

## Chichester Board of Selectmen

### Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday January 31, 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

**Others Present:** Ewen & Otilie MacKinnon, Heather Chiavaras, Ruth Hammen, Fred Shaw, Brenda Boswak, Craig Sykes, and other members of the public.

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

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

#### **Cemeteries-**

Mr. Millette stated that they asked the Trustees to the meeting so that they could discuss the warrant articles the trustees put in for \$5,000 for tree removal in the cemeteries. Mr. Millette asked if they had a list of trees that needed to be removed.

The trustees indicated that there were many trees in multiple cemeteries that need to be removed.

Mr. Sykes stated that the cost of tree removal has increased substantially and the waitlist is long if a crane is involved.

Mr. Millette asked if any money was available in the Capital Reserve Fund.

Mrs. Pinard stated that there is currently \$15,985.00 in the Capital Reserve.

Ms. Hammen stated that they would like to take ownership of Hook Cemetery to the Town maintained cemeteries. It is currently private and the owner can't keep up with the maintenance.

Mr. Shaw stated that Warrant Article #1 would create one fund "Funds received from Sale of Cemetery lots". This would allow money for the sale of cemetery lots to be placed into the town general fund or into a trust fund.

This would simplify the process and make accounting more manageable. Currently a trust is created for each individual sale. Currently violating the law with the way it's done. This would be a onetime vote.

Mr. Millette asked about the "Selectmen, as agents may only expend the interest generated from the trust." He asked if that was RSA.

Mr. Shaw stated that it was not RSA, and it could be expended all by the Selectmen. The fund is set up and if the town wants to change it later, they could. It doesn't have to be set up the same way forever.

Ms. Doult stated that she has concerns. Maintenance of the cemetery includes trees.

The Boards discussed that for mowing and trimming, the town goes under one contract and asked if the trustees considered using the same vendor to save money.

Ms. Hammen stated that the Trustