

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 7:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2016 IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410.

Present

Chairman Robert J. Oris; Vice Chairman Paul A. Bowman; Council Members Patti Flynn-Harris, Liz Linehan, Sylvia Nichols, Thomas Ruocco, Timothy Slocum, and Peter Talbot. Absent: Michael Ecke.

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director, Louis Zullo, Personnel Director; Robert Ceccolini, Director Parks and Rec Department; Sheila Adams, Pool Coordinator.

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 OF FY 14-15 COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Ms. Linehan.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #022316-1.

RESOLUTION #022316-1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council accepts the FY 14-15 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Discussion

Ms. Nichols reported on the Audit Committee Meeting of February 22nd and the overview of the report with Scott Basset of RSM. The report is favorable in terms of the Town, BOE and Finance Department, and the purpose of the report is to insure the town is following generally accepted accounting principles.

Mr. Jaskot submitted a summary of the financial report for Council members to review. He said it was a successful audit. During the audit, internal controls were looked at to make sure reports are fairly stated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. There were no material weaknesses in the control structure of the town.

Surplus FY 2015 - \$1,096,567; \$1 million was used to fund this year's operating budget (\$700,000); December 2015 there was an additional appropriation from fund balance of \$350,000 for additional reserves for debt service. As a result the fund balance increase

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was \$46,567. Fund balance is 91.17% of the general fund operating expenditures. Fund balance policy requires 8%.

Tax Collections - the collections are at 99.7%, exceeding the 99% expected rate.

Reserve funds, medical trust fund are monitored monthly and the Council receives reports.

There was a separate audit of the grants. The town received \$22.7 million in State grants in FY 2015, and \$2.1 million in federal grants. Other grants were the Clean Water Fund Grant, BOE grants, WPCD grants, and project construction grants.

Page 2 - the town submits its financial documents to the GFOC and has received awards of excellence for 22 years. This reflects strongly with the rating agencies; the town has a good professional management team; and has received awards for its financial statements and budget documents.

The town has a clean opinion; the statements are all in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

WPCD - surplus of \$4,567; \$669,000 balance as of June 2015.

Community Pool - surplus of \$52,199.

OPEB - there is a new liability for pension funds under GASB 68. This shows a \$28 million hit on the government financial statements; it is a long term liability being funded. OPEB will show on the balance sheet under the next GASB to be implemented; will be another \$25 million hit to the government financial statements. Cheshire is funding its liabilities; the discount rate is now 7.5% and contributions increase, and have caught up.

Cheshire does not have post retirement medical benefits; teachers can stay on the medical plan with full premium payment; this is an inflation to the insurance costs.

Mr. Slocum commented on the report being excellent, and he has heard about auditing firms scope of work in looking at the town's control systems, infrastructure, and computer and technology.

Under general accepted auditing standards, Mr. Jaskot said they are required to look at technology, and RSM has a department that reviews this area.

Last year during the interview process for the auditing firm, Ms. Flynn-Harris noted this was stressed by the firms. Cheshire had done so much with technology upgrade and had the information.

Mr. Jaskot said the auditor looks at the town having a redundant system should the computer system fail. Apex Technology does a good job keeping up with this area of importance, and security is in place.

The new GASB took effect for this audit and Ms. Flynn-Harris asked if an additional GASB could reverse the position of others. This is the first year for the pension.

They can override prior GASB systems...and Mr. Jaskot said they can do what they want. It makes the statements so complex to accommodate all the user group needs.

Regarding the cash accounts, Mr. Jaskot said there were minimal concerns about internal controls for student activity funds, reporting from small departments, collection of small fees.

With OPEB on the sheets, Mr. Oris asked if this jeopardizes the AAA credit rating.

In reply, Mr. Jaskot said he cannot imagine it would; the liability is always reported, but was never in the balance sheet. Agencies look at funded liabilities and how well funded they are. Cheshire has made progress in this area.

Chairman Oris thanked Mr. Jaskot, Ms. DeFilio and the Finance Department staff for their hard work, which is reflected in the outstanding financial statements and awards.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Ms. Nichols.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #022316-2.

RESOLUTION #022316-2

BE IT RESOLVED, that, in accordance with Section 3-4 of the Town Charter, the Town Council hereby retains Marilyn Milton as Clerk of the Council at the rate of \$47.00 per hour for attendance at meetings, \$13.00 per page for minutes typed, and \$25.00 per hour for miscellaneous clerical work performed for the Town Council, per the recommendation of the Town Council Personnel Committee, effective March 1, 2016 through February 28, 2018.

Discussion

Personnel Committee Chairman Ruocco reviewed the letter from Ms. Milton on her reappointment as Clerk of the Town Council, noting that the contract rates have not increased in many years. Mr. Ruocco noted that the position of Clerk receives no benefits or expense reimbursement from the Town. He stated he supports the proposed contract.

Ms. Milton affirmed that she does not receive benefits, reimbursement, or any other compensation from the Town in her Clerk position. The current rates have been in existence for many years, and due to increased expenses for her business, she has requested consideration of the change in rates charged.

Mr. Talbot and Ms. Nichols (Personnel Committee members) stated they were in favor of the new contract.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

MOVED that the following reappointments be approved by the Town Council.

The Beautification Committee - Pauline Cacace (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18; William Bonaminio (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18; William Meyerjack (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18; Jane Presnick Lyon (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18.

Building Code Board of Appeals - George Bowman (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Economic Development Commission - David Pelletier (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Environment Commission - Robert DeVlyder (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Historic District Commission - Elizabeth Fox, (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/21; James Vibert Sr. (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19.

Cheshire Housing Authority - Marcel Gauthier (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/21.

Human Services Committee - Susan Pappas (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19; George Pawlush (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19; Ruth Veleber (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19; Martha Picket (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19.

Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission - Robert deJongh (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20; Thom Norback (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Library Board - Tod Dixon (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Performing & Fine Arts Committee - Donna Lodynsky (U), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19; Donna Myjak (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19; Ophelia Frazier (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/19.

Prison Advisory Committee - Trip Sanders (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18;
Margaret Rogers (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18.

Public Safety Commission - Nick Cifarelli (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Retirement Board - W.Dennis Flagg (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/20.

Water Pollution Control Authority - Kenneth Cianci (R), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18.

Youth Services Committee - William Kalinowski (R) term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18;
Rosa Solla (U), term of office 2/23/16 to 1/31/18.

Chesprocott Health District - Lisa Davis (R), term of office 2/223/16 to 1/31/19.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

6. DISCUSSION RE: COMMUNITY POOL

Ms. Adams informed the Council about many problems with the fiber glass grates at the community pool. In this regard she has spoken with a company who informed her this is normal with these grates, that they should be replaced every 10 years. The pool grates have been installed for 15 years. Ms. Adams cited the three options for the grate situation.

1. Resurface existing grates; many pools do this every 10 years; estimated cost is \$9,000 to \$11,000. Based on the time to do one grate (pool has 60 grates) the costs could be lower or higher.
2. Replace existing grates with new fiber glass grates; \$25,000 estimated costs for the grates; in 10 years the grates must be resurfaced again.
3. PVC grates - \$18,000 cost for grates; welding and installation are additional costs; more process required for the PVC grates.

All the grates must be skid resistant; painting grates has a four week time frame; fiber glass grates have a 4 to 6 week time frame; PVC grates have a 2 week possible time frame for delivery, then welding and installation to complete the project.

Ms. Adams ordered two fiber glass grates, \$380 each, and there are 60 grates at the pool. Painting of grates cannot be done in house due to sanding involved/airborne material, so it must be done in a controlled environment. Chesprocott visited the pool about the issue. If fiber glass grates are to be painted, they will be removed a few at a time starting with the dive well...take one out, paint, and put it back in.

PVC grates require welding to be done; water level is dropped a little for welding; sections of the pool will be closed; the welding process could start immediately but cost of this work is unknown at this time.

Ms. Adams informed the Council that she did not know about the grating issue until people told her last week; the grates are fading, not peeling; and fibers stand out and skin gets irritated.

Ms. Nichols stated this issue has nothing to do with the new pool.

Mr. Talbot talked about the pool budget, and fund balance of \$52,200 from last year.

The difference between rehab and ordering and installing new grates was cited by Mr. Slocum, who questioned the long term gain.

With the PVC grates the life cycle is 20 years and Ms. Adams said some of these grates may have to be replaced, individually, over time, but a full replacement would not be required. Painting the grates has them taken out, sanded, work done, reinstalled, and total of one month to complete the work. The amounts stated are just for the grates, and fiber glass grates cost between \$30,000 to \$33,000. PVC grates will have a total cost of \$23,000 to \$25,000.

Ms. Linehan reported she has received letters from parents of children hurt or affected with a rash from the grates, and said the grates need to be replaced. She suggested a warning system to keep children off the grates, and alert people without fear.

