

**CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Chaplin, Connecticut**  
**Remote Special Meeting Minutes**  
**April 5, 2021**

Chairperson Dick Weingart called the remote meeting to order at 7:00 PM and read the procedures. Present were Board members Link Diwan, Jean Lambert, Linda Caron and Victor Boomer; Alternate Peter Haines. Others present was Selectman/Fire Chief Joe Pinto. Unable to attend were Alternate Matt Foster and Alternate Bill Jenkins.

**3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES:**

Alternate Peter Haines was seated for Board member Doug Dubitsky.

**4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:** None

**5. GUESTS: Mr. Joe Pinto, Selectman and Fire Chief; CIP funding for Fire Truck and Vehicle/Equipment Plan**

Selectman and Fire Chief Joe Ponto presented information on proposed CIP funding for Fire Truck and Vehicle/Equipment Plan. The Board of Selectmen discussed a possible spending plan from the Unallocated Fund Balance surplus and suggested \$500,000 for the England Rd Bridge project (towards town's 20% portion) and \$220,000 for vehicle replacement (towards purchase of new fire truck). Current amount of \$25,000 being set aside yearly is not enough and should be increased (current balance is \$120,000). The cost of a new truck to replace the current 1998 International starts at \$420,000. There is also a USDA Grant (\$100,000 available with no other applicants at this time) for fire apparatus. The following is a list of the trucks, how they are used and what they are used for:

- Pierce Engine – goes out on every call; has all rescue equipment tools with hydraulic Jaws of Life; holds 6 people; holds 500 gals of water; purchased used and wouldn't need replacement for 10+ years.
- 1998 International - main attack truck (1<sup>st</sup> truck in for a chimney fire) and responds to every incident, makes 90% of calls if there is a driver; equipped for car crash with battery operated Jaws of Life (2<sup>nd</sup> tool if needed); hold 1,000 gals of water; still runs but has issues with onboard generator that stopped working and is located on top of the truck in a compartment that is difficult to access (cost to replace \$10-\$15,000); LED lights need electrical work (need to repair or replace); truck is starting to rust; alternator replaced last year (parts hard to find).
- 1978 Mac Tanker Truck – main purpose is to carry water (1,000 gals); recently refurbished.
- 2006 GMC Extended Cab Pickup – utility truck that pulls trailer with UTV for brush fires and personnel.
- Rescue Truck Chevy SUV – responds to every rescue call and incident.
- There is no ladder truck (Willimantic and Scotland have a ladder truck if needed).
- Major equipment that may need replacement within 3-5 years is the Pickup Truck or the SUV.

Link Diwan asked about the following: How long would the truck last if refurbished (the cost of refurbishing is almost half the cost of a new truck); clarification on the USDA Grant (can be used towards the purchase of a new truck); cost of a used truck (not recommended unless it was a demo that would have to be fitted to Chaplin's needs, old truck only seats 2 people and would not support 2 paid firefighters at the station for every shift expected in the future); expected lifetime of fire trucks (1998 truck purchased new, 1978 Tanker purchased new); resale value (\$25,000 per insurance agent). Peter Haines asked about the following: how often the fire department responds on average (about 240 calls a year), were there any problems with injuries or loss of life (none) and supports CIP funds towards the purchase of a new fire truck in the CIP Plan taking USDA Grant funding into account.

Link Diwan asked about other equipment including: SCBA Bottles (life expectancy of 15 years, will start setting aside funds in 5 years); Jaws of Life (life expectancy of 25 years, will start setting aside funds in 5

years). Link Diwan suggested using the grant funds for the SCBA Bottles. Dick Weingart suggested the CIP Committee do more work in planning with funding schedule and acquisition replacement schedule. Victor Boomer suggested making a list of all equipment, how long it will last and set funds aside to purchase new equipment when it's needed instead of waiting until equipment is dead.

**6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA:** None

**7. REPORTS:**

**a. Board Member Reports:**

**1) FY2019-20 Annual Report – Approval of Annual Report**

The Annual Report is posted on the website and ready to be approved.

***Motion to approve the FY2019-20 Annual Report, was made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.***

Link Diwan commended Sue Krodel and Peter Haines for their diligence in working on the report. Dick Weingart commended Sue Krodel, Link Diwan and Peter Haines for all their work on this project.

**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. Special meeting(s): March 29, 2021**

***Motion to approve the special meeting minutes from March 29, 2021, was made by Jean Lambert with the following corrections:***

Item #10a should read – Link Diwan suggested including the General Fund Balance in the budget worksheets and work to keep the mill rate constant (might not be good to raise taxes during recovery from the pandemic).

Item #10d1) should read – Fire Hose (every other year).

***The motion was seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.***

**9. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**a. BOF Representative to Steering Committee for Chaplin Housing Plan:**

There are 10 representatives from town Boards and Commissions for the Steering Committee. Link Diwan will represent the Board of Finance on this Committee.

**10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2021-22:**

The Fund Balance information has been added to the budget workbook. Dick Weingart reviewed the impact of projected Revenues and Expenditures that may need an increase to the Mill Rate. The proposed \$900,000 transfer to the CIP may need to be reworked. The proposed BOE Budget and Town Agency Budgets need to be reviewed closely. Link Diwan would like to see the mill rate remain constant and avoid an increase if possible. He supports healthy funding over the next two years to purchase a new Fire Truck.

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

The revised BOE/CES and Central Office budgets are posted on the website. Link Diwan presented worksheet on examining the proposed BOE/CES budget with proposed savings. Unemployment Compensation, Travel, Instructional Supplies, Dues & Fees – Regular Ed, FICA Taxes – PPT Services, Communication, Dues and Fees – School Office all appear as underbudgeted (some based on current

year expenditures). Tech Coordinator (proposed budget indicates large salary increase not in line with other increases of similar nature). Electricity, Building/Grounds/Maintenance, Heating Oil/Propane (consider adopting linear projections based on historical experience). Non-Instructional Equipment (purpose unclear, prior years had no allocation, consider a CIP item). After revisions made by the BOE to Electricity and Building/Grounds/Maintenance, proposed savings would reduce the budget by \$28,556 (7 increases and 5 decreases) and should still be able to meet goals of the budget. Dick Weingart will work with Link Diwan to finalize a proposal that will to be presented to the BOE.

**b. Review town agency budget requests; identify individual budgets for examination/additional information/adjustment:**

Link Diwan did a similar analysis on these budgets. Dick Weingart reviewed the history of larger budget categories where most of the funds go.

**General Govt** – slight overall increase; Cyber Security added to Insurance (split 50/50 with the BOE).

**Accountant** – increase in hours (documented).

**Assessor** – increase for Software System. Annual payment for Revaluation done every 5 years moved to here. Link Diwan asked if there is any corrected billing based on actual quantities at the end of the year. Backup documentation needs to be posted on the website (**Dick Weingart will follow up**).

**BOF** – increase for Audit. There is a Fixed Assets Schedule used to determine depreciation (**Dick Weingart will follow up**).

**BOS** – increase in hours for Administrative Assistant (includes assisting the BOF); increase for Clerical Hourly (as needed for projects including automating Cemetery Lot Accounting).

**Building/Grounds** – overall increase; Utilities based on actuals; increase for IT Support; increase for Mowing (one contract for Cemetery; one contract for Rec Park, Town Hall, Senior Center/Library) with contracts going out to bid.

**Building Official** – increase for Town of Windham contract.

**Conservation Commission** – doesn't function but still has a budget. A movement is in the works to combine with Inland/Wetlands Commission.

**Emergency Preparedness** – no change. Link Diwan asked what Disaster Recovery is used for (**Dick Weingart will follow up**).

**Employee Fringe Benefits** – increase for Annuity Match (maximum contribution based on those employees eligible); This budget includes Holiday Pay, Health Insurance, Longevity Payment, Payroll Expenses, Unemployment Compensation. Link Diwan asked about Employee Recognition line item (Dick Weingart will post Chart of Accounts).

**Fire Marshall** – no change. Link Diwan asked who the Deputy Fire Marshall is (**Dick Weingart will follow up**). Mileage rolled into the Salary per an agreement.

**Library** – increase for Utilities (based on current expenses); energy rate for Solar Panels is locked in with no savings to Electricity.

**Police Protection** – increase for Electricity and Heating Fuel; Contract Renewal for Resident Trooper not yet received (**Dick Weingart will follow up**).

**Public Works** – decrease for OSHA Compliance; increase for Tree Removal (funds are also being set aside in the CIP); remainder of the line items are consistent.

**Recreation** – increase for Office Supplies (**Dick Weingart will follow up**). Link Diwan suggested tapping into Town Hall Office Supplies.

**Sanitation** – increase for Solid Waste Collection (cost to haul away contaminated recyclables). This budget needs to be revisited.

**Tax Collector** – increase for Contract and In-House Computer system (company that prints tax bills also mails them); increase for Legal Notices (*Dick Weingart will follow up*).

**Transfer Station** – no change; possible reductions could be made.

**Town Treasurer** – remove cost for Cell Phone (there is no Stipend).

**Volunteer Fire Department** – overall decrease. Link Diwan suggested an increase to Cable and a decrease to Electricity, Heating Fuel & Propane based on lineal projections; new equipment line needs research and consider funding through CIP (*Dick Weingart will follow up*).

**Contingency Fund** – Regular and Salary for this year. No decisions have been made on Salaries (there is a \$20,000 Contingency Fund for Salaries with projected increase of 3%).

**Board of Assessment Appeals, Historic District, Inland/Wetlands, Town Memberships, Zoning Board of Appeals** – minimal change.

**Burning Official, Community & Economic Development, Planning & Zoning, Registrars & Elections, Town Clerk, Tree Warden, Vital Statistics** – no change.

The remainder of the agenda will be discussed at the next Budget Workshop meeting.

**c. Review Capital Projects Plan**

1) FY 2022-2026 CIP Plan as proposed by CIP Committee

2) Review completed CIP projects for potential closure: #3300.13, #3305.22, #3320.1, 3320.12

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

**e. Review FY 2021-22 online budget book materials and presentation**

**f. Other budget issues for consideration**

**11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

**a. 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, April 12, 2021:** Regular Meeting and Budget Workshop @ 7pm (Remote Audio/Video)

**b. Monday, April 26, 2021:** Budget Public Hearing and Special Meeting Budget Workshop @ 7pm (In Person and Remote Audio/Video)

**c. Monday, May 10, 2021:** Annual Town Budget Meeting@7pm (In Person & Remote Audio/Video)

**d. Monday, May 24, 2021:** Special Meeting to Set Mill Rate & Approve Revenue Budget for FY 21-22 (Remote Audio/Video)

**14. ADJOURN:**

***Motion to adjourn (9:53 PM) was made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.***

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