

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84
SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Timothy Slocum, Chairman; Michael Ecke and Sylvia Nichols.

Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; Finance Director James Jaskot; Police Chief Neil Dryfe; Parks and Rec Director Robert Ceccolini.

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. REAUTHORIZATION OF UNOBLIGATED CNR BALANCES FOR
ACQUISITION OF PARKS ATV.**

Mr. Ceccolini stated that the acquisition of an ATV for the Parks and Rec Department was discussed with the Council during budget deliberations. With the expanded responsibilities of the department relative to the Town's open space and Linear Trail expansion, the ATV is a critical piece of equipment.

Mr. Ceccolini cited the need for the ATV due to the large open space acreage, additional trails, the program to increase open space, the need for a presence on the open space, monitoring and maintaining the properties, training staff on invasive species and floral/fauna, and importance of easing safety concerns of neighbors abutting the Linear Trail. The final piece of the Linear Trail opens in 2017, and the trail is cumbersome for a truck, while a smaller ATV can go up and down, monitor the trail, handle maintenance issues. The ATV would be used for Town events...Fall Festival, Relay for Life, concerts, and be able to move around the parks all day. The Police, Fire and BOE all have ATV vehicles, and the Parks and Rec ATV would have two front seats and a utility area in the rear.

With regard to some open space areas, Mr. Ceccolini affirmed that there are people camping with fires at Roaring Brook, and there has been a significant increase in the use of the trails.

Mr. Milone pointed out that Ms. Simone has promoted and marketed the trails with maps and information, resulting in increased use of the open space and trails. Other than some instances with Roaring Brook there have been few issues of concern. He noted the Police Department's ATV is about 8 years old, and CPD wants to trade it in for a newer ATV.

The John Deere ATV vehicle for Parks and Rec Department is a basic body ATV, at a cost of \$11,000.

With regard to CNR funds, Mr. Ecke asked about available funds for the CHS concession stand.

Mr. Milone stated there is \$304,000 in the CNR which is not assigned to any project. The Council suggested this money be held for possibly supplementing the concession stand project. The money is still there. A few weeks ago the Council authorized an increase in the East Johnson Avenue Bridge project, using \$270,000 of the \$304,000 with 80% of the \$270,000 coming back to the Town. He cited the unobligated balances of three CNR appropriations for funding the ATV.

The committee reviewed the funding for the ATV with Mr. Milone.

FY 2015 Vehicle/Equipment Replacement - balance of \$3,675.
FY 2016 Vehicle/Equipment Replacement - balance of \$4,503
Total - \$8,178.

Other projects were reviewed for unallocated funds, and the FY 2015 Property Revaluation has a balance of \$20,000 for possible legal fees for appeals. Out of this \$20,000, there can be an allocation of \$3,000 for the ATV purchase for a total of \$11,178.

Mr. Milone stated the concession stand funding was never appropriated, and \$254,000 will be maintained in an enabling status. \$500,000 is the total funding needed for the project. On July 1, 2016 there will be an additional \$1.1 million appropriated in the CNR and the Council can utilize some of this money.

Mr. Milone and Mr. Jaskot will go through all the CNR projects, funding available, and review with the Council.

It is hoped to have the ATV on the road this spring. Mr. Milone commented on five departments having discussed the need for the ATV, and there being an identification sheet on what to look for in the parks and on open space land and Linear Trail. This information is relayed to all departments, and Parks and Rec staff is clear on their responsibilities of maintenance and monitoring. This ATV will be a critical piece of equipment for the department in maintenance of 700+ acres of open space to be looked at each month. Mr. Milone advised that the Parks and Rec, Fire and Police Departments have a good presence in the open space and on the Linear Trail.

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

MOVED that the Budget Committee forwards the reauthorization of CNR balances for acquisition of an ATV vehicle for the Parks and Recreation Department to the full Town Council with funding as follows:

FY 2015 Vehicle/Equipment Replacement balance of \$3,675;
FY 2016 Vehicle/Equipment Replacement balance of \$4,503;

and \$3,000 allocation from the unobligated balance in the Property Revaluation account. Total \$11,178.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Mr. Slocum raised the issue of the high grass at the Town's rental house on Boulder Knoll Road and who is responsible for cutting the grass.

In response, Mr. Ceccolini said he would check into the mowing at this property. He stated that once everything is in place there will be regular maintenance schedules for the Town parks, with mowing at least every 2 weeks.

4. APPROVAL OF POLICE DEPARTMENT ELIM PARK DONATION.

Chief Dryfe reviewed his requested appropriate for the gift account donation with the committee.

\$118,000 - Equipment - the gift account will help with the purchase of two specialty vehicles this year. CPD intends to purchase a Ford Transit to be outfitted as a multi-purpose response vehicle, to serve as a crime and accident scene response vehicle, with secure cabinets to store crime and accident scene processing equipment. The vehicle will have a work area for personnel, laptop and printer, cargo door, shelving, house sensitive equipment, provide security and protection from the elements, and will be a high top vehicle.

\$50,000 from the gift account will be used for the purchase, and augmented with asset forfeiture money. The new Transit vehicle will replace the 1991 Ford truck used by the SRT team. The Transit is a flexible vehicle; it will be used at town line locations in collaboration with other departments for DUI road blocks and other programs; it will be a transport vehicle for employees to help at events, accidents and crime scenes. The vehicle will have all CPD markings, and be a visible presence in the community.

Chief Dryfe distributed photographs of the Ford Transit vehicle.

With regard to CPD vehicles parked outside and susceptible to the elements, Chief Dryfe informed the committee that the equipment in a vehicle is built to withstand exposure to the elements. Most of the cars go out two shifts a day; defibrillators are brought inside the station house, checked by a supervisor, and reissued to the next officer; computers and cameras stay in the vehicles.

ATV - \$15,000 - The current ATV is 8 years old, cannot be used in the winter and kept running. It is also too small. The CPD needs one more larger off-road capable vehicle to handle the open space rough areas for patrol and getting someone out in an emergency situation.

Tasers - \$16,000 - the CPD tasers were purchased 6-8 years ago; they are out of warranty; and replacement costs will come out of the gift account. The plan is to spend

\$16,000 in the next 3 years to replace the entire inventory with the new model and accessories (holster, batteries, cartridges). Chief Dryfe wants to all officers to have a taser with them.

CAD/RMS Upgrade \$12,000 - This would be an upgrade in conjunction with the Fire Department to allow dispatch and records information available to command personnel in the field through use of a tablet; software cost is \$12,000 to be split between Fire and Police Departments...\$6,000 each. Tablet devices are about \$1,000 per device.

Chief Dryfe reported that \$70,000 has been spent in the last 3 years adding equipment to police vehicles.

Supplies and Services, \$57,000 - Training opportunities outside mandated certification will be the focus in this area, including supervisor and management training for newly promoted sergeants and lieutenants - \$20,000. First line officers attend the Accident Reconstruction School in Florida; most of the cost of officer training in Meriden is funded out of the gift account.

Consultant for the Policy and Procedure Manual rewrite is ongoing - \$10,000.

Community Programs and events such as R.A.D., Citizens Academy, Police Explorers, DUI education, Fall Festival, Half Marathon and other events continue to be funded through the gift account, \$15,000 for this year. Plans are being made for a Senior Citizens R.A.D. program.

Uniforms and Equipment \$6,000 - gift account funds augment the quartermaster system and updating of various uniform and equipment items.

I.T. Upgrades \$6,000 - There are various upgrades throughout the year, and gift account funds are reserved for this expenditure; last year 4 new desk top computers were purchased out the gift account.

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

MOVED that the Budget Committee approve the appropriation of the entire amount, \$175,000, from Elim Park to the Cheshire Police Department Gift Account for use as stipulated and outlined by Police Chief Dryfe.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. FEE FOR POLICE VEHICLES AT SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS.

The committee and staff were informed by Chief Dryfe that many vendors and contractors request a marked Cheshire police vehicle at road construction or other extra duty assignments. For nighttime assignments, State highway assignments, and when officers are moving around town on a job, a vehicle accompanies the officer. The

Chief noted that many surrounding towns have an ordinance and/or practice to allow a cruiser at an extra hourly fee or flat fee on an assignment.

The Town Attorney has given legal input to the proposal.

The proposed fee for CPD would be \$25 per hour for the use of the police vehicle, and the program is voluntary for the contractor. Chief Dryfe has reviewed the estimated cost of using a police cruiser (EDJ Car) in this manner, and Tom Mancini (PW Department) anticipates a slight increase in servicing costs. Currently, there is one car on reserve for night jobs, and it had less than 2,000 miles last year. The second marked vehicle would be available as a cruiser at the job sites.

According to Chief Dryfe, the Town of Cheshire is missing a revenue opportunity. He recommends the policy of assignment of a cruiser as a "pilot program" until December 31, 2016. At that time the policy and amount of revenue generated can be evaluated. If the program is deemed successful, there can be discussion on long term implementation. This revenue item could be a line item in next year's budget.

Chief Dryfe commented on the cooperative program between local police departments which has officers, as needed, working in other towns. Last year Cheshire officers had about 37 out of town assignments; no complaints were received about officers working on Cheshire job sites; and the program has worked well. Most of the out of town assignments have been between Cheshire and Southington police departments.

Mr. Milone cited the fact that revenue from the use of marked cruisers on job sites would go into the General Fund line item for "special duty". After the pilot program ends in December 2016, it will be reviewed and a determination made on formalizing the program.

It was clarified by Chief Dryfe that the CPD practice, when an officer is on night assignment or on a main road, a vehicle goes to the job site for the protection and safety of the officer.

Mr. Slocum stated he observes traffic in town on job site areas, and officers sometimes have more focus on the "contractor's work" than the traffic. He finds this troubling, and sometimes it has to do with cell phone use...but more visibility is needed for the traffic.

In reply, Chief Dryfe concurred with this observation, and informed the committee that he is sending sergeants around town to check on officers at a job site. He wants assurance the officers are maintaining a safe work area and traffic safety.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED to adjourn at 8:10p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk