TOWN OF CHESHIRE

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes –May 28, 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 28, 2024, at 6:30 PM.

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

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub; Art Kaufman; Scott Fellows

S.McGrath called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:32 p.m.

Truly Independent Wrestling Facilities Use Form – Scott Fellows

Scott Fellows from Truly Independent Wrestling presented his proposal to use the cafeteria space within the Community House for his monthly event. He explained that he had been running in other locations including the Lanesborough Mall, Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA. They offer shows to families at an affordable cost. M. Francesconi shared her concerns regarding the use of the space and the impact it has on the town needs and staff. R. Killeen inquired about the number of fans and Mr. Fellow shared his experience with their past shows which typically ranged from 100-300 people in attendance. R. DeAngelis stated that he did not feel it was a good fit for the space and that tickets would have to be limited. There was further discussion about the current use of the space and the fact that most uses are for non-profit organizations and town use. There was discussion regarding other possible venues locally.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to decline the facilities request form.
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

- Cheshire Community Association – Special Permit Application Summer Festival July 27, 2024

The Special Permit Application was presented in the packet, the event will be held on Saturday July 27, 2024, and will be held on the Community House grounds for the second year.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the Special Permit Application
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis- Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

- Youth Center Facilities Use Form – June 18, 2024

The Anniversary event will be held on June 18th on the grounds of the Community Center. There was clarification of the date.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the Facilities Use Form

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

- Annual Town Meeting Warrant Review and Vote

S. McGrath explained the funding options and free cash/stabilization scenario for the board. There are three options to fund the HVRSD budget; 1. The budget passes as presented, the town will need to use $156,381 in Free Cash and $86,065 in General Stabilization to stay under the levy, 2. If the budget fails the school committee will have to come back to the town with a revised budget. 3. If the motion for a Prop 2 ½ override passes, the total of $91.912 will need to be used in Free Cash and the voters will decide on the override amount for the school budget.

A voter information packet will be created showing the changes in the warrant, there will not be a budget hearing. The warrant was reviewed in its entirety with the following being highlighted.

- Article 19: Revolving Fund Bylaw - Council has clarified that this bylaw needs to be created and moving forward there will be one article for revolving funds that will show the account name and the spending limits.
- Article 21: Police Cruiser – Debt Exclusion - This is a one-year debt exclusion with payoff in June 2025, the article allows for the borrowing and appropriation.
- Article 22: Fire Truck- Debt Exclusion - This is for the authority to borrow which is expected to happen in Fiscal Year 2026 as the truck is expected to arrive in 20-24 months. The affirmative vote will lock in the purchase price of $850,000.
- Article 23: Water Department Enterprise Fund Retained Earning – The Town Administrator shared that the bid for the North State Water Project was opened last week and the lowest bidder with Maximillan with a base bid of $772,334 with the alternate bid of $31,790. The project will be funded with the Rural Grant funds in the amount of $472,600; Remaining borrowing funds in the amount of $164,406 and Retained Earnings in the amount of $167,118. An additional $65,000 will be earmarked in the Water Department Operating Budget for police details for the project.
- Article 25: Free Cash/Stabilization Use - There was discussion about leaving it as a "sum" in the article with the numbers being populated depending on Article 8.
- Article 27 - Collectors Office - The board has been talking about the MGL Chapter 41, Section 38A since it was one of the recommendations within the Financial Management Review in September 2022 which expands the authority of the collector office to collect all monies or accounts due to the municipality including water bills and transfer station permits.
- Article 29: Uncombine Treasurer/Collector position - The position was combined with the vote to appoint the collector in 2021, to uncombine and allow future options for hiring outside consulting services or hiring two individuals for the positions this article needs to be passed.

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded R. DeAngelis to approve the warrant as revised.

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

Digital Equity Plan and Implementation Grant

The Board was presented with the finalized Digital Equity Plan, the project was done by VHB with the City of North Adams, Lanesborough, Florida, and Adams. The deadline for the first implementation grant is this upcoming Friday. The Town Administrator is working with VHB on a plan for a hot spot at the transfer station and

devices for the Senior Center and Library. The Digital Equity Plan will open funding for other infrastructure moving forward.

Reorganization of the Board

A motion was made by R. Killeen and seconded by R. DeAngelis to maintain the current make up of the board with Shawn McGrath as Chair and Jason Levesque as Vice Chair.

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

Consent Agenda

- Payroll and Accounts Payable Warrant
- Minutes – 5/14/24 and 5/21/24(tabled)

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the consent agent except for the May 21, 2024, minutes.

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

Town Administrator Updates

- North State Road – Water Project was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- Parking - The Town Administrator shared that parking for baseball games continues to be an issue. Communication has been sent to the organizer that there is no parking on the West End of the building Monday – Friday due to Town Office meetings and Youth Center pick-up. This evening the parking lot is full of baseball parking, the youth center complained that parents have no parking for pickup. The Police Department was contacted and to a coach and the police will be contacting the organizer to reiterate that parking should be in the main parking lot or at St Mary's.
- Guardrail mower - The DPW director shared that the highway department is looking to purchase a guardrail mower with remaining operating funds. The mower was demonstrated on Friday last week, board member R. DeAngelis was in attendance for the demo. The machine attaches to the John Deere mower and can be used by any highway department employee, saving time weed whacking and roadside safety concerns, it rotates 360 degrees to get around the guardrails and the light poles. It was noted that the current boom mower is down again waiting on parts.
- Sandmill Bridge Update – The Town Administrator, Police Chief and DPW Director attended a DOT meeting, the project will start this summer with the road being closed by the end of September. The project is expected to be complete by 2027, there is an order that no work can be done until after August 1 due to a endanger species in the riverbed. The Fire Chief has been informed so plans can be arranged with dispatch and NBEMS regarding the detour. The residents will be mailed a Code Red form so they can sign up to get information as it is given to the town.
- Van Driver - The Town Administrator was contacted by the Senior Center Director and the COA Chairperson to hire Althea Ossenfort as a van driver. The application was turned in today and sent to the Senior Center. There is an upcoming class required by BRTA which is only held twice a year, so the request is to send the new van driver to this training.
  A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to hire Althea Ossenfort contingent on the return of paperwork and to add the hiring to a future agenda to allow the employee to begin the mandatory training.
  Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis- Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath- Yes
  Motion Carries: 5-0
- Cheshire Rod and Gun Club Liquor Licenses
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the one-day liquor licenses for June 1, June 7, June 18, June 22, and June 29.

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

Announcements from Board Members

M. Francesconi requested that organizations wanting to solicit donations at the Transfer Station obtain permission after receiving complaints about the Lions Club recent fundraiser.

Memorial Day was discussed noting that the essay from students were a highlight of the ceremony. There was discussion about cancelling the parade, plans for a ceremony next year and discussion about the future of the parade. The Memorial Day committee will be soliciting feedback from fallen military families regarding the event and the best way to memorialize the day.

Public Comment

C. McGrath noted that there is a water main break near Dery's on Route 8, residents have been asking why the new excavator is not being used on water projects. He explained that the town does not have a trench box and often the depth of the water line is unsafe for the employees. He is working on obtaining estimates for a trench box.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.
Vote : Unanimous
Motion Carries : 4-0

Document List

- Agenda May 28, 2024
- Facilities Use Form – Truly Independent Wrestling
- Special Event Permit Application - Cheshire Community Association Summer Festival
- Facilities Use Form – Youth Center Inc

Approved: June 4, 2024