

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL AND BUDGET COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016, AT 6:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207-209, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Town Council Chairman Robert J. Oris Jr.; Budget Committee Chairman Tim Slocum and committee members Michael Ecke and Sylvia Nichols. Council Members Patti Flynn-Harris, Liz Linehan Thomas Ruocco, and Peter Talbot.

Absent: Paul A. Bowman

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director. Robert Ceccolini, Parks and Rec Director; Sheila Adams, Pool Coordinator; Michelle Piccerillo, Human Services 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. FY 2016-17 GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET.

Budget Committee Chairman Slocum informed the Council that the BOE submitted budget information which was requested by the Council.

Town Manager Milone stated the BOE will be providing clarification on the salary accounts, certified and non-certified; non-certified salary account increases by 3.1% with salary increases below this percentage; and there was a question on what makes up the difference. Mr. Masciana will provide a spreadsheet on the information, and it is usually due to teachers on homebound tutoring, with expectation of more teachers doing homebound tutoring.

Mr. Milone distributed the handout for March 21, 2016, and referred to page 1d regarding the assessment of pipelines by the Town. Information on this issue was received from Assessor Panagrosso and Town Engineer Gancarz and they are included in the packet. There is a \$10,000 reduction in taxes due to the Town's acquisition of the streetlights.

Mr. Oris had requested a chart showing the student population relative to teacher retirements and class sizes, and the BOE protocol for purchasing of uniforms for all activities, and if a plan is in place.

Mr. Slocum informed the Council that some of this information is included in Mr. Masciana's submissions.

Planning Committee Meeting - the committee will meet on Monday, March 28th, 6:30 p.m. regarding the transfer of the Boulder Knoll property to the Cheshire Housing Authority. The budget committee meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on March 28th.

Public Hearing - Tuesday, March 29, 2016, with a Budget Committee/Joint Town Council meeting to follow. Action on the transfer of Boulder Knoll Property can be added to the agenda of the joint special meeting.

LEISURE - Parks & Recreation Department, Parks & Recreation Commission, Community Pool. Pages 165-176 and 70.
Director Robert Ceccolini and Pool Coordinator Sheila Adams.

Community Pool - pages 177-181 and 122. Mr. Milone commented on this being a challenging budget; there was no activity at the pool for 3 years, and the operation has changed from the trends and model of 5 years ago. The budget increases \$73,296; the facility is going from a 10 month operation to a 12 month operation; temporary part time salary line is increased by \$39,000, and part of the increase is due to the increase in the minimum wage. The permanent part time position shows an increase of \$15,000 in the salary line item. Natural gas is budgeted at \$109,432; 10 years ago this cost was \$272,493; this is a \$163,000 reduction. The total pool operating budget is \$902,823, which is \$20,000 less than in 2009. The subsidy is reduced from \$459,000 in 2007 to \$215,000 in 2016. Without the bubble, building maintenance is reduced by \$30,000. Non-salary accounts show a modest change.

Over the last 6 years there were pool closures due to mechanical and building issues, going from 108 days in 2010-11 to this year 226 days. The total estimated expense for the pool in FY 2016 is \$639,163. The work on the interior of the building was charged to the insurance account or C.N.R.

Ms. Adams reviewed the costs of interior projects totaling \$78,006.

These included:

Sandblasting and painting the floors, locker room facilities, walls in the showers, \$229,954.

Repairing and patching the concrete deck, \$18,300.

Pool deck sanding and epoxy cover, \$19,500.

Replacement of all sand in the water filtration system, \$15,750.

Replacement of grates, \$1,592.

Other expenses include:

Replacement of score board, 10 touch pads, depth markers on the side of the pool.

Total \$43,000.

Replacement cost of grates and welding is \$28,000. This project is almost completed; welding is taking place at night; there was a problem with a half inch difference on one side of the pool, so new anchors had to be ordered. The work should be completed by mid-week. The cost of the welding work is more than expected, but this is a specialty type of welding, and the contractor was willing to work at night when the pool is closed. Relocation of lane line reels will come out of the construction budget at an estimated cost of \$5,600. The desk in the front lobby should be replaced, but it is still useful and can wait for replacement.

Total cost of all this work is \$150,440. There is \$137,633 in funds available, and the difference of about \$13,000 will be absorbed in the current operating budget.

The level of activity at the pool is very busy. From February 1st to March 21st the pool has generated \$90,311 in revenue, with another \$10,000 in private swim lessons.

Ms. Adams explained that the pool facility has been asked to host swim meets, and could host every weekend, but she has limited the weekend events. May 23 to 25 there will be a swim meet; June 18-20 there will be a swim meet; and the pool will close at 4 p.m. on Friday to host these meets. Revenue will be about \$10,000. The YMCA has a meet planned for one weekend per month January to March. Some swim groups (CIAC and larger groups) want bleachers for visitors to observe meets, and this will be looked into later. These bleachers would be retractable units.

Handout, page 3 - Ms Adams reviewed the fees current and proposed for 2016-2017 and explained there has not been a fee increase since 2010, and not all fees will be increased. There is no increase in day passes. April vacation Monday to Friday and first week of school vacation in June will be \$1.00 days.

Resident annual passes increase +\$20 for adults; +\$15 for youth and seniors; and +\$20 for senior couple.

Non-resident passes increase \$+\$30 for adults; +\$15 youth and seniors; and +\$30 for senior couple.

Resident Seasonal passes have an increase of \$15 adults, \$15 youth and senior and senior couple.

Non-resident seasonal passes increase \$15 adult, \$15 youth and senior and senior couple.

Business rates - for persons who work full time at a Cheshire business. Increase for adult yearly pass is \$20; adult seasonal \$15; youth and senior yearly \$15; senior couple \$15.

Total estimated proposed revenue is \$663,135.

Birthday parties at the pool are popular and generated \$49,300 in revenue in the past. Miscellaneous and concession generates \$4,500 in revenue.

Ms. Adams commented on the pool being a family facility and busy all day in the summer season. She would like to add a bocce court, sand volleyball court, badminton court for families to enjoy.

Parks - 165-176 and 70. Mr. Milone reviewed this budget which shows a 4.53% increase. Part of this increase is for a Maintainer/Grounds Keeper position at \$256,000 for one half year, and he supports this new position for the Parks and Rec Department. There is a \$15,000 salary adjustment, and \$10,000 increase for part time/temporary positions.

Mixville Park - there were lifeguards at Mixville last year due to the pool being closed, and these lifeguards will return to the pool for summer work. Mixville will have 3 lifeguards Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; the budget includes lifeguards for the pool and Mixville Park. There are some town recreation/camp programs at Mixville, and a life guard goes with the camp programs.

Administration - no changes; there is on-line registration for programs; and information on the web site, Facebook and twitter. Mr. Ceccolini said the budget is the same as in the past, with the difference being the increase in temporary part time positions.

Mr. Ceccolini informed the Council that the one new Maintainer/Grounds Keeper position is an important request to continue excellent maintenance of the Town fields and parks. There are added ball fields at Bartlem Park; the Linear Trail is coming on with 2 sections opening by the end of the year, and 3rd section in 2017; the Trail requires general maintenance, bathroom maintenance and parking lots. He said there will be upgrade to Town open space programs for proper usage, and brochures, kiosks, parking lots, all coming soon. Parks and Rec crews must maintain these open space areas, and another Maintainer will enhance the department. Total salary is \$56,326 +30% benefits for the 40 hour per week position; one-half year net is \$25,997.

A question was raised about a Public Works Garage Mechanic working part time for Parks & Rec Department. Mr. Milone stated this would not work due to the work load in the PW Department and Garage. He noted that this year 4 departments have responsibility in the parks; Cheshire Fire and Police Departments will patrol parks regularly along with rescue and emergency situations.

ATV for Parks & Rec Department - Mr. Ceccolini said the cost is about \$11,000. This vehicle will allow crew members to access the parks, trail and open space areas, bring in needed equipment for maintenance work. The Parks Department has used the CFD ATV for better access to parcels of land.

Mr. Ceccolini pointed out that there are more playing fields now and an ongoing demand for more field work. There is an increase in water expenses for the field irrigation, and problems with irrigation have been addressed. The lights at Cheshire Park will be upgraded in the spring.

Mr. Ceccolini met with the Cheshire Sports Coalition and reported this group wants more activity and more fields. Soil tests were done at Bartlem and Quinnipiac Parks. They discussed the 10 acre parcel on Jarvis Street given to CYB, and nothing happened with this land. The group wants to know what can be done with this property; maybe go back to the State regarding land off Sandbank Road and Peck Lane which could be a playing field near the Linear Trail.

Sponsorship Approval - Mr. Ceccolini talked about a sponsorship policy for Council approval, which will tie into sponsorships for the score board at the pool, bleachers in

the pool, concert series. A firm may have to be hired to get this going, and there will be some costs involved.

