

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021, AT 6:30 P.M.**

VIRTUAL MEETING

**This meeting can be viewed live at
[youtube.com/c/CheshireChannel14](https://www.youtube.com/c/CheshireChannel14) or on Channel 14**

Public Comments can be made

Via email at Comments@Cheshiredirect.org

And by voice message prior to the meeting at 203-271-6638

Present

David Borowy, Chairman; Jim Jinks and Tim Slocum

Staff: Town Manager Sean M. Kimball, Asst. Town Manager Arnett Talbot, Finance Director James Jaskot; Tax Collector William Donlin; Police Chief Neil Dryfe; John Gawlak, Parks and Rec Director

1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Acceptance and appropriation of a donation of a police motorcycle to the Cheshire Police Department from the Hometown Foundation and Bozzuto's Inc.

4. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$150 donation from the Town Clerk's Office to the Human Services Account to be used for general purposes.

5. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$500 donation from White Bowman Plumbing & Heating Inc. to the Cheshire Fuel Bank.

6. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$1,760.00 donation from the Cheshire Senior Center Membership Association Inc. to the Human Services Gift Account to be used for the Senior Center.

7. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$943.85 donation from the Cheshire Fire Department Holiday Collection to the Human Services Gift Account to be used for general purposes.

8. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$100 donation from Richard and Kathleen Pfeiffer to the Cheshire Police Department Gift Account to be used for personal protective equipment.

9. Acceptance and appropriation of \$50 donation from Deborah Rutter to the Human Services Gift Account to be used for holiday programs.

10. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$100 donation from the First Congregational Church of Cheshire to the Cheshire Fuel Bank.
11. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$300 donation from Angie Bradley To the Human Services Gift Account for the Adopt-A-Family Program.
12. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$1,000 donation from Barbara Christoff To the Human Services Gift Account to help our residents in need.
13. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$50 donation from an anonymous donor To the Human Services Gift Account to help our residents in need.
14. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$4,940.29 donation from the Cheshire Senior Travel Club to the Human Services Gift Account to be used for the Senior Center.

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED to accept agenda items #3 through #14 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

Chief Dryfe informed the committee that agenda item #3, donation of a police motorcycle worth about \$25,000 from Hometown Foundation and Bozzuto's Inc. was very generous and greatly appreciated by CPD.

Mr. Borowy commented on the generosity of the Cheshire community with donations for many Town departments.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

15. Discussion and possible action re: Parks and Field Use Charges

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED to accept agenda item #15, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

The Town Council and Budget Committee had discussion on the field use fee changes proposed, and were in favor of the reasonable changes.

With regard to the field use charges, Mr. Jinks noted there is nothing in the proposal for payment of charges for field maintenance work done by Town Maintainers. He asked if the fee changes will cover this expense, and if this revenue would be in a separate fund.

Town Manager Kimball explained the proposal is only for fee changes for use of the fields. During the budget process the issue of charges for field maintenance will be discussed. The Maintainers are funded out of the PW Dept. budget, and the field fee revenue goes into the Parks and Rec budget. The offset of maintenance expenses becomes an accounting matter to be reviewed during the budget process.

Mr. Borowy does not favor special funds and enterprise funds.

In the budget process, Mr. Slocum said sources of revenue are shown for departments.

Mr. Kimball explained there were cases in which the frequent local field users would often pay for supplies out of their own funds. They should have been accepted and appropriated by the Council, but there was no mechanical way to fairly equate what this does...i.e. preferential treatment for use of fields. It is better for the Town to accept fees, not equipment, and use the funds to purchase equipment. At this time, the Town is not getting any in-kind funds to purchase equipment.

Mr. Gawlak reported volunteerism is getting less and less. And, there are more requests and demands for field work, purchasing of clay, bases, etc. by the leagues, an expense which the leagues used to pickup.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

16. Extension of COVID-19 local property tax deferral program.

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED to accept agenda item #16, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

Mr. Borowy stated the Town Council has already adopted this program, and the executive order says once adopted, it continues on. It should be noted this includes the property tax due in January (motor vehicles, 2nd half of real property, sewer use charges).

When first introduced, Mr. Kimball said it was a three (3) month deferral. It is actually a two (2) month deferral of the existing one (1) month grace period, and technically taxes must be paid by March 31st.

According to Mr. Jaskot there has not been a big problem with the deferral program, and the cost has been about \$10,000. The majority of taxes are in escrow accounts and paid on time, and many people paid up front without the grace period.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

17. Approval of bidding requirements

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED to accept agenda item #17, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

The recommendation for bid requirements February 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 is maintained, with \$30,000 bid limit for construction related services and \$15,000 for non-related construction services.

Mr. Kimball stated there is no change from last year, when the bid levels were increased. The vendor list is also the same as last year.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

18. Discussion and possible approval of income levels for the 2020 Local Elderly Tax Credit Program.

MOTION by Mr. Jinks; seconded by Mr. Slocum.

MOVED to accept agenda item #18, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

Mr. Borowy stated this is the annual update of the numbers to correspond with the State numbers. The increase is about 1.5% in the levels, and the program helps over 400 people in Cheshire. The program is very successful.

At this time there are 431 people in the program, and Mr. Jaskot noted the number fluctuates year to year. In 2015 there were 499 people, and prior years the number was over 500 participants. The tax credit is based on State program guidelines. Each year the Council reviews and raises the levels to the State level.

The local program in Cheshire goes beyond what the State provides and covers more people than the State program. The cost to Cheshire for the program is \$55,000, and State program is \$45,000.

19. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Jinks.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk