

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2014 AT 6:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207, TOWN HALL, 84
SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

David Schrumm, Chairman; Thomas Ruocco; Absent-Peter Talbot.
Staff: Town Manager Michael A. Milone; Finance Director James Jaskot;
Police Chief Neil Dryfe; Fire Chief Jack Casner.

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 \$700 Connecticut Community Foundation Sponsorship Grant to fund the Survivors Program at the Senior Center.
4. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$1,500 grant from the Connecticut Community Foundation for Therapeutic Recreation Camps.
5. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$1,500 donation from the Jean McSweet To the Park Gift Account for a memorial bench or Donald Gode.
6. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$1,550 donation from the Cheshire Animal Shelter Volunteers Inc. to the Parks Gift Account for a bench for at The Cheshire Dog Park.
7. Acceptance and appropriation of \$868.49 in asset forfeitures from the State Of Connecticut to the Police Seizure Account.
8. Acceptance and appropriation of \$1,660.96 in asset forfeitures from the State Of Connecticut to the Police Seizure Account.
9. Acceptance and appropriation of \$2,572 State of Connecticut Youth Services Grant for positive youth development programming.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to approve agenda items #3 through #9 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

10. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$150,000 donation from Elim Park to the Police Gift Account.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm

MOVED to approve agenda item #10 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

Chief Dryfe informed the committee that the RAD program is underway for CHS female graduates, and to date, there have been two classes of 16 people each.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those resent.

11. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$150,000 donation from Elim Park to the Fire Department Gift Account,.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm

MOVED to approve agenda items #3 through #11, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

There is money in the gift account for the “bunk room” program and this will be an item of consideration upon completion of the study.

Mr. Milone stated that more and more of the Elim Park donations are being used to supplement the operating budget. He cited an example of the Fire Department, 2010 non-salary account of \$318,000, and the 2014 non-salary account of \$310,000...a savings if \$8,000 due to the Elim Park funds. Mr. Milone noted that Elim Park also donated money for the repair of the pump station problems.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those resent.

12. Award of tax and sewer lien sale.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to approve agenda item #12 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

The committee was told by Mr. Milone that the total amount of the lien sale is \$237,422.96, and additional information will be presented by Tax Collection Donlin at the Council meeting. With this lien sale Cheshire gets a 13% premium.

Mr. Jaskot reported there is a new company handling the tax lien sale, and it has been thoroughly checked out, including referenced. This company has a history in other municipalities. There is a 13% premium on the award which his \$30,864 which will be

put into the General Fund Miscellaneous Revenue account. Mr. Jaskot informed the committee that over the years the collection agencies have foreclosed on only one Cheshire property, and companies want to work with the homeowners for collection of the outstanding taxes. The original total liens were \$519,000. After notification to property owners the total is down to \$232,422.96.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

13. Transfer of uncollectible taxes to the Suspense Tax List.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to approve agenda item #13 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

This is an annual event, and Mr. Jaskot said these taxes are taken off the receivables list, but can still be collected. Over the last 5 years the Town collected about \$20,000 of these taxes. An RFP was issued for a new collection agency; 4 competitive bids were received; and one firm was selected due to having better reporting and being more aggressive.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

14. Approval of appropriation from Peck-Jones Fund.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to approve agenda item #14 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

Discussion

Mr. Milone explained that the undesignated balance in this fund was not stated in the resolution because the July 1st balance is unknown at this time. The Board of Education (BOE) can appropriate no more than 4% of the fund balance. The May 31st value is \$733,986; 4% of that amount is \$29,359; and the BOE cannot receive more than \$29,000.

Mr. Jaskot stated that on July 1, 2014 the value of the account will be known; 4% of this value is calculated; and this is the amount the BOE will receive...not to exceed \$29,000.

Mr. Schrumm recommended the resolution include the restriction "not to exceed \$29,000".

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

15. Approval of Successor Chief Technology Officer contract.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

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

Discussion

Mr. Milone advised this is renewal of the original contract with Apex Technology. The renewed contract is for two (2) years per the recommendation of the Technology Study Group, at the same rate of \$20,000 per month, with the Town paying \$96,350 and BOE paying \$104,436.

The committee was told by Mr. Milone that the study group met with Anthony Verrill, CEO of Apex Technology, reviewing all that has taken place in the last year, planning on what to do next year with the capital funds. The outsourcing of the technology has resulted in \$148,000 of savings for the Town and BOE, while receiving higher quality of support and assistance. Apex has been involved in every technology area of the Town and BOE, including the RFP for town wide copiers, and will assist with the phone system. During the review of the contract renewal, the study group noted that many of the capital projects will be done in two years, and the current level of needs from Apex will diminish. Their recommendation was a two year contract renewal. Mr. Milone commented on the great benefits in technology through Apex, and said there is increased efficiency and understanding of the use of technology.

Chief Dryfe reported on the Police Department having a problem over Memorial Day weekend with AT&T, and with the assistance of Mr. Verrill and Apex talking to AT&T engineers, it was found the problem was not with the department technology – but on AT&T's end.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

16 Authorization for natural gas procurement.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

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

Discussion

Mr. Jaskot reviewed the issues surrounding the gas contract which ends July 31st. The Council is being asked to approve the Town Manager signing a new supply contract for up to two years with an independent supplier. He said it is possible the Town may forego contracting with an independent supplier if prices continue to be higher in the next few months. The problem for independent suppliers is getting the capacity into New England, and the Town may have to go back to Yankee Gas which has more reasonable prices than the independent suppliers. However, the Town would have to lock in for one year with month to month pricing, but not lock in the price. Mr. Jaskot said the Town may want to go with Yankee Gas, even though there are some risks, or

go with an independent month to month waiting for prices to drop. He will do what is in the best interests of the Town, and will not go beyond two years.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

17. Acceptance of maintenance for bathrooms, water fountain and pedestrian Crossing signal lights for the Linear Trail.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

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

Discussion

In reviewing the information from DOT, Mr. Schrumm suggested going with #3 for the light, and #1 and #2 should go to Planning Committee for review and recommendation.

Mr. Milone said if the Town is not willing to maintain rest rooms, the State will not build them. He spoke with Parks and Rec Director Ceccolini on the estimate to maintain a bathroom facility in the parks, and was told the cost is about \$5,400 for 8 months for cleaning, supplies, and time and half on weekend for a crew member. Depending on the size of the rest room, the department's staff could handle the maintenance, and for one year it would cost about \$8,000 for one larger bathroom. These costs would also include cost of repairs.

It was pointed out by Mr. Schrumm that there is no bathroom along the length of the trail, and he questioned why Cheshire must have a rest room facility

Once the entire trail is connected it will be 50+ miles long, and Mr. Milone said the model is changing with the State recognizing the importance of amenities, including camp sites and bike areas. The State determines the location of the bathrooms – Jarvis Street parking lot area and West Main Street (Dalton property). Mr. Milone noted that the State is spending millions of dollars for trail construction; is paying for 90% of the Cheshire section; and if the \$10,000 for the light puts the Town's cost over \$350,000 the Town will not be able to absorb this cost.

Mr. Schrumm questioned why Cheshire must have these amenities when the Town is being treated so badly in Hartford. His recommendation is for the amenities being built at the Southington Town Line. Mr. Schrumm is not in favor of the Council making a decision on this agenda item at tonight's Council meeting, and recommended the matter be forwarded to the Planning Committee.

With regard to the signal light, Chief Dryfe stated the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is the bible for markings etc. They recently added and approved this type of signal for use at this type of crossing.

There will be a DOT presentation by Scott Bushee on the Linear Trail on June 18th in Council Chambers.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

18. Approval of Economic Incentive Policy.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

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

Discussion

In the policy under Personal Property section there is a modification with deletion of the "incentive for manufacturing personal property". Mr. Milone said the State stopped PILOT payment for manufacturing equipment.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

19. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with the Connecticut Department Of Energy and Environmental Protection and the participating Wallingford Project municipalities.

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to approve agenda item #19 and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

20. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Ruocco; seconded by Mr. Talbot.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk