

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE
Chaplin, Connecticut
Special Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2024

Chairperson Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Present were Board members Link Diwan, Linda Caron, Jeremiah Rufini and Victor Boomer; Alternate Peter Haines and Alternate Matt Foster. Others present were First Selectman Juan Roman, Finance Manager Val Garrison, CES Board Chair Jaclyn Chancey, Principal Kevin Chavez and Business Manager Jobina Miller. Absent were Board members Bill Jenkins; Alternate Izzy Alvarez.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Alternate Matt Foster seated for Board member Bill Jenkins.

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS: None

5. GUESTS: Chaplin Board of Education/CES, COC, & RSD11 FY 2024-25 Budget Presentations

a. Review and discussion of Board of Education/CES and Central Office proposed budgets for FY 2024-25:

CES Board Chair Jaclyn Chancey presented proposed budget for BOE/CES aiming for flat services while providing same quality of education and looking at actual costs. There is an accounting change with Group Insurance now under Object 210 (previously all under Function 1000). CES – overall increase of 6.09% including: Salaries (most 3% contractual), Non-Certified Staff Salaries (still being negotiated – need another non-certified for student needs), Group Insurance, BCBA Services (Psychological and Behavioral no longer grant funded - reduced to 2 days a week), Speech and Language Services (not able to fill the position with shortage across the state - outsourced). Major deduction for Magnet School Tuition with costs covered by the state. Central Office portion of the budget in line with those changes (majority is salaries – plan to hire a Superintendent within the same range for salary and benefits). Principal Kevin Chavez noted Special Ed is often the driving factor in the change in numbers in the budget while trying to keep the rest of the budget the same.

- Dick Weingart asked what BCBA stands for (Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (minimum of 4 students would be outplaced without it); asked about increase for Special Ed Services for student that moved into Town (one outplaced student moved in this year and going to Parish Hill - \$107,000 not budgeted this year); asked about projecting if increased costs would be covered in this year's budget or the need for additional funding (looking at requesting from the Non-Lapsing Fund – Dick will check if any approvals needed).
- Link Diwan asked about Chaplin's share of Central Office (50% for Special Ed, 45% for Building & Grounds, 80% for Information Technology, 40% for everything else); asked if the School Psychologist at Parish Hill is able to provide BCBA Services (needs separate certification); encourages shared services to reduce costs and duplication.
- Dick Weingart reported the Auditors found 2 funds with the Town's FEIN (Boy Scouts and Parent/Teachers) that should be handled the same as the Student Activities Fund – BOE needs to update their policy.

b. Review and discussion of RSD11 proposed budget for FY 2024-25:

Jobina Miller presented RD11 proposed budget with a 5.9% increase – Teachers (contractual), Negotiations for Paras and Custodians (not started yet), Insurance, Special Ed Services (would be 1.8% increase without costs for outplaced students). The Special Ed Director created transition program at Parish Hill that tries to give students (ages 18 - 21) the ability to live in society and able to do laundry, cook and get a job (very successful with 4 students previously outplaced brought back to Parish Hill).

- Link Diwan asked if Parish Hill has IT Services (has a dedicated person that is overseen by the IT Director).
- Chaplin assessment percentage increased to 49.61% (50 percent of students RD11 responsible for).

- c. **Review Board of Education (BOE/CES) FY 2023-24 budget reports for February:** Covered later on agenda.

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None permitted

7. REPORTS

a. Board Member Reports

1) Selectmen's monthly meeting:

Dick Weingart updated the BOS with the following: budget process well underway with some items outstanding (Resident State Trooper).

- Discussed significant increase (about 10%) for Trash and Recycling Collection (price per ton has dropped without having to change recycling to every other week – Casella working on new cost).
- Discussed costs for repairing and restoring the corner cupboard that was stored in the old William Ross Library.

b. Staff reports:

Reviewed the 2024 Town Financial Statements. Revenues – coming in as expected (Tax Collections running ahead, Building Permits running ahead, Conveyance Tax running slightly behind). ARPA – remaining balance of \$230,848 (Fire Pond outstanding).

Motion to accept February 2024 Town Financial Statements, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.

1) BOE/CES: Review and accept monthly CES Financial Statements (FY 23-24); identify questions for followup:

62.42% of budget spent to date.

- Juan Roman asked if short bus purchased for student transportation is being used (not being used - hard time finding a driver, van at Parish Hill used for Special Ed); asked why transportation going up with number of buses down from 4-3 (****need to check with the BOE***).

Motion to accept February 2024 CES Financial Statements, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.

2) Tax Collector: Review and accept monthly Tax Collections Report (FY 23-24); identify questions for followup: Tax Collections for February are at 99%.

Motion to accept February 2024 Tax Collections Report, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.

Assessor - Grand List reduced \$109,000 from appeals process with 5 real estate appeals (2 reductions, 2 with no change, 1 no show by property owner).

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular/Special meeting (s) – March 4, 2024, March 18, 2024:

- ***Motion to approve March 4, 2024 special meeting minutes, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.***
- ***Motion to approve March 18, 2024 special meeting minutes, made by Victor Boomer with the following corrections:***

Item #5a under General Government should read - RD11 Information Technology Director.

Item #5a under Board of Selectmen should read – decrease for Clerical Hire (only for time off for Administrative Assistant).

Motion was seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.

9. CORRESPONDENCE:

a. Board of Selectmen letter of March 13, 2024 re: Appropriation of Funds for the Benjamin Chaplin Cupboard:

Andy Belisle (restores furniture) presented BOS with estimate for restoration and appraisal of Chaplin Cupboard with an estimated value in excess of \$150,000 (nice piece that preserves the history of the Town). The BOS asked to use funds from the William Ross Library Restoration Fund.

Motion to authorize the use of unexpended balance of \$3,484.70 from the William Ross Library Restoration Fund to be used for the cost of paint chip analysis, restoration, appraisal and insurance for the Benjamin Chaplin Cupboard, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.

10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2024-25

a. Review Board of Education/CES Budget Proposal for FY 2024-25 and identify questions/comments for BOE:

Need to take a close look at the school budget (difficult budget situation with Special Ed student needs).

b. Review latest draft of total Chaplin FY 2024-25 anticipated revenues:

Not much change with projected revenues from the last meeting (looked at mill rate needed to get the same total revenue as last year). There is about \$1.1 million in budget requests: Government Operations (\$450,491), CIP (\$204,000), Education (\$527,942) – would need 4 mills to cover the increase and strategies on how to approach potential deficit.

- Dick Weingart commented about the Town voting to support Parish Hill that comes with a commitment to fund (proposed \$285,000 increase).

- Matt Foster suggested bringing up regionalization for K-6 (study done previously) for cost savings. Reviewed Chaplin Median Assessment Value with 40% increase in real estate and 20% increase in Grand List (due to decrease in personal property from Algonquin and decrease in motor vehicles).

c. Review Town agency budget requests, identify individual budgets for examination/additional information/adjustments: Tabled

d. Review FY 2024-2025 DRAFT Chaplin assessment percentage for RSD11 budget and cost impact on Chaplin: Covered in Item #5.

e. Continue review of FY 2024-25 General Fund and FY 2025-2029 CIP Plan budgets, parameters, and schedule: Tabled

f. Review Capital Projects Plan

1) FY 2025-2029 CIP Plan as proposed by CIP Committee: Tabled

2) Review completed CIP projects for closure: Tabled

g. Review dates for Board of Finance special budget workshops, budget Public Hearing, and Annual Town Budget Meeting: Tabled

h. Continue review of BOS recommended Salary Adjustments for Town Officials and Staff: Tabled

i. Other budget issues for consideration: Tabled

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

a. Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested: Tabled

b. Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar – FY 2023-24: Tabled

c. Review BOF Bylaws:

Inserted Article 4 – Members and Their Duties (existing Article 4 became Article 5) and pared down Article 3 so not redundant (Dick will send existing Bylaws with revisions for review).

d. Continue review of policies under revision

- 1) **BOE Unexpended Education Funds:** Tabled
- 2) **General Fund Unallocated Fund Balance:** Tabled

12. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS: None

13. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:

- a. Special meeting: March 25 – Standard meeting agenda & pertinent tasks from Annual Activity Calendar
- b. BOF response to Board of Education Budget Presentation
- c. Continue review of FY 2024-25 General Fund and FY 2025-29 CIP Plan budgets, parameters and schedule
- d. Continue review of FY 2024-25 agency budget requests

14. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETINGS:

- a. Monday, April 1, 2024: Special Meeting & Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Town Hall)
 - b. Monday, April 8, 2024: Special Meeting & Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Town Hall)
 - c. Monday, April 15, 2024: Special Meeting & CIP Committee Plan/Budget Presentation @ 7pm (Town Hall)
 - d. Monday, April 22, 2024: Special Meeting & Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Town Hall)
 - e. Monday, April 29, 2024: Budget Public Hearing & Special Meeting/Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Senior Ctr)
- Link Diwan suggested moving the IT Coordinator into the Town budget and share with the schools (Juan will consider after the audit of the computer system).
 - Dick Weingart would like to move the Revaluation Assessment into the CIP so appropriation doesn't lapse.

15. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn (9:35 PM) made by Link Diwan, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.

***Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Clerk***