It was stated by Ms. Adams that when people come to the pool, they read a notice, and if there are questions they will be answered. There is a sign posted about the grates, and lifeguards are available for assistance. Since last Wednesday, no one has been hurt. When the fibers are wet, they lay down, and are not a bother. The shallow end is the 1st place to be addressed as kids use the ladders to get out of the pool. Ms. Adams advised pool staff is doing what it can to insure no one is walking on the grates.

Ms. Nichols commented on the fact that the town and staff are paying attention to this issue, but cannot make everything safe in public places, and parents must have some responsibility. The issue is not being ignored; it is being addressed; and information is available to the public.

The Council was told by Ms. Adams that since the pool opening, 3500 to 4000 people have come in to use the pool, and only 8 complaints have been made. The grate situation is not an epidemic situation, and staff is doing what it can to insure no one is hurt in the pool. She reported swim lesson revenue of \$65,000 to date, and the fact that since last week, parents are acting responsibly.

Mr. Milone reviewed the pool financial situation. To date there is \$122,500 committed to all the projects at the pool. There is \$61,702 in the insurance reserve fund; \$23,732

C.N.R. funds; \$52,199 in the fund balance. This totals \$133,633 to cover the \$122,500 of expenses. If the numbers trend to year end projections, there should be \$20,000 to \$30,000 or more surplus. The Council can allocate the money, and if necessary make a transfer from the general fund for a shortage. Once allocated the revenue stream can continue and create larger revenue.

Regarding the painting process for grates, Mr. Bowman asked if any pools do this. His biggest concern is the painting, and having no direct record of how long it will last.

According to Ms. Adams many pools apply epoxy paint once a year to fiber glass grates.

It is fiber glass vs. PVC grates and Mr. Bowman said the welding is an unknown cost.

Many pools have eliminated fiber glass grates and Ms. Adams said they have gone to PVC grates due to the longer life span and many pools are being built with the PVC grates.

Product Cost - PVC is \$18,000; Fiber Glass is \$25,000 plus installation for a +\$30,000 total. PVC still has \$2,000+ welding costs and then installation for a total of \$23,000 to \$25,000. Ms. Adams said she could call on Wednesday and have PVC grates in house in 2 to 3 weeks. Welding can start ahead of time, with grate installation of 2 to 3 weeks.

It was recommended by Mr. Bowman that the PVC grates be the product of choice, not to exceed \$25,000 to \$28,000, and the process get started for installation of new grates. He has concerns about the welding costs.

Ms. Adams cited the time frame of 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. as the time for welding work on the grates.

Director Ceccolini asked about bids being required, and ability to waive the bids for the grate project.

The PVC product is \$18,000; Welding work is about \$4,000; and then installation, and Ms. Adams asked if each portion of work could be done without bidding.

Ms. Flynn-Harris stated she is in favor of the PVC with quick delivery by the manufacturer.

Regarding the welding work, Mr. Oris said the cost is unknown, and asked if the town has welders to do this work.

There is a welder in the PW crew, but Mr. Milone said due to his work load he could not devote time to the pool project.

Mr. Ceccolini has a former Park and Rec crew member, a welder, and he will contact him about doing the work and it being done soon.

The issue is a matter of safety, and Mr. Oris said the grates must be replaced. He favors PVC vs. the cost of the fiber glass grates. The PVC grates will not be as big a safety issue as the fiber glass and is a better way to go. The PVC grates have a longer life span, will be new, and it will not be a band aid approach to a problem. It was emphasized by Mr. Oris that this issue has nothing to do with the new pool facility. It is an ongoing maintenance issue that needs to be addressed. Other community pools have the same type of maintenance issues. Nothing wrong was done; the fiber glass grates are 15 years old; and the best course of action is to replace them with PVC grates.

The Council will have a progress report on the grates at the next meeting.

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Ms. Linehan.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #022316-3.

RESOLUTION #022316-3

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes an allocation of approximately \$28,000 for the purchase of new PVC replacement grates and accompanying installation for the Cheshire Community Pool.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

**7. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS STRATEGY
Executive Session.**

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris.

MOVED that the Town Council enter Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. to include Town Manager Milone, Personnel Director Zullo, Attorney Dugas, Attorney Kowalchik to discuss collective bargaining negotiations.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Ms. Linehan left executive session at 9:20 p.m.; Mr. Bowman left executive session at 9:45 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris.

MOVED that the Town Council exit Executive Session at 10:15 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Nichols; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris

MOVED to adjourn the Special Meeting at 10:15 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk