TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen
Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes –May 21, 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 21, 2024, at 6:30 PM.

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

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

Finance Committee Members Absent: Jeff Chaput

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; David Tarjick, Cheshire PD; Michael Alibozek, Police Chief; Aaron Dean, HVRSD Superintendent; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub, Bob Tetlow; Whitney Flynn

S. McGrath called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:30 p.m.
J. Tremblay called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 6:31 p.m.

Meeting with Superintendent Dean re: SRO Position

Superintendent Dean started by stating that the draft MOU has been reviewed by School Committee Counsel and that the district is looking to implement the position in the fall of 2024. The purpose of the position is to mentor and protect the safety and security of the students at the middle/high school. The position will be outside of the operating budget and will be funded with rural aid. The Superintendent was asked about the long-term sustainability of the position with rural aid funds, the Superintendent intends to continue using rural aid or other safety grants for the position. Discussion on SRO procedures and training, annual review, collaboration with school staff, office space. There was discussion regarding retaining the cruiser for use by the SRO, J. Tremblay asked if the district would commit to a portion of unexpected expenses. It was acknowledged by all board members the need for the position.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to support the School Resource Officer position.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis- Yes; R. Killeen- Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath- Yes

Motion Carries: 5-0

Discussion/Decision Items

- Budget Discussion and Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Cruiser (Capital, Debt Exclusion) – Discussion on the one year borrowing for the new Police Cruiser and radio needs.

Boom Mower – The Boom mower was discussed and will not be on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, remaining ARPA funds will be earmarked for the purchase. DPW Director explained the pros of the machine that is being proposed, he is seeking additional quotes and setting up a demo of the equipment once received by abutting towns. The Finance Committee requested that the DPW Director look into other options like what is currently being used, there was discussion about the current mower and out of service times that have gone back for year. There was further discussion on the licensing needed, procurement practices and funding options.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to earmark ARPA funds for the purchase of equipment for roadside mowing.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis- Yes; R. Killeen- Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

J. Tremblay stated that the Finance Committee has put protocols into place for Capital purchases including exploring all options including used equipment, S. McGrath stated that this was noted. Further discussion on the cruiser and the one-year note will allow for a slight increase in the levy maintaining the borrowing that is coming off the books. M. Biagini inquired if the 3rd cruiser would go out of town on details, the cruiser detail policy was discussed including the fee for use.

Fire Truck it was agreed by all to include the Fire Truck on the warrant, borrowing would be in FY26. The quoted price is $850,000 and can be held will a successful town meeting vote. The truck is estimated to arrive in 20-24 months.

Longevity was discussed in detail, currently one employee is eligible through the union contract. After discussion it was determined to take longevity off the warrant for this year until the Classification and Compensation study can be reviewed in detail.

A motion was made by D. Gregoire and seconded by M. Biagini to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous

Town Administrator Updates

The highway department is replacing the failing existing infrastructure (drainage) at the bottom of Curran Road in preparation for paving this summer. The existing infrastructure was failing and has been replaced, the water originally ran down the side of the owner's property across the road, until it was diverted at the request of the property owner and the former Superintendent ran a culvert under the driveway with a culvert which empties into a waterway (ditch) on the owner's property into the neighbor's field. The property owner is concerned about their property flooding without the drain being cleaned out , private utilities run through the drainage ditch putting the town at liability. There was discussion about the town doing work on private property, which is not allowable, the property owners will be notified that they are responsible for the drainage on their private property. (Photos in packet).

The Town Administrator shared that she had a call from the Real Estate Attorney who works with the Springfield Diocese, they are interested in the unused section of the Community House. The Town

Administrator shared that an RFP should be created to allow for proposals for the existing space. With the Town Meeting, grants due on June 6 and Year End the RFP will be worked on in early summer. The Town Administrator mentioned that the Town Clerk and Assistant Treasurer/Collector are going on vacation next week putting more pressure on the Administrators Office during the busy time. Discussion on asking the Treasurer/Collector to help with water collections during this busy time.

Announcements from Board Members

The Memorial Day Parade is Monday, the ceremony will be held in the cafeteria if raining.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment:

The Board of Selectmen adjourned their meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Carries: 4-0

Approved: June 4, 2024