

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE
Chaplin Town Hall
Chaplin, Connecticut
Special Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2025

Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM. Board members present: Link Diwan, Jeremiah Rufini, Victor Boomer, Alternate Peter Haines. Guests: Library Director Sandy Horning, Library Board of Trustees - Chair Leslie Ricklin, Diane Sanchez, Adele Swart. Others present: Emergency Preparedness Director Jim Randall, audience members. Absent: Linda Caron, Bill Jenkins, Alternate Matt Foster, Alternate Izzy Alvarez.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Alternate Peter Haines seated for Linda Caron.

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS: Done after Chaplin Board of Trustees budget presentation.

5. GUESTS: Budget Presentations

a. Chaplin Trustees and Library Director Sandy Horning:

Leslie Ricklin commented on being very sensitive to another tough budget year – would like to work with the Town best they can. Sandy Horning reviewed the proposed budget with supporting information for each line. Library Assistant II - asking for increase (one has worked for 10 years with no significant wage increase while minimum age continues to go up – gets paid more to do Senior Center minutes than covering vacation). Moved \$100 from DVDs (more people streaming) to Periodicals. Cable Internet (grant covers majority). Electricity set by the Town (split with Senior Center – includes Community Room). Heating Fuel/Propane set by the Town (expected to go over this year). Remaining items stayed the same.

- Dick Weingart noted the BOS expected to approve 2-1/2% wage increase for Town employees except Public Works and asked how many periodicals are available (about 8-10 – mostly CT related including the Chronicle).
- Peter Haines commented on not much of an increase in 4-year span (lean budget - volunteers help with events and Friends of the Library that Board members are a part of handle the food).
- Leslie Ricklin asked if Library Board could determine what lines to cut if the BOF decides their budget needs to be cut further (try to give each agency total BOF reduction with specific exceptions).
- Link Diwan asked the Library Board to think about what to do to bring budget back to zero with difficulty in passing the budget last year.

Todd Marsh of Canada Lane proposed shopping around for Fiber Optic Cable/Internet (sent out to bid with lowest bid from CT Education Network for libraries and schools, received bid from Frontier), and expressed concerns with the following from CES budget: Superintendent's Office (\$120,000 increase), Business Office (cost of living increase amount not disclosed), Paras (receiving 45 cents over minimum wage), cutting teachers and consolidating classes, bringing in Instructional Coach to instruct teachers (have PD days), bringing in FT Psychologist or Psychiatrist (Psychiatrist to replace outsourced service with limited access).

b. Other budgets from invited agencies: None

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

7. REPORTS

a. Board Member reports:

Peter Haines presented BOF Annual Report with appropriate tables (approve at next meeting) -waiting for Treasurer's report (Link suggested including additional appropriation for federal audit – available online).

b. Staff reports:

- 1) **Finance Dept.:** None
- 2) **BOE/CES:** None
- 3) **Tax Collector:** None
- 4) **Assessor/Treasurer:** None

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular/Special meeting(s): February 24, 2025

Motion to approve February 24, 2025 special meeting minutes, made by Victor Boomer with the following corrections:

Item #10a should read – Will calculate excess funds to go into restricted account for difference of mill rate (29.95 set by BOS and 29.7 advertised in final budget).

Item #10e under 1st Selectman’s comments should read – NECCOG hired 2 for Town Administrator – one for grant writer (grant writing background), one for administrator (town management and transportation background).

Motion seconded by Peter Haines and carried with abstention by Link Diwan.

9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

10. BUDEGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2025-26

a. Review and update FY 2025-26 budget calendar:

Most Town Agency budgets are in. 2nd CIP meeting (March 13th). BOS Budget Presentation (March 10th).

b. Initial Review of PRELIMINARY FY 2026-30 CIP Plan and determine potential available funding:

Projects to fund for FY 2025-26: **General Government** - Revaluation (funds set aside for 5 years).

