

**CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**Chaplin Senior Center**  
**Chaplin, Connecticut**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**March 17, 2025**

**Chair Dick Weingart called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Board members present: Link Diwan, Linda Caron, Jeremiah Rufini, Victor Boomer, Alternate Peter Haines. Others present: First Selectman Juan Roman, Finance Manager Val Garrison, CES Staff (BOE Chair Jaclyn Chancey, Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski, Principal Kevin Chavez, Business Manager Jobina Miller, IT Coordinator Alex Hill, Penny Boomer, Jane Spencer). Absent: Bill Jenkins, Alternate Matt Foster, Alternate Izzy Alvarez.**

**3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** Alternate Peter Haines seated for Bill Jenkins.

**4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:** Covered after CES budget presentation.

**5. GUESTS: Budget Presentations**

**a. Chaplin Board of Education/CES, COC & RSD11 FY 2025-26 Budget Presentations:**

**1) Review and discussion of BOE/CES and COC proposed budgets for FY 2025-26:**

Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski presented CES budget (lean & challenging) with overall increase of 1.81% (Contractual Salary, Group Insurance, Special Education - transportation, PreK - Salaries split between budget and reserve funds with reduction in School Readiness Grant, Fuel, Magnet School Tuition - added back in, State not covering); Staffing – consolidation of split classes (reduction of 1 Certified Teacher, 2<sup>nd</sup> Certified position reallocated to Instructional Coach), 2 Special Ed para positions not filled, Special Ed Teacher position reallocated to BCBA position, shared service with RD11 for School Psychologist; Enrollment; Test Scores; Local Comparison (Other District Budgets).

- Link Diwan asked about charge for PreK Tuition (sliding scale); appreciates slides on test scores – hoping to see improvement (looking at individual growth and monitoring performance); asked about staff shared with RD11 (shared through Central Office compact and billed back to different budgets); asked if any progress on sharing services between the Town and school – asked to consider sharing IT services (continue to discuss).
- First Selectman Juan Roman asked how sustainable is using Reserve Funds for PreK (about a year - gives time to find other funding); asked about Local Comparisons (Scotland - 0% increase, Hampton - significant increase); appreciates what the school does with education – great job done with presentation.
- Dick Weingart asked if PreK is open to all children in Chaplin (open to all up to a certain number – have 17 currently); asked for clarification of SCBA position (shared service with Parish Hill – also does testing); appreciates what BOE and Administration does for students and the community.
- Linda Caron asked about tuition model for out-of-town Special Ed students (Chaplin has Flex program that allows students to remain in regular education setting).
- BOE Chair Jaclyn Chancey noted another tough budget year with difficult decisions (Principal Kevin Chavez agrees – need to consider the future as well).

Public Hearing for combined Town and BOE budget will be held April 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm (Senior Center).

- Todd Marsh commented on not filling Special Ed positions, promoting for out-of-town Special Ed students, and new coaching position.
- Karen Desciscio (PTO President) expressed concerns about consolidating classrooms, parents sending their kids to Magnet School and additional cuts to a very slimmed down budget.

**2) Review Board of Education (BOE/CES) FY 2024-25 budge reports for February: None**

**3) Review and discussion of Central Office and RSD11 proposed budget for FY 2025-26: None**

**4) Review of FY 2025-26 DRAFT Chaplin assessment percentage for RSD11 budget: None**

**b. Budgets from invited agencies:**

**1) Ms. Lisa Kegler, Senior Center and Mr. David Stone, Recreation Commission:**

**Senior Center** – increase for Salary (2.5% - Director, Assistant Director, Clerical Hire, Cook, Assistant Cook). Remainder of budget stayed the same. Working on getting rid of Cable/Internet – Internet will come from the library (IT working on).

- Link Diwan asked when Internet would be dropped (expect to drop this year – need to keep funds in case it takes longer).
- Dick Weingart noted new suspended ceiling and floor using ARPA funds, internet for library through CT Education Network - asked if Senior Center would piggyback internet services (will share with library) and asked how new HVAC system working (happy after bugs worked out).

**Recreation Commission** – increases for Clerical Hire (2.5%), Special Activities - Summer Concert Series (4-5 concerts), Chaplin Day (has grown since 2019), Movie Nights (license required per movie), Music License, Halloween at the Park (has grown with many participants), Light Up Chaplin. Remainder of budget stayed the same.

- Dick Weingart asked if any other leagues besides basketball (soccer held many years ago – kids lost interest, Hampton and Scotland invited to join basketball at higher fee - in negotiations with Hampton to form partnership).
- Jeremiah Rufini asked who covers vandalism and theft (Public Works covers labor, Building & Field Maintenance covers materials).
- Juan Roman would like to see more youth (future leaders) getting involved in town activities by standing behind the Rec Commission.
- Link Diwan noted next year is America’s 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (would be great to incorporate with Chaplin Day, funds may be available at state level).

**c. Budgets from other invited agencies:**

Public Works – Dave Stone reviewed current budget in monthly financial report - about 70% spent through February very misleading (may not have enough to end of year after labor costs), stopped auto drops for diesel and gas (Town’s emergency supply – will fill if gets low enough), overbudget (Overtime, Snow Removal O/T, Salt, Equipment Maint. – repaired 2002 spare truck and old CAT backhoe).

- Link Diwan asked if any savings with stopping auto delivery (may have to go out to bid to reinstate).
- Dick Weingart asked about salt and sand use (sand taken out of mix – no traction but clears roads faster and saves on sweeper, more salt used when colder), and asked about environmental impact of salt (no more than before for a normal winter, sand plugs up drainage).

CIP Plan - Nutmeg Lane project planned for 2025-26 deferred (not transferred to new plan). Road projects need to go out to bid and in place before the budget.

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

**7. REPORTS**

**a. Board member reports:**

**1) FY 2023-24 Annual Report:**

- a) Consider and act on approval of BOF FY 2023-24 Annual Report:** waiting for Treasurer’s Report.  
***Motion to approve FY 2023-24 BOF Annual Report as amended, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.***

**b. Staff reports:**

- 1) Finance Dept.: Review monthly Town Financial Statements (FY24-25) as necessary: No Report**

- 2) **BOE/CES: Review and accept monthly CES Financial Statements (FY24-25); identify questions for followup:** 59.67% of budget spent through February.  
*Motion to accept February 2025 CES Financial Statements, made by Victor Boomer, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.*
- 3) **Tax Collector: Review monthly Tax Collections report (FY24-25) as necessary:** No Report  
**Assessor:** BOS voted to change Motor Vehicle Valuation program - increases Grand List for motor vehicles.

## 8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### a. Regular/Special meeting(s): March 3 and March 10, 2025

- *Motion to approve March 3, 2025 special meeting minutes, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Peter Haines and carried unanimously.*
- *Motion to approve March 10, 2025 special meeting minutes, made by Peter Haines with the following corrections:*
  - Item #5a1) should read – “expressed the need to bring in more visibility with reports and paperwork for grants”. Peter Haines suggested thinking about NECCOG assistance with grants and report for all current grants at budget time.
  - Item #7a1) should read – Health Insurance costs went down with Anthem bid (expected to go up with ConnectiCare). Legislation passed recently to give Towns option to change depreciation schedule (would increase Grand List for motor vehicles about 5%).
  - Item #7b1) should read – Jeremiah Rufini asked if Town liable for Public Benefit with electricity (Public Benefit included).*Motion seconded by Victor Boomer and carried unanimously.*

## 9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

## 10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2025-26

### a. Review updated FY 2025-26 budget calendar:

Appeals window pushed out to April (may be appeals for Veteran exemption and motor vehicles). RD11 budget will be approved at meeting tomorrow night. Central Office Committee will meet on Wednesday.

- Peter Haines suggested asking Superintendent to present RD11 budget like the CES budget (Juan working with Superintendent to come here and explain budget on informal basis before full presentation – doing the same for Public Works on April 1<sup>st</sup>).

### b. Consider the FY 2024-25 mill rate and tax differential (0.25 mills) and transfer funds to a Restricted General Fund Account: ¼ mill differential between 29.95 and 29.7 mill rate is \$62,739.

*Motion to transfer \$62,739 from Unallocated General Fund Balance to Restricted Account for purpose of reducing FY 2025-26 mill rate, made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.*

### c. Continue review of PRELIMINARY FY 2026-30 CIP Plan and determine potential available funding:

Discussed funding for CIP: projects will cost a lot more in the long run if not funded, educate taxpayers before Public Hearing, prioritize projects, lots of services in Town (have to spend the money), have Town Administrator tap into grants (contract being reviewed by Town attorney), Juan asked if open to bonding (town in good financial position and doesn't owe anything - gathering more information). Board asked what information needed to make decision on funding CIP - amount of funding put into CIP over last 5 years, average mill rate and what's needed in the CIP, specific information for better sales pitch (Town Administrator most appealing), see what's out there for grants, information on bonding, amount of property tax revenue raised (Juan suggested taking out Algonquin to get real average mill rate) - most of Algonquin revenue used for capital projects.

### d. Continue review of FY 2025-26 CES & RSD11 preliminary budgets and identify questions for BOE: None

- e. **Review updated DRAFT FY 2025-26 State and local revenue estimates:** None
- f. **Review of FY 2025-26 General Fund budgets, parameters and schedule:** None
- 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:** None

**14. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING**

- a. **Special meeting(s): Budget workshop agenda**
  - 1) **Potential agency budget presentations**
  - 2) **FY 2025-26 budget revenue and expenditure proposals**

**15. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING – No Budget Workshop Meeting March 24<sup>th</sup>**

- a. **Monday, March 31, 2025: Special Meeting @6pm (Senior Center) – Budget workshop**

**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 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.
- Bring in more visibility with reports and paperwork for grants.

**16. ADJOURN:**

***Motion to adjourn (9:30 PM) made by Link Diwan, seconded by Linda Caron and carried unanimously.***

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