

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE

Chaplin Town Hall

Chaplin, Connecticut

Regular Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2025

Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Board members present: Jeremiah Rufini, Victor Boomer, Linda Caron (7:41), Alternate Peter Haines. Others present: 1st Selectman Juan Roman, Finance Manager Val Garrison, Tax Collector Lisa Madden, NECCOG Town Administrators (Jordan Lumpkins, Mary Calorio). Absent: Link Diwan, Bill Jenkins, Alternate Matt Foster, Alternate Izzy Alvarez.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Alternate Peter Haines seated for Link Diwan.

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

- Adele Swart of Tower Hill Road asked the Board to look at Library budget narrative that includes No Increase in bold letters thanks to wonderful job with budget management by the Library Director who has written many grants that continue at no cost to the Town (includes installation of automatic door, wiring whole building for Internet). Cuts should not come from what is already at zero.
- Leslie Ricklin of England Road would like to know if decision about cuts would be made this evening (will present proposed reductions later on agenda).

5. GUESTS: Ms. Lisa Madden, Tax Collector re: Annual Suspense List and Quarterly Reports

Regional Tax Collector Lisa Madden presented Suspense List (deemed uncollectable - recommends transfer from active to non-active) and monthly snapshot of quarterly report available on Town website. Suspense List totals \$29,218 (Collection Agency Account - \$27,661.61, Deceased - \$1,556.39).

Motion to approve Suspense List as presented by Tax Collector for \$29,218, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

7. REPORTS

a. Board Member reports:

1) Selectmen's monthly meeting:

- Budget discussion included timing with RD11 budget in limbo - no decisions made.
- May Report from Regional Town Administrators presented (impressed with all items including examining budget process and procedures to make more efficient).

b. Staff Reports:

1) Finance Dept: Review and accept monthly Town Financial Statements (FY 24-25); identify issues for follow up:

- #25101 RD11 payment more than owed (needs followup).
- #26000 Board of Finance overbudget (Federal Audit).

Linda Caron arrived at meeting.

- Special Revenue Funds - Senior Center (activities, meals), Recreation, Library (gifts left in memoriam/trust, donations, proceeds from merchandise sales, no charge for activities/programs).
- Peter Haines asked where bulk of ARPA funds went to (AC system for Library/Senior Center and Firehouse, Fire Pond, vehicle - about \$7,000 left from \$662,000).

Motion to accept May 2025 Town Financial Statements, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Jeremiah Rufini and carried unanimously.

2) BOE/CES: Review and accept monthly CES Financial Statements (FY 24-25); identify issues for follow up: 74% of budget spent through April (includes tuition for Special Ed services).

Motion to accept April 2025 CES Financial Statements, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.

- 3) **Tax Collector: Review and accept monthly Tax Collections report (FY 24-25); identify questions for follow up:** Covered already.
- 4) **Assessor/Treasurer:** No Report

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular/Special meeting(s) – June 2, 2025:

Motion to approve June 2, 2025 special meeting minutes, made by Peter Haines with the following correction:

Item #10a should read – “(Juan noted monthly reports received from Library – they are busy)”. 1st Selectman working on new phone system with substantial savings to the Town.

Motion seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.

9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY2025-26

a. Review FY 2025-26 anticipated revenues:

1) Review state revenue updates after passage of State budget for FY 2026 and FY 2027:

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (less revenue), Motor Vehicle Tax Reimbursement (no revenue – exceeded maximum mill rate), Town Aid Road (increased revenue), Education Cost Sharing (legislation passed to hold districts harmless from reductions), Adult Education (goes to BOE directly for students eligible for transition services), level funding for (Supplemental Revenue Sharing Grant, Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Grant, LoCIP, Municipal Grants-In-Aid).

b. Consider and act on Board of Education/CES budget for FY 2025-26; identify questions/comments for Board of Education:

CES has Flex program for out-of-district students to receive Special Ed services on tuition basis. A student arrived recently and will generate \$54,288 in revenue (tuition and staffing) for the coming year - can be used to reduce CES budget to \$4,099,471 with overall increase of 0.48%.

- 1st Selectman asked why the school isn't sticking to 0% increase as requested (reasonable compromise with concerns about program being sustainable long-term).

Motion to approve CES budget of \$4,099,471 for FY 2025-26, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Jeremiah Rufini and carried unanimously.

c. Consider and act on Town agency budget requests for FY 2025-26; identify budgets for additional information, and/or adjustments:

Dick Weingart presented approach to limit budget increases:

- Consider BOF reduction up to 1.5% or flat amount – includes: Library (1.5% reduction), Fire Department (\$2,500 reduction for Forestry Grant), Public Works (1% reduction) for total reduction of \$20,700.

Discussion included: allow agencies to determine where to cut from, spend more time getting people out to vote than nitpicking the budget, concerns about sending budget out with no changes (not including RD11 – education a bone of contention), reduce Town budget as good faith gesture, put Tree Removal in one budget (currently in Public Works and CIP), consider taking same budget back to voters with \$84,000 in reductions for RD11 and CES, concerns about consequences if Public Works not able to do work (overbudget options include: Contingency Fund, appropriation from Unallocated Fund Balance or transfer overage from other budgets), don't cut Public Works (removed BOF reduction). Impact with proposed

reductions (includes reductions for RD11 and CES) would be overall increase of 3.34% with 31.5 mill rate and 4-1/4% tax increase for the average homeowner. It's possible to have 2 ballots at one Referendum to vote on the BOE and Town budgets separately.

Tabled remainder of agenda.

- d. Review preliminary mill rate for FY 2025-26**
- e. Discussion of General Fund and CIP Fund budget parameters for FY 2025-26**
- f. Review BOF Budget Schedule and potential dates for 2nd Budget Hearing and 2nd Budget Referendum**
- g. Other budget issues for consideration**

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line addition/adjustments as requested**
- b. Review action items from previous meetings – see minutes**
- c. Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar – FYs 2023-24 & 2024-25**

12. CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- a. Review Board goals and policies for FY 2023-24:** All moved to follow up section of meeting minutes.

13. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

Leslie Ricklin agrees new budget should be submitted (offering same budget would be insult to taxpayers). Every agency needs to be supportive of Town's needs with real effort by BOF to work with the Boards.

14. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:

- a. Regular meeting(s):** Standard meeting agenda - 1) FY 2025-26 Budget Workshop

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

- a. Monday, June 16, 2025:** Special Meeting @6pm (Town Hall) - Budget Workshop
- b. Monday, June TBD, 2025:** Budget Hearing @7pm (Senior Center)
- c. Tuesday, June TBD, 2025:** Town Budget Referendum @Noon to 8pm (Fire Dept.)
- d. June TBD, 2025:** Special Meeting to set Mill Rate for FY 2025-26 @ 6pm (Town Hall)
- e. Monday, July 14, 2025:** Regular Meeting & Approve Revenue Budget for FY 25-26 @7pm (Town Hall)

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 they can be added, 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 MR.
- Highlight grant funding in the Budget and Annual Report.

16. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn (9:53 PM) made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.

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