

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE
Chaplin, Connecticut
Remote Special Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2021

Chairperson Dick Weingart called the remote meeting to order at 7:02 PM and read the procedures. Present were Board members Link Diwan, Jean Lambert, Linda Caron and Victor Boomer; Alternate Peter Haines. Unable to attend was Board member Doug Dubitsky; Alternate Matt Foster and Alternate Bill Jenkins. Others present were CES Board Chair Jaclyn Chancey, Board member Will Hooper, Superintendent Ken Henrici, CES Principal Kevin Chavez, Food Service Director Jessica Texera, Business Manager Antonio Caldas and Administrative Assistant Sue Krodel.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

Alternate Peter Haines was seated for Board member Doug Dubitsky.

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS: None

5. GUESTS:

Chaplin Board of Education CES/RSD11 FY 2021-22 Budget Presentation:

a. Review and discussion of Board of Education/CES proposed budget FY 2021-22:

Board Chair Jaclyn Chancey commended the administration for their work on the budget that meets the needs of the school with staff that have increased their education and qualifications for higher pay grades. Superintendent Henrici presented the proposed CES, RD11 and Central Office budgets.

CES Budget – overall increase is 2.45% with major increases for contractual Salaries, Health Insurance (4%) and the Library Media Specialist. Regular Ed - decrease for Certified Staff and Non-Certified Staff; Special Ed – increase for Certified Staff and Non-Certified Staff (extra Paras per IEPs); School Social Psychologist – decrease for Certified Staff (new hire); School Library – increase for Non-Certified Staff (para now certified Library Media Specialist); Building Grounds - increase for Non-Certified Staff, Maintenance and Heating Oil/Propane (volatile account); Pupil Transportation – increase for Regular Ed and Special Ed; Out-of-District Tuition – decrease for Magnet School Tuition (number of students reduced from 15-10). Link Diwan asked about the following: big increase for Special Ed Non-Certified Staff (staff was moved to their proper function), substantial increase for Technology Coordinator (contractual increase that was renegotiated), budget for Electricity (very volatile account, hope to install air conditioning that will use more electricity), increase for Building Grounds Maintenance (building is 25 years old and needs work), why Legal Services in the Object budget was higher in FY 19-20 than last year (due to contract negotiations) and suggested changing the title for the Library Media Specialist. Linda Caron asked why the Certified Staff in Regular Ed went down (new staff hired to replace staff who were at maximum salaries).

RD11 Budget – overall increase is 0.60% (includes contractual Salaries and Health Insurance (4%)). Business & Computer – holding funds (hoping to fill the position with someone to teach a section who is cross certified); Music - teacher reduced by .2 FTE; Computer Technology – decrease for Network Maintenance (contract reduction); Special Ed – decrease for Certified Staff (new staff hired to replace staff who were at maximum salaries) and Aides/Assistants (down one Paraprofessional); Guidance -one Counselor reduced from 1.0 to .8 FTE; PPT Services – decrease for Speech & Language (.2 FTE shared with Chaplin Elementary); School Psychologist – not budgeting due to outsourcing Psych Evals; General

Administration – increase for Legal Services; Building Grounds – increase for Maintenance (substantial repairs needed, new Fire Panel needed per Fire Safety Inspection); Capital Improvement – increase to meet the recommendations from the Fire Marshal; Out-of-District Special Ed – overall decrease; Out-of-District VoAg/Tech – decrease for Magnet School Tuition (less students attending). Link Diwan asked about the following: any other teacher reductions (French will be reduced from .8 to .4 FTE due to course request tallies that were received after the budget was formulated); improvement costs for the Fire System (substantial repairs will be done with allocations from the Capital Non-Recurring Account, Capital Improvement within the General Fund and Building Grounds Maintenance). Dick Weingart asked if there were any shifts in individual line items in this budget between the February RD11 Board meeting and the March RD11 Board meeting when it was approved (there were no shifts).