Regarding the Maintainer position, Mr. Ruocco asked for clarity on this position (page 171), and the adjustment of \$30,000 for this one position.

Mr. Milone clarified it is an adjustment for this one 40 hour per week position which begins January 2017, and will be funded yearly thereafter. Salary is \$56,326 and benefits equating to 30%. This position has not been included in the employee benefit numbers.

Concert Series - Mr. Ceccolini commented on this being a quality of life program at no cost to the public, along with the tree lighting, touch a truck and smaller programs. The big item is the concert series for which he wants to get sponsorships as they are high cost events paid out of the operating budget. The Summer Theater Program is now a camp program. 120 programs are run by the department.

Rental Fees - Youth Center rentals for various events will increase; program services will also increase; there will be a meeting with the Council on the rental fees and increases. The Mixville Pavilion and rooms at the Youth Center are rented for 40% less than the going rate, and should be increased.

Chairman Oris talked about the new Maintainer position, but not having seen a plan for the open space usability. He has concerns about upcoming debt service and is looking hard at proposed positions. He asked how much good this position will do related to open space; is the position just added to take care of the extra Linear Trail work; or provide access to more open space.

At this time there is little use of open space, and Mr. Ceccolini said this use will increase. He has information on each piece of land, what the proposed plan is for each one, and there are calls to the department on damage or problems on open space land.

Mr. Milone said this Maintainer will work with the team of people involved...Parks & Rec and Public Works, and an extra person working on the fields.

In response to a question about Boulder Knoll property, Mr. Ceccolini said his crews do the maintenance work at this site. The crews also work and maintain the Dog Park.

Fireworks at Fall Festival - Mr. Ceccolini explained that the Chamber of Commerce pays for these fireworks. With another location, other than Bartlem Park, there could be parking concerns. The back area of the high school has a minimum amount of room, and the fireworks display could be reduced.

Mr. Milone reported the Chamber is looking at an alternate program, i.e. laser show.

Mr. Ceccolini suggested the Chamber get a big name band and food truck for the nighttime event at the festival.

With regard to the new vehicle and new Maintainer, Mr. Oris asked if there would be a corresponding vehicle in the capital budget.

At this point, Mr. Ceccolini said the department has another dump truck, an additional vehicle, and the new person may or may not need a vehicle, and could be working with another team member on any day. He is not looking for another vehicle.

Mr. Milone advised there is a plan in place right now, and work is being done with the current staffing level, with a great strain on the Parks & Rec Department. Public Works has 18 crew members, and one can be re-deployed for work. Parks & Rec has only 4 or 5 crew members. Another person at Park & Rec will devote more time to open space and deal with the Trail maintenance and requirements. The position does not start until January.

Mr. Ceccolini took one part time person out of his budget. There is still the Trail work, with opening one trail section in the spring and one in November...which will be added to the list of work for Parks & Recreation crews.

Public Information Session - Mr. Milone advised there will be a public information session on Wednesday, April 6th, at 6:30 p.m. with the neighbors along the Jarvis Street section of the Trail. There will be visits to each homeowner's property by town staff and a landscape architect. The goal is to plant more screening for property owners along the Trail. PW Director Noewatne will send a letter to everyone abutting the Trail, and information on the web site and in local papers.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT - Pages 137-152 and 66
Michelle Piccerillo, Director of Human Services.

Mr. Milone reviewed the department budget which increases by \$34,555, 4.12%. The average budget increase over 5 years is 2.66%. The increase of \$7,900 is due to the increase in hours for the Social Worker and Program Supervisor at the Senior Center, which the Council approved last year. The additional hours went into effect in January 2016.

In this year's budget the Council approved additional hours for the Dispatcher position from 24 to 30 hours per week, at a cost of \$7,800. The balance of the salary increase is due to normal percentage increases. There is a \$5,000 increase in program services due to the significant demand for senior services. Mr. Milone pointed out that much of this budget is not seen as some things are not public, and the Center staff deals with many people at risk and people with significant needs.

Ms. Piccerillo informed the Council about some of the highlights and accomplishments of the department. The staff is working on the data collection of middle school and

high school students through an attitude and behavior survey undertaken in November 2015. This was a successful process. She noted the data puts Cheshire equal or above the normal average in terms of successes in the community. There are still some areas of concern. The process to be followed includes a retreat on April 8th for 7th to 12th grade students to come together, process the survey data in workshops, and this will help identify areas to be targeted within the community. This data will be out into the community, to the Council, Board of Education. This process was all funded through a grant, and the results could be eligible for larger federal grant funds.

Grants - Ms. Piccerillo informed the Council there have been several successful grants in the past year. Two new senior buses were received through a grant, and another grant will fund another new bus for the Senior Center. The department is completing an application for the municipal rehabilitation grant which is due in April, and it is hoped the grant will be received. The department received a Connecticut Community Foundation Grant for \$5,300 for purchase of the My Senior software.

Clinicians Networking Breakfast - this event was held several years ago at Town Hall, and put together an area providers directory. The 2016 breakfast will be hosted on April 5th; 100 area providers and school staff are invited to the event. Through this effort there will be an updated directory, which will decrease the burden on the Youth and Social Services clinical staff.

Juvenile Review Board - this Board is up and running and successful. The Board has undertaken 16 cases; participants completed the program with consequences; and their cases are closed. There were 2 incidents with a 2nd arrest and these matters were referred to the court process.

Youth Activities - The Yellow House is open 6 days a week; opportunities for youth include mentoring, character building, community service, leadership building; and there are social activities on weekends. A local gentleman has offered to paint the Yellow House and he will include the youth members in the work process.

Throughout the year staff has managed many mental health situations. There is collaboration with Public Health and public services for residents living in unsafe condition. The task force is effectively managing situations, has kept people safe, and is working with the Chief State Attorney's office.

Ms. Piccerillo advised that the department is putting together an awareness program on opiate addiction. Staff is working with Cheshire Human Services Committee; is collaborating with Public Health and several area substance abuse providers to put together a series of awareness programs; heroin is in the Cheshire community; and there is a direct link from prescription drug use to heroin. The awareness program is for specific audiences, taking people through general education, addiction treatment and recovery. The presentation will be video-taped and aired on public access television.

Ms. Piccerillo stated that the Board of Education and school system are incredibly supportive of the Human Services programs, and the departments work well together. The support and response is better than in most communities.

Social Services - there are more people in need due to the State financial crisis; there is more burden on the community; and Human Services Department works to get more access to State programs.

Senior Center - there is an increase in the Center budget this year, including the salaries approved by the Council. The renovation of the basement will result in offering additional classes and more flexible scheduling. The multi-purpose room will also offer additional activities...i.e. choral group, men's breakfast group, and increase in the luncheon program. With the additional staff hours there is opportunity for more meetings with clients, more home visits, transportation assessment program, additional transportation for senior citizens in need, and individual personal evaluation of clients using the system.

Program Supervisor - the supervisor is working on the development of new programs, and provides assistance to office staff with program registration.

Dispatcher - the extra hours for the dispatcher position have been very successful, and allow office staff more time for their own work. This has created an improvement for response to calls to the Center.

Software - the new software program will be up and running in May...it is the My Senior program.

Ms. Piccerillo expressed appreciation to the Council for its support of the Senior Center, the staff, and senior citizens, and the work performed by the Public Works.

Mr. Milone cited the facts on the Cheshire senior population, people over 60 years of age, which has increased to 6,404 from 4,552 over 10 years.

4. APPROVAL OF REVISED RESOLUTION FOR AUTHORIZATION TO
APPLY FOR SMALL CITIES GRANT FOR THE MUNICIPAL HOUSING
REHABILITATION PROGRAM.

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves Resolution #032116-1

RESOLUTION #032116-1

WHEREAS, Federal monies are available under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Grant Program, administered by the State of Connecticut, Department of Housing pursuant to Public Law 93-3-83, as amended, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 127c and Part VI of Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commissioner of Housing is authorized to disburse such Federal monies to local municipalities; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of Cheshire make application to the State for \$400,000 in order to undertake a Small Cities Community Development Program and to execute an Assistance Agreement, therefore, should one be offered.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL:

1. That it is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for State Assistance imposed by Part VI of Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes; and
2. That the filing of an application by the Town of Cheshire in an amount not to exceed \$400,000 is hereby approved, and that Michael A. Milone, the Town Manager for the Town of Cheshire, is hereby authorized and directed to file such Application with the Commissioner of the Department of Housing, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required by the Commissioner, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such Agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, rescissions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Cheshire.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. LAND ACQUISITION - Executive Session.

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

MOVED that the Town Council enter Executive Session at 8:36 p.m. to include Town Manager Milone and Town Attorney Smith to discuss land acquisition.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

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

MOVED that the Town Council exit Executive Session at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED to adjourn the special meeting at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk