TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen
Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes –May 14, 2024

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Tuesday May 14, 2024, at 6:30 PM.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Ray Killeen, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member
Ron DeAngelis, Member

Board of Selectmen Member Absent: Jason Levesque, Vice Chair

Finance Committee Members Present: John Tremblay, Chair
Jeff Chaput
Mickey Biagini
Patrick Pettit
Kathy Levesque (remote)

Finance Committee Members Absent: Denise Gregoire

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Tom Francesconi, Fire Chief; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; David Tarjick, Police Department; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub, Bob Tetlow

S.McGrath called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:30 p.m.

Discussion/Decision Items

- Berkshire Running Foundation- Special Permit Application – May 19, 2024 - Chief Francesconi

Chief Francesconi joined the board to discuss his concerns regarding the Steel Rail, Berkshire Running Foundation marathon on Sunday May 19, 2024. The race begins in Pittsfield and goes to Adams and back, the Chief was made aware of it on May 8th and NBEMS was not notified. The Chief is concerned that there will be 1200 people and hundred of runners with limited ambulances and medical response. He plans on staging the RTV at the highway garage though it will not be manned, they have no command post only detail police officers at the crossing on Route 8 and Church/Main Street. The Chief does not support the permit due to the lack of communication, inadequate EMS coverage, poor planning, he does not believe that denying the permit will stop the race since they have a permit from DCR. Discussion ensued on notification to the race organizers of the decision to deny the special event permit application, request that they notify the town at least ninety days before future events and invite the public safety team to participate in planning.

J. Tremblay called the Finance Committee to order at 6:49 p.m.

Joint Meeting with Finance Committee to Review Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Sergeant David Tarjick joined to discuss the School Resource Officer position at Hoosac Valley Middle/High School. He explained the role of a SRO stating the position is much needed for safety, security, and mentoring reasons. He is an officer in Cheshire that is trained as an SRO and spends a great deal of time at the middle/high school now as he is often the daytime officer on duty. He was not just speaking as an officer but as a parent regarding his concerns. He believes that position is much needed and if the School District is paying for 80% of the costs and the rest can be absorbed by the current police department budget it is a win for all.

S. McGrath stated that the board agrees the position is needed, it is a question about future funding and involving Adams in the discussion. There was discussion about the need for an additional cruiser, Sergeant Tarjick believed that it was not a necessity in the first year. R. DeAngelis questioned why the Superintendent had not brought up the SRO in any of his budget presentations or discussions. Bob Tetlow, School Committee member, was asked if it has come up at School Committee meetings and he said it has but not in detail. There was discussion regarding the concept, organization and funding, the Town Administrator was asked to invite Superintendent Dean to the next meeting to have a discussion relative to the SRO position.

J. Tremblay asked about Health Insurance Open Enrollment and if that number could be adjusted, the Town Administrator informed him that enrollment is still open. He also inquired if the board was steadfast with the Longevity bonus, and he questioned board/committee stipends vs. elected/appointed stipends. It was explained that Board and committee members did not see a stipend increase however elected/appointed official are at 3%. J. Tremblay inquired about the Free Cash and Stabilization reserve amounts and informed the Town Administrator that he had some follow-up questions for department heads regarding Capital Requests.

S. McGrath spoke about the Cruiser and Fire Truck, both being debt exclusions with the cruiser having a one year note due in September. He stated that in his mind the Boom Mower would be purchased with remaining ARPA funds, this will be a topic of discussion at the next meeting.

Finance Committee Adjournment

A motion was made by M. Biagini and seconded by J. Chaput to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous

Discussion/Decision Items

- Chip Sealing – Summer 2024 Contract – All States Construction Inc.

  The Town Administrator shared that All State Construction was the only bidder for the Chip Sealing project, at $94,350.60, the project is being funded with Chapter 90. The roads to be chip sealed in the early summer at Richmond Street, Dean Street, School Street and Eastview Drive.

  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to award the contract to All States Construction Inc.

  Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes

  Motion Carries: 4-0

- Town Clerk Special Municipal Employee Designation

  Town Counsel has advised that the Town Clerk position should be designated as a Special Municipal Employee, the Town Clerk elect should submit a Conflict-of-Interest disclosure that she holds two roles in town and the board should vote to pay the clerk a stipend and her salary as Assistant Treasurer/Collector

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to designate the Town Clerk position as a Special Municipal Employee and pay the Town Clerk her stipend plus her salary to be Assistant Treasurer/Collector.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

The Board welcomed Whitney Flynn as the new Town Clerk and discussed alleviating some of her Assistant Treasurer/Collector duties until she is settled into her new role.

- Town Office Hours

The Town Administrator shared that due to changing positions, public office hours are being reviewed and new hours will be published.

- Peak Youth Wrestling Club – Facilities Use Form

The request is for youth wrestling lessons in the Community House Cafeteria through the summer as their Lanesborough location is undergoing renovations. A security deposit of $200 will be requested along with clean up daily of the mats for storage.
A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. Killeen to approve the facilities use form for the Peak Youth Wrestling Club.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

- Executive Assistant Job Description

The Town Administrator shared that this position would replace the Municipal Clerk job description. S. McGrath inquired about the Human Resources function, the Administrator shared it will be to help with functions such as insurance research, policies, and employee engagement.
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to approve and post the Executive Assistant Job Description.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

- Reorganization of the Board

Tabled until the entire board can be present.

- Consent Agenda

Minutes – May 7, April 30, April 23, April 16
Minutes – April 9 – Tabled for review by member Francesconi as the recording was not complete.
Account Payable and Payroll Warrant
A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. Killeen to approve the consent agenda with edit to the minutes.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

Town Administrator Updates

- Ingalls Road Tree Work IFB - The IFB for tree work estimated to cost $45,000 is complete, the scope of work is for 1200 feet of canopy trimming. The bid opening date for the project is June 4, 2024, with work completion by July 5, 2024, so the resurfacing can begin.

- FY18 CDBG Email from BRPC

Pat Mullins notified the Town of an additional $22,407.65 from the town funds from the FY18 grant. She notified the board that there are a few households from the program that could be provided with additional help, the money could be used by the Town for ADA accessibility projects or could be used as a match for a FY25 CDBG grant.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. Killeen to request that the $22,407.65 be returned to the Town for ADA projects.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

- Cemetery Part Time Seasonal Employee

The Town Administrator shared that she had filled the part time seasonal position at the Cemetery with student Cole Stentiford and asked that the board ratify his hiring. He started the position on May 4, 2024, and will work Saturdays until school is out. R. DeAngelis inquired about the training program he will receive, the Town Administrator will follow up with the DPW Director to discuss, all DPW employees are doing safety training.

A motion was made by R. DeAngelis and seconded by M. Francesconi to hire Cole Stentiford for the part-time seasonal cemetery position.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes, R. Killeen – Yes, M. Francesconi – Yes, S. McGrath – Abstain
Motion Carries: 3-0-1

- One Stop Grant Applications

The Town Administrator shared that the deadline for One Stop Grant submission is June 6, 2024. Currently she is working on a joint application with Adams for resurfacing of Fred Mason Road/West Road/Friend Street, an Underutilized Properties Grant for the Old Section of the Community House, a Way Finding Study Grant, and the South Street/Lanesborough Road Water Project (estimated to at 1.1 million).

- Rural Affairs Director, Anne Gobi, and Representative Barrett meeting

Rural Affairs Director Anne Gobi and Representative Barrett joined the Town Administrator, S. McGrath and M. Francesconi to discuss top priority projects including the grant submissions, funding for mason work at Stafford monument and engineering completion on Route 116.

Announcements from Board Members

M. Francesconi noted that the Memorial Day Committee is looking for volunteers for parade lineup, there was discussion about whether or not to order more flags for distribution along the route.

The Town Administrator shared that Transfer Station Permits and Tags will go on sale next week. S. McGrath inquired about online sales. The Town Administrator shared that the goal is to have Transfer Station, Dog Licenses, Vital Records all available online, there are hurdles to overcome but the town should be moving in that direction.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment:

The Board of Selectmen adjourned their meeting at 8:20 p.m.
Vote: Unanimous
Motion Carries: 4-0

Approved : May 28, 2024

Document List

- Agenda May 14, 2024
- Borrowing estimates
- Chip Sealing Contract – All States Construction, Inc.
- Berkshire Running Foundation – Special Event Permit Application
- Peak Youth Wrestling Facilities Use Form
- Executive Assistant Job Description
- Draft Minutes 4/16/24; 4/23/24; 4/30/24; 5/7/24
- Email – FY18 CDBG
- Highway Bi Weekly Report