

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE
Chaplin, Connecticut
Budget Public Hearing Minutes
April 10, 2017

Chairperson Dick Weingart opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 PM. Present were Board members Linkesh Diwan, Jean Lambert, Cesar Beltran and Doug Dubitsky. Unable to attend was Board member Marc Johnson and Alternate Matt Foster. Others present were First Selectman Matt Cunningham, Selectman Bill Rose, Superintendent Ken Henrici and Chaplin Board of Education members Chair Jaclyn Chancey and Will Hooper.

3. READ PUBLIC HEARING LEGAL NOTICE:

Dick Weingart read the Public Hearing notice that was published in The Chronicle on April 2nd.

4. REVIEW GROUND RULES FOR PUBLIC HEARING:

The audience was asked to direct any questions to Chairperson Dick Weingart.

5. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BUDGET PROCESS: REVIEW KEY BUDGET POLICIES AND ASSUMPTIONS:

- Achieve a “no tax increase” budget.
- Balance the budget.
- Implement Phase 1 of the Motor Vehicle mill rate cap (32 mills – postponed from FY 2016-17).
- Maintain an Unassigned Fund Balance equal to approximately 10% of annual expenditures.
- Use the Fund Balance in a judicious way to avoid large structural deficits.
- Use a portion of any excess Fund Balance for urgently needed Capital Equipment purchases and infrastructure repairs.
- Maintain additional Fund Balance as protection against:
 - Unknown repair & replacement needs for aging Town infrastructure and vehicles
 - Unpredictable State grant funding for municipal aid in FY 2017-18 and beyond
 - Unknown Bedlam Road and England Road bridge costs

Note: Salary increases for FY 2017-18 have been projected at the BOS recommended rate of 2.5%. The Board of Finance has not yet approved this increase.

6. PRESENTATION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION AND TOWN BUDGETS: AUDIENCE QUESTIONS:

Superintendent Henrici presented the Chaplin Board of Education and RD11 budgets.

The Chaplin Board of Education budget has a 3.93% increase. The Board was presented with significant costs for Chaplin Elementary School (outplaced students, increased health insurance and contractual salary increases), salary increase for certified/non-certified staff, COC assessment ratio (36% - CES/64% - PHHS except the Special Education Director – 50%/50%), Instructional Consultant Description, legal expenses, special education costs for outplaced students and CIP request for boiler repair.

Doug Dubitsky expressed concerns with Legal Expenses and would like to see legal services bid out. He suggested sharing costs with the town to not impact the MBR. In addition, he asked for the cost per student. The approximate cost is \$20,800 gross for 158 students PreK – 6.

Bill Rose expressed concerns with moving items back and forth between the town and CES. Will Hooper suggested establishing a contingency fund. Link Diwan asked for the COC budget. Dick Weingart asked for

the number of instructional assistants. There are 13 paraprofessionals with approximately 80% for 1 on 1 based on IEPs.

The RD11 Board of Education budget has a 0% increase. There is a reduction in staff due to declining enrollment and consolidation of services. Superintendent Henrici will recommend \$300,000 to offset town assessments leaving the Fund Balance at approximately 3%.

Doug Dubitsky asked about the unusually high number of outplaced students at Parish Hill (there are 9) and for the cost per student for Parish Hill. The cost is approximately \$23,000 gross/\$16,000 net per student.

Town Agency budgets were reviewed.

Bill Rose and Matt Cunningham expressed concerns with the projected 12% fund balance as too high for taxpayers. They suggested putting more funds into the CIP for Public Works and Volunteer Fire Department needs. Dick Weingart reported that the issue will be reviewed at the budget workshops and asked for documentation on any CIP projects.

7. ANNOUNCE TIME AND PLACE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

The annual town meeting will be held on Monday, May 8th followed by a referendum that will be set by the Board of Selectmen.

8. ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING:

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 PM.

Minutes will be approved at the next regular meeting.

*Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Clerk*