Central Office – overall increase is 0%. Special Ed Office – decrease for Group Insurance (Director of Special Ed shifted into RD11 budget, new Secretary not taking insurance); Superintendent Office - increase for Superintendent, Administrative Assistant, and Group Insurance; Business Office – increase for Business Manager (moved from a 2 to a 3 day a week position) and Clerical/Secretarial (moved Secretary position from the CES budget to Central Office budget, substantial salary increase for another Secretary). Dick Weingart reported that the Secretary position was moved from the CES budget to the Central Office budget in the current year (***Superintendent Henrici will check on***). Link Diwan expressed concerns with the CES budget amounts for Central Office not matching the Chaplin Assessment. Superintendent Henrici reported that there was a \$45,000 error and a revised budget coming out tomorrow will reflect accurate allocations.

The BOF has been working with the BOE on the Food Service Program to find reasonable measures to run without a deficit. Business Manager Antonio Caldas and Food Service Director Jessica Texera presented Food Service Plan with eight Cost Reduction Initiatives to help achieve that goal.

Phase 1 – Focus on reporting, forecasting and reviewing monthly results.

Phase 2 – Reach out to different schools and the state to leverage best practices to see how they are managing costs and operations during Covid.

Phase 3 – Focus on food costs, labor costs, understanding cost drivers, utilize USDA Commodities to keep costs down and looking at National Food Distributors for competitive bidding to lower costs.

Phase 4 – Meetings scheduled with the CT State Food Service Director and follow up meetings with the State CFO to review grant opportunities (two additional grant opportunities not yet pursued).

Cost reductions Initiatives:

- In constant contact with the Educational Consultant at the state to find more money to get more USDA Commodities. Found a program with a list of foods that other schools are not using that schools in need can take advantage of and will order more food for cost savings (more expensive if ordered from the vendors). Granted an additional \$1,000 for the Produce Program (fresh fruits and vegetables).
- Bring back a-la-carte items after Covid.
- Promotion of free lunches through the Newsletter, Social Media, email and sending flyers home.

Jaclyn Chancey commended the Business Manager and Food Service Director for their work that has given more insight into the financial aspect of Food Service. Better forecasting and a budget are expected for this account to make improvements. Families are encouraged to use the Universal Free Lunch and Breakfast Program that is good for the school with reimbursement to the town. Dick

Weingart also commended them for their work on the program that has many moving parts and is hoping to see reasonable improvements. Link Diwan asked if any teachers and school staff eat in the cafeteria and suggested meals for Town employees, meals to order for people that work from home and reaching out to Chaplin businesses to become involved in the Food Service Program. Jessica Texera reported that a small number of teachers and staff eat in the cafeteria and anyone from the town is welcome. The Fire Department joins the staff for lunch on their yearly visits to the school.

b. Review Board of Education (BOE/CES) budget reports for February: No Report

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA: None permitted

7. REPORTS:

a. Board Member Reports:

Peter Haines reported that getting out the Annual Report is close with 100% participation and commended Sue Krodell for her work on this project.

b. Staff Reports:

1) Tax Collector: Review and accept monthly Tax Collections Report (FY 20-21); identify questions for follow up:

Tax Collections for February was 96.9%.

Motion to accept the February Tax Collections Report, was made by Jean Lambert, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular meeting(s) – February 8, 2021, March 8, 2021:

Motion to approve the minutes from February 8, 2021, was made by Victor Boomer with the following corrections:

Item #7b1) should read – The Governor’s Budget Address is scheduled for February 10th and the Governor has stated previously that he will keep municipal funding the same.

The motion was seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the minutes from March 8, 2021, was made by Jean Lambert with the following corrections:

Item #5a should read – The audit is designed to spot check for abnormalities (not 100%).

Correct the spelling for NECCOG in the entire document.

Pg. 2 CIP Public Safety should read – Bill Rose will follow up on account balance (new SCBA System), Drainage Infrastructure (ongoing, replacing metal drainage pipe).

Item #7b1) should read – Bill Rose reported that contracted services were for evaluation by an engineering firm required for grants for South Bear Hill Rd Bridge; engineering and surveying of North Bear Hill Rd intersection; and surveying of William Ross Library for septic system, well and driveway to make more marketable.

The motion was seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.

Dick Weingart reported on items for follow up: Funds in the negative are for certain situations that come up that are affected by journal entries (need to keep an eye on). Assets in the negative are due

to revenues that are never recorded in the CES General Fund because the town deposits revenue into the town's account. The Annual Report has been received from the BOE.

9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

10. BUDGET WORKSHOP:

a. Review and discussion of Governor's FY 2021-22 budget and municipal aid to Chaplin:

All the grants are basically level funded for FY 2021-22 and will be the same for FY 2023. Federal ESSERII is a new grant awarded to the town and the schools to offset Covid related expenses with no guidance yet on how to use. Additional Support: Distressed Municipalities (Chaplin falls into this category) is awarded for purposes as yet undefined and will include restrictions.

b. Review first draft of total Chaplin FY 2021-22 anticipated revenues:

The Board reviewed draft of total Chaplin anticipated revenues. To collect the same amount of tax revenue as last year, the mill rate would need to be increased to 32.85 mills or may need to reduce budget numbers. The following year, with the continued depreciation of Algonquin, would need to increase the mill rate to a little more than 33.5 to collect the same amount of revenue in FY 22-23.

c. Review Board of Education CES budget for FY 2021-22 and identify questions/comments for Board of Education:

Dick Weingart expressed concerns with the 2.45% CES budget increase. The BOF sent a letter to the BOE asking to keep a flat budget except for cost-of-living salary increase. Link Diwan expressed concerns with the following: presentation of salary increase for the Technology Coordinator (contractual salary that was renegotiated); increase for Electricity and Building Grounds Maintenance (recommends basing costs on lineal projections and do the same for the RD11 budget). Linda Caron commented that it is a good budget and agrees with Link Diwan regarding the Technology Coordinator. Peter Haines expressed concerns with the increase for the Technology Coordinator that breaks away from contractual obligations and the standard cost of living increase. Dick Weingart will ask the BOE for the following: revised CES Object budget, revised Central Office Budget and if there are any areas where staff was added. The Board will then need to decide on what bottom line number to approve for the BOE. Link Diwan suggested doing a spreadsheet and analysis with current preliminary budget requests and reasonable number based on last year's expenditure for Technology Coordinator Salary, Electricity, Building Grounds Maintenance, Heating Fuel and Propane. The spreadsheet will be compiled with salaries and reviewed at the next meeting.

The remainder of the agenda will be reviewed at the next meeting.

d. Review Town Agency budget requests; identify individual budgets for examination/additional information/adjustment

e. Review Capital Projects Plan

- 1) FY 2022-2026 CIP Plan as proposed by CIP Committee
- 2) Review completed CIP projects for potential closure

f. Review BOF Budget Development Calendar for FY 2021-22; establish dates for Board of Finance special budget workshops and budget Public Hearing

g. Other budget issues for consideration

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Review FY 2021-22 online budget book materials and presentation**
- b. **Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested**

12. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:

- a. Regular meeting: Standard meeting agenda & FY 2021-22 Budget Workshop
- b. Special meeting(s): FY 2021-22 Budget Workshops

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

- a. Monday, March 29, 2021: Special Meeting and Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Remote Dial In)
- b. Monday, April 5, 2021: Special Meeting & Budget Workshop @7pm (Remote Dial In)
- c. Monday, April 12, 2021: Regular Meeting and Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Remote Dial In)
- d. Monday, April 26, 2021: (Tentative) Budget Public Hearing & Special Meeting and Budget Workshop @ 7pm (In Person and Remote Dial In)

14. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn (9:50 PM) was made by Link Diwan, seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

***Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Secretary***