

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE

Chaplin Senior Center

Chaplin, Connecticut

Special Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2025

Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Board members present: Link Diwan, Linda Caron, Jeremiah Rufini, Victor Boomer, Bill Jenkins, Alternate Peter Haines. Others present: Finance Manager Val Garrison, NECCOG Town Administrator Jordan Lumpkins. Absent: Alternates Matt Foster and Izzy Alvarez.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES: None

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

- Michael Whitehouse of Tower Hill Road expressed concerns about increase in his mortgage (nothing changed except taxes) and 8% tax increase - would like to talk to someone (property values went up about 40% - talk to Assessor).
- Stephen Hall of Miller Road asked about budget increase (biggest expense is increase in assessment to send kids to Parish Hill – about 1 mill), and expressed concerns about not enough businesses in Town (goes through Planning & Zoning, losing revenue from Algonquin).
- Pat Pogmore of Chaplin (member of Economic Development trying to bring revenue into Town) suggests going to Town website to see Boards and Commissions and their meeting dates, asked if any changes to MBR for education (no changes), and asked about cuts to ECS funding (state proposes taking funds from small towns to send to large towns).
- Ann Chuk of Chaplin expressed concerns about comments on Facebook regarding unessential services, and asked for continued support of the Library and Senior Center - very essential and great community places with lots to offer to the Town (Library established by state statute, Senior Center and Rec established by ordinance - all approved at Town Meeting).
- Adele Northrop of Chaplin Street suggests Agent for Seniors to advise Mr. Whitehouse (may be state or federal grants available), and commented that everyone's house measured the same for Reval.

Bill Jenkins left the meeting at 6:25 PM.

5. GUESTS: None

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None permitted

7. REPORTS

a. Board member reports

1) FY 2023-24 Annual Report:

- a) Consider and act on approval of FY 2023-24 Annual Report: Ready to be published.

**Motion to seat Alternate Peter Haines for Bill Jenkins, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.*

**Motion to approve FY 2023-24 Annual Town Report, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.*

b. Staff reports

- 1) Finance Dept.: None 2) BOE/CES: None 3) Tax Collector: None 4) Assessor: None

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular/Special meeting(s): April 7, 2025, (April 14, 2025 – Tabled)

**Motion to approve April 7, 2025 special meeting minutes, by Victor Boomer with following correction: Remove from Action Items – Put funds collected in excess in restricted account for sole purpose to offset next year's budget to lower mill rate; and Chaplin Elementary Food Service Account.*

Motion seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.

9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2025-26

a. Consider and act on Town Agency budget requests for FY 2025-26:

Budget assumptions - taking in less revenue than what spent (about ½ mill), challenges with RD11 budget (many failed attempts to dissolve – Chaplin voted yes to keep) and CES budget (unanticipated special ed costs), mill rate of 32.215 (7.5% tax increase), Fund Balance about 10% (about 6 weeks of expenses - financial experts like to see 16% for 2 months of expenses).

- Jeremiah Rufini would like to see education flat funded and cuts except to public safety or required.

Linda Caron left the meeting at 7:15pm.

Over the last 7 years, expenditures have increased \$3.5 million dollars (Total Town Government went up \$550,000, Education went up \$640,000 for CES and \$1,433,000 for RD11). Revenue decreased \$1 million (Algonquin depreciation).

- Link Diwan noted majority of expenses for education not controlled by BOF (Town can control by voting against budgets, discussion at BOE meetings, may be way to move out of Central Office). Budget adjustments include: Assessor (reduction for Pricing Guides no longer needed); BOF (reduction for Legal Notices, Office); Planning & Zoning (reduction for Advertising); Public Works (reduction for Road Maintenance, Equipment Maintenance); Recreation (reduction for Special Activities, increase for Electricity); Registrars (reduction for Registrars, Election Hire); Sanitation (\$3,000 reduction); Senior Center (reduction for Cable/Internet, increase for Phone); Volunteer Fire Dept. (remove Forestry Grant).
- Link Diwan asked about breakdown of CES enrollment and support for Central Office ratios between CES and RD11 (agreement will be posted online in BOF documents folder) – could reduce costs by abolishing Central Office.
- Victor Boomer asked about utilities in Building Grounds Maintenance (Town Hall, Museum old Post Office, street lighting, red light signal), and Tree Removal in Public Works also in CIP (use Public Works first, then moves over to CIP).
- Link Diwan suggests moving all Tree Removal to CIP and add to CIP funding (talk to 1st Selectman), suggests holding Fire Department to 4% increase (\$5,900 reduction), \$7,000 reduction to Registrars.

****Motion to accept preliminary budget of \$10,275,578 as presented with 32.215 mill rate to take to Public Hearing, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Link Diwan and carried with the following vote:***

YES: Link Diwan, Victor Boomer, Peter Haines.

NO: Jeremiah Rufini.

b. Consider and act on Capital Projects Plan and approve funding for same:

1) FY 2026-30 CIP Plan as proposed by CIP Committee

2) Review completed CIP projects for potential closure

****Motion to allocate \$352,705 from General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to CIP for FY 2025-26, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.***

c. Consider and act on Board of Education/CES budget request for FY 2025-26: Proposed 1.81% increase.

****Motion to approve BOE/CES budget of \$4,153,759 for the purpose of taking to Public Hearing, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Link Diwan and carried with the following vote:***

YES: Link Diwan, Victor Boomer, Peter Haines.

NO: Jeremiah Rufini.

- Link Diwan appreciates Business Manager and Principal's efforts with their budget based on actuals, and suggests talking about Central Office at the Public Hearing.

d. Consider and act on preliminary mill rate for FY 2025-26: Covered already

e. Consider and act on preliminary FY 2025-26 anticipated revenues:

****Motion to approve preliminary Revenue of \$10,150,472 made by Link Diwan, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.***

- f. **Discussion of General Fund and CIP Fund budget parameters for FY 2025-26:** None
- g. **Consider and act on Legal Notice for Budget Public Hearing:** Published already
- h. **Review BOF Budget Schedule and dates for Budget Public Hearing and Annual Town Budget Meeting:**
- i. **Other budget issues for consideration:** None

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested:** None
- b. **Review action items from previous meetings – see minutes:** Covered already
- c. **Appoint Auditors for FY 2024-25:**
**Motion to appoint Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan LLC as auditors for FY 2024-25, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.*
- d. **Select meeting date to set mill rate following the budget referendum on May 20th:** May 27th (tentative).
- e. **Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar – FY 2023-24 & 2024-25:** None

Link Diwan thanked Dick Weingart for all his work preparing the budget.

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: None

14. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING

- a. Regular/Special meeting(s) - FY 2025-26 Budget workshop following Budget Public Hearing

15. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING

- a. Monday, April 28, 2025: Budget Public Hearing @7pm (Senior Center)
- b. Monday, April 28, 2025: Special Meeting following Public Hearing (Senior Center) – Budget workshop
- c. Monday, May 12, 2025: Annual Town Budget Meeting @7pm (Senior Center)
- d. Tuesday, May 20, 2025: Town Budget Referendum, Noon to 8pm (Community 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.
- Check general item for Grant Funding that could be used to offset General Fund expenditures.
- Contact Treasurer about presentation by a Berkshire Bank representative.
- 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 (9:00 PM) made by Link Diwan, seconded by Jeremiah Rufini and carried unanimously.*

*Respectfully submitted by,
Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott*