

**CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Chaplin Town Hall**  
**Chaplin, Connecticut**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**July 22, 2024**

Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Present were Board members Link Diwan, Linda Caron, Victor Boomer, Bill Jenkins; Alternate Peter Haines. Others present were First Selectman Juan Roman, Administrative Assistant Susan Welshman, Finance Manager Val Garrison, Assessor Chandler Rose, Tax Collector Lisa Madden, BOE Chair Jaclyn Chancey, and audience member Ryan Perry. Absent was Board member Jeremiah Rufini; Alternate Matt Foster and Alternate Izzy Alvarez.

3. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** Alternate Peter Haines seated for Jeremiah Rufini.

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

5. **GUESTS:** None Expected

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

7. **REPORTS**

a. **Board Member Reports:** Annual Report letters going out (drafting procedures).

b. **Staff Reports:** No Reports

8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Special meeting(s): July 8, 2024**

***Motion to approve July 8, 2024 special meeting minutes, made by Victor Boomer with the following correction:***

Under Heading correct where meeting held - Chaplin Town Hall.

***Motion was seconded by Peter Haines and carried with abstention by Linda Caron.***

9. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

10. **OLD BUSINESS:**

a. **Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar:** None

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

**IF BUDGET FAILS AT REFERENDUM ON JULY 17<sup>TH</sup>: BUDGET WORKSHOP**

a. **Consider and act on recommendation to Board of Selectmen re: setting temporary mill rate in accordance with CGS 12-123, etc.:**

Lisa Madden presented information on the mill rate with 2<sup>nd</sup> budget failing: OPM frowns on different mill rates (nothing in the statute allows or denies), Town Attorney recommends mill rates stay the same with no ordinance in place (different mill rates would be difficult to defend with costly legal fees, citizens would question fair and equitable), statute allows BOS to set a temporary mill rate for money to come in to the Town – normally would use mill rate from last year (would be a disaster due to reval assessments - use mill rate close to what mill rate would be if budget passed).

- The Board discussed setting temporary mill rate: tax burden has shifted to residential real estate - look at dollar increase more than the mill rate, setting differential mill rate is not prohibited, don't set differential mill rates - may result in costly litigation, authority to set mill rate is with the BOS per the

statute, keep mill rate at 29.95 - supports revised budget #2 with about 21% tax increase for the median homeowner, could recommend a differential mill rate - BOS may not support, motor vehicle assessment changes starting with next year's Grand List - Senate Bill 501, reports to OPM used to calculate grant funding for the Town, set mill rate and send out tax bills (except motor vehicles – hold off for a month or two) with 2<sup>nd</sup> billing for adjustments to personal property and real estate, concerns about small number of people voting with 1,822 registered voters, townspeople want a lower mill rate, resubmit budget as is.

- BOE Chair Jaclyn Chancey identified \$70,000 in cuts to the CES budget (as far removed from education as possible): Custodian laid off, Art teacher left (hire new teacher at lower step), cut PD for teachers and Standardized Testing in half, School Equipment, Field Trip Transportation. Concerns with pushing too much on staff - could be a problem with the union and reducing Special Ed any lower would result in potential to be sued. Link Diwan asked if the budget includes salary increases (contractual increases) and where the IT Director Salary is (Central Office position).

- **Motion to recommend to Board of Selectmen a mill rate of 29.95 submitted with proposed budget, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Linda Caron and carried with the following vote:**

**YES: Linda Caron, Link Diwan, Peter Haines, Victor Boomer. NO: Bill Jenkins.**

- **Motion for the BOF to recess their meeting until after joint meeting with Board of Selectmen, made by Peter Haines, seconded by Link Diwan and carried unanimously.**

The BOF reconvened their meeting at 7:34 PM (Bill Jenkins left the meeting).

**b. Investigation of ways to reduce the budget AND to reduce the tax impact of the Grand List shift to Real Estate:**

Discussed budget to take back to the taxpayers: won't be able to have budget referendum for 2-3 weeks due to registrars being tied up with early voting for primaries, resubmit the budget like it is with same mill rate (29.95), should there be a Town Meeting if sending out the same budget (check with Town Attorney). Link Diwan suggested doing more with publicity to attract more voters (sent out to Google Groups, posted on Town Calendar and Town webpage). Discussed where to post information about the referendum – need to keep official: CES Principal sent notice out to parents, Linda sent notice out through PTO site.

**Motion to submit previously submitted budget to the Board of Selectmen to send to referendum, contingent upon approval by Town Attorney, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.**

- Joe Pinto suggested posting that the Town Government budget was lower than last year (include in message about the budget from BOF to the townspeople - direct people where to go to read it).
- Jaclyn Chancey noted that the Parish Hill budget is set – more cuts to education would have to come from the CES budget.
- Link Diwan suggested adding BOS and BOF Joint Meeting to the Budget Calendar.

**c. Consider and act on Board of Education/CES budget:** Kept budget the same.

**d. Consider and act on Town Government budget:** Kept budget the same

**e. Consider and act on combined Town Government, Board of Education budget and RSD11 budget for FY 2024-25:** Kept budget the same

**f. Review of BOF budget calendar & schedule:** None

**g. Other budget issues for consideration:**

Link Diwan suggested going forward with a Town Meeting (open for virtual attendance) and meet for a Budget Workshop next Monday for further discussion.

**Motion to schedule a Budget Workshop for July 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.**

**h. Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line-item additions/adjustments as requested:** None

**12. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:**

Ryan Perry expressed concerns about townspeople response to sending budget back out to referendum without any reductions - a Town Meeting should be held to explain that the only way to make reductions would result in loss of services (possibly Education and roads) and hurt the town.

**13. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:**

- a. Regular meeting(s): Standard meeting agenda and pertinent tasks from Annual Activity/Project Calendar

**14. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETINGS:**

- a. Monday, August 12, 2024: Regular Meeting @7pm (Town Hall)
- b. Monday, September 9, 2024: Regular Meeting @7pm (Town Hall)

**15. ADJOURN:**

*Motion to adjourn (8:45 PM) made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.*

*Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott  
Recording Clerk*