

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOF MEETING
TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, August 17, 2023
Chester Town Hall and via TEAMS

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman O'Hare called the meeting to order at 7:03. In attendance included: Chairman O'Hare, Members Deb Vilcheck and John Chillock and Alternates Bill Bernhart and Mike King seated, as well as Members Andrew Gardner and Steve Cline. Also in attendance were Richard Strauss, James Grzybowski, Cindy Lignar and approximately 6 audience members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes from the 6/15/23 BOF meeting were approved with corrections: "Same auditors" to be changed to "PKF O'Connor Davies, LLC." and "Alternate candidate" to be changed to "John Connelly, Alternate candidate".

CHARTER COMMISSION REPORT

Richard Strauss, Charter Commission Chairman, provided an update on the initiatives and discussions of the Charter Commission as well as the progress made by the Commission. He was available to address questions/comments posed by BOF members.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT

A copy of the correspondence received from the Harbor Commission was included in the BOF packet. The Town of Chester received an invoice from the Town of Essex in the amount of \$5,000 for the boat pump out services in the 23/24 season. The pump out program is administered by the Town of Essex and is reimbursed at 75% by the State via DEEP. Increased fuel costs and boat repairs resulted in increased expenses for the program. Chester has not been billed for a portion of the program in the past. John O'Hare will pursue additional data relative to the invoice from the Director of Finance in Essex.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the BOF authorized payment in the amount of \$5,000 from the General Contingency Fund to the Town of Essex for pump out boat services. The motion passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

John reported:

- The Town realized a year-end budget surplus throughout several departments, including the schools.
 - Potential uses for surplus: Town Hall sprinkler system, roads
- Tax Collection rate is "healthy". Back taxes are being collected.
- Additional revenue realized via the STIF investments.

FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT – None.

FINANCE – Financial documents, provided by Peter Evankow were included in the Board's packet and reviewed by the BOF. Items discussed:

- The Skyview property will be listed for sale (\$300,000 assessed value).
- Potential legal costs:
 - Upcoming Revaluation appeals
 - Tax lawsuits
 - IW – Aaron Manor – septic repair – neighbors may file a lawsuit.
- Potential for lost tax revenue due to bankruptcies

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Cindy Lignar updated the BOF on Sustainable CT initiatives. The town has reached 500 points to qualify for Silver Certification. In addition, the Town Attorney is reviewing the documents provided relative to the Cell tower at the Town Garage.

Chief Grzybowki provided an update on year-end financials associated with the Ambulance. In addition, he reported:

- The new boat is undergoing sea trials. The propellers were changed and the boat will be bottom painted.
- Documents are being finalized relative to the purchase of the new engine.
- The Hose Co. is working with Jacobson regarding the parking lot.
 - Possible location for EV charging station.
- ARPA – Communications/Radios – it is anticipated that the Department will be on the State's radio system in September.
- ARPA – Defibrillators have been ordered but have not yet been delivered.
- For FY 7/1 through 6/30/23 the Hose Company responded to 912 calls.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk