Table remainder of budget except Item #11a.

**e. Review of updated DRAFT FY 2025-26 State and local revenue estimates**

- f. **Review of FY 2025-26 General Fund budgets, parameters and schedule**
- g. **Discuss Potential BOF CIP meeting with Fire Department, Public Works, or Chaplin Elementary School**
- h. **Other Necessary budget business**

**11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested:**  
Town Administrator originally expected to start mid-year (\$10,000 appropriated). Contract amended to May 2025-2026 (received request for additional \$4,766 for the 1<sup>st</sup> year to get program off the ground).  
***Motion to transfer \$4,766 from Contingency Fund to #20270 Town Administrator, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.***
- b. **Review action items from previous meetings – see minutes**
- c. **Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar – FY 2023-24 & 2024-25**

**12. CONTINUING BUSINESS**

- a. **Review Board goals and policies for FY 2024-25:** All items moved to followup section of meeting minutes.

**13. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS**

**14. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING**

- a. **Regular/Special meeting(s):** Regular meeting agenda and Budget workshop agenda
  - 1) Potential agency budget presentations
  - 2) Review FY 2025-26 budget revenue and expenditure proposals
  - 3) Review of FY 2025-26 Town Agency preliminary budgets and identify questions for agencies

**15. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING**

- a. **Monday, April 14, 2025:** Special Meeting @6pm (Senior Center) – Budget workshop
- b. **Monday, April 21, 2025:** (TBD if necessary) Special Meeting @6pm (Senior Center) – Budget workshop
- c. **Monday, April 28, 2025:** Budget Public Hearing @7pm (Senior Center)
- d. **Monday, April 28, 2025:** Special Meeting following Public Hearing (Senior Center) – Budget workshop
- e. **Monday, May 12, 2025:** Annual Town Budget Meeting @7pm (Senior Center)

**Action Items:**

- Review Board goals and policies for FY 2024-25:
  - 1) Board policies and Board Member handbook.
    - a) Revise BOE Non-Lapsing Carryover Account: Revise to reflect change of Bank, G/F accounts, format.
    - b) Revise Board of Finance organizational documents and Bylaws.
    - c) General Fund: Policy on Unreserved & Unassigned percentage of budget and other factors.
    - d) CIP Fund: Policy on budget amount and new projects (when can be added and cost documentation).
    - e) Policy for dissemination of Personal Information of Board Members.
- Draft Memo Template for Agencies that are near budget.
- Funding for CES Roof Replacement.
- Put funds collected in excess in restricted account for sole purpose to offset next year's budget to lower mill rate.
- Check general item for Grant Funding that could be used to offset General Fund expenditures.
- Contact Treasurer about presentation by a Berkshire Bank representative.
- Chaplin Elementary Food Service Account.
- Fixed Assets – Public Works only.
- Highlight grant funding in the Budget and Annual Report.
- Bring in more visibility with reports and paperwork for grants.

**16. ADJOURN:**

***Motion to adjourn (9:17 PM) made by Peter Haines, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.***  
***Respectfully submitted by,***  
***Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott***