

Chichester Board of Selectmen

Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday January 17, 2023

Members Present: Richard Bouchard, Ed Millette, Stephen MacCleery and Jodi Pinard Town Administrator, Kristy Jobin Administrative Assistant

Members of the Advisory Budget Committee: Don Peterman, Kathy Doult, Tara Blaney

Call to Order: Mr. Bouchard called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Others Present: Ewen MacKinnon, Heather Chiavaras, Donna Chagnon, and other members of the public.

Mr. Bouchard opened the meeting at 6:00pm

Joint Meeting with the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Budget Committee-

Warrant Articles-

Mrs. Pinard stated that she did find the warrant article where the Road Advisory Committee (RAC) was only supposed to be in existence for one year. Due to this, the RAC does not need to be discontinued at Town Meeting.

Mrs. Pinard went over the discussion points including, the library warrant article, Parks and Recreation Capital Reserve Fund to cover the amount for the pavilion roof that needs replacing, tree cutting in the budget, and the tax impact for the warrant articles and the loader bid with updated lease prices.

Ms. Doult stated that the Trustees still had concerns about removing the warrant article and not having separate funds for the Library. She stated that if the Library had control of the funds they would not have to wait as long.

Mr. Millette did not agree and stated that the Town already gives the Library Trustees a disbursement that they can spend as they see fit. The library is a Town building and is covered under the Town fund.

Mrs. Pinard stated that the library used to have a fund but it was closed after 2015 after a Town vote.

Mr. MacCleery made a motion and Mr. Bouchard seconded to remove warrant number fifteen from the draft warrant. Roll call vote. Millette, aye. MacCleery, abstain. Bouchard, aye. **Motion passes.**

Mr. MacCleery stated that after reviewing the loader cost, he would propose that if it's necessary to purchase the loader, that the Town does so but without the attachments, which would save costs. Those could be purchased down the road. He stated that he is not in agreement with the size of the loader and believed a smaller loader could do the job.

Mr. Millette stated that the Town may be able to use some of the covid funds to make the first lease purchase for the loader.

Mrs. Pinard will research to see if that would be an option.

The Board discussed needing more businesses on Route 4 to help with offsetting taxes. Water and Sewer is needed to be more appealing.

Highway-

Mrs. Pinard stated that she recommends a level funded road budget or to cut the road reconstruction line to \$300,000.

Mrs. Pinard stated that Fredwood Drive needs repair and it must be done this year. Horse Corner Road needs to be finished with a topcoat as well.

The Board would like to see cost estimates for the topcoat project and Fredwood Drive.

Mrs. Pinard stated that the extra tree cutting money is still in the tree removal line for highway to be in charge of.

Mrs. MacCleery is not in favor of that and would like it to be a warrant article.

The consensus of the Board was to remove \$5,000 from the budget and make it a warrant article to remove ash trees.

Forestry-

Mrs. Blaney asked about Warrant article number fourteen and if two forestry trucks were necessary.

Mr. Millette stated that if the grant was not awarded, it would not be purchased this year. He stated that there is a need for equipment. They already scaled back from three vehicles to two.

Capital Reserve Deposits-

Mrs. Pinard stated that some reductions were made in the capital reserve deposits for government vehicles by \$5,000, Town Facilities by \$10,000 and Town office equipment by \$7,000.

The Board would like the Cemetery Trustees to come to discuss the proposed warrant articles. The Trustees do have \$15,000 in capital reserves that they could utilize.

Mrs. Pinard stated that the surplus is a little over \$400,000 but still under 5%. DRA recommends between 5%-12%.

Salary increases-

The budget has a placeholder of an 8% increase for Town employees and Mr. MacCleery asked what the private sector is offering.

Mr. Millette stated that he never followed cola, but he estimates a 15% increase in payroll.

Mr. Peterman stated that he has increased more than 15% for his employees.

Mr. Millette stated that increases are a requirement to retain good employees and he would rather fund employees than fund other things.

Mr. MacCleery stated that he would go with cola and cut other places if need be. His concern is to keep the employees.

Mr. Bouchard stated that everyone wants to cut increases but if employees leave then no one is there to run the offices.

Mrs. Blaney stated that the State is giving out 10% increases this year.

Mr. Peterman asked the Boards if 8% was really enough, or should they consider more. He stated that he always goes above cola and wants to maintain the current employees.

The 8% placeholder was maintained.

Other-

Mrs. Pinard stated that the next meeting will be on January 31, 2023, and the public hearing for the budget will be on February 7, 2023.

Mr. Hodge is leaving for a vacation for three weeks. Mrs. Pinard stated that they did find coverage and were looking for approval from the Board for Kevin Gagne to fill in.

The consensus of the Board was to approve Kevin Gagne filling in for Mr. Hodge while he was on vacation. He will not be an employee and will be issued a 1099.

Approval of Minutes-

Mr. Millette made a motion and Mr. Bouchard seconded to approve the meeting minutes of January 3, 2023. Roll call vote. Millette, aye. MacCleery, aye. Bouchard, aye. **Motion passes.**

Zoning updates-

Map 8 Lot 7-

Mrs. Pinard stated that Mr. Fife did submit documents to the court and is now waiting for the decision to be issued.

Map 3 Lot 25-

Mrs. Pinard stated that she has not heard back from the property owner and the due date was January 13, 2023 to start the application process.

The consensus of the Board was to send a cease-and-desist letter to the property owner.

290 Dover Road-

Mrs. Pinard stated that Mr. O'Donnell has not completed getting a building permit. Mrs. Jobin stated that no application has been made to the Planning Board.

The consensus of the Board was to send a cease-and-desist letter to the property owner.

Abatement-

Mr. Bouchard made a motion and Mr. Millette seconded to approve the abatement for Map 6 Lot 22 in the amount of \$293.36. Roll call vote. Millette, aye. MacCleery, aye. Bouchard, aye. **Motion passes.**

Adjournment: Being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Millette and seconded by Mr. Bouchard to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm. Roll call vote. Millette, aye. MacCleery, aye. Bouchard, aye. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Approved January 31, 2023

Kristy Jobin, Administrative Assistant

Richard Bouchard

Edward Millette

Stephen MacCleery