Public Safety - Fire Department - SCBA Bottles (needs further review), Firefighter Gear Replacement, Vehicle Replacement (Tanker needs to be replaced – need long-term plan with cost), UTV Water Tank & Pump, Trident Air Prime System. **Public Works** – plan for continuous funding with Road Maintenance (partial reimbursement from LOCIP funds), Tree Removal, Equipment Replacement (per replacement schedule), Drainage Infrastructure Rehabilitation, Vehicle Replacement (per replacement schedule), Nutmeg Lane Drainage & Paving; Sander Roof Rack (needs further review), Facility & Vehicle Communication, Senior Center Parking Lot Paving (funds set aside), Pumpkin Hill Bridge & South Bear Hill Bridge (needs further review). **Board of Education** – Heating Pump and Controls (needs repair before replacing boilers - likely required beginning FY 2027-28).

Net CIP funding from General Fund Budget - \$626,951 (LOCIP funds - \$38,823 and transfer from existing CIP Accounts for funds remaining in closed accounts - \$84,627).

- Link Diwan asked what projects can be funded with LOCIP (typically infrastructure). Grants may be available for large infrastructure projects (task for the Town Administrator).

c. Review of DRAFT FY 2025-26 State and local revenue estimates:

Total revenue projection – \$368,615 reduction (about 1.5 mills at current mill rate).

d. Review of FY 2025-26 DRAFT Chaplin assessment percentage for RSD11 budget:

Reviewed October 2024 Enrollment (Chaplin, Hampton, Scotland) for assessment percentage for RSD11 budget (\$140,809 increase for Chaplin).

e. Continue review of CES and RSD11 preliminary budget:

Changed carried for Health Insurance from ConnectiCare to Anthem (0.5% increase) – should be dramatic budget decrease (check with Business Manager).

- Link Diwan asked what split would be for Central Office (hasn’t met).

f. Review of FY 2025-26 General fund budgets, parameters, and schedule:

Total budget impact from revenues – loss of state revenue (car tax reimbursement, PILOT, ECS Grant), decrease in Grand List, and Parish Hill enrollment increase would be about 6.85% increase to the mill rate (2 mills). Excess funds from the difference in tax revenue between 29.95 and 29.7 will be used to offset the mill rate (about ¼ mill).

- Link Diwan suggested substantiating salary increases for Superintendent and IT Director (estimates – wait for Central Office budget).

- g. Discuss Potential BOF CIP meeting with Fire Dept., Public Works, or Chaplin Elementary School: None**
- h. Other Necessary budget business: None**

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested: None**
- b. Review action items from previous meetings – see minutes: None**
- c. Review and update BOF Annual Activity/Project Calendar – FY 2023-24 & 2024-25: None**

12. CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- a. Review Board goals and policies for FY 2024-25: All items moved to followup section of meeting minutes.**

13. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

Link Diwan speaking as a citizen located contract for Superintendent on the Hampton Town website (salary negotiated yearly with minimum salary of \$135,000 – no contractual increase). Also serves as Hampton Superintendent with minimum salary of \$52,439. Superintendent Salary in preliminary Central Office budget for FY 2024-25 (\$132,600 - CES pays 40%, RD11 pays 60%).

14. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:

- a. Special meeting(s): Budget workshop agenda**
 - 1) Potential agency budget presentations (BOS, Rec)**
 - 2) Review FY 2025-26 Budgets, agency presentations, and budget documents**
 - 3) Other necessary business**

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

- a. Monday, Mar., 10, 2025: Special Meeting @6pm (Town Hall) Board of Selectman budget presentation**
- b. Thursday, Mar. 13, 2025: CIP Committee Meeting @6:30pm (Senior Center)**
- c. Monday, March 17, 2025: Special Meeting @6pm (Town Hall) – Board of Education budget presentation**
- d. Monday, March 24, 2025: Special Meeting @6pm (Town Hall) – Budget review**
- e. Monday, March 31, 2025: Special Meeting @6pm (Town Hall) – Budget review**

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 can be added and 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 the mill rate.

- Check general item for Grant Funding that could be used to offset General Fund expenditures.
- Contact Treasurer about presentation by a Berkshire Bank representative.
- Chaplin Elementary Food Service Account.
- Fixed Assets – Public Works only.
- Highlight grant funding in the Budget and Annual Report.

16. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn (8:47 PM) made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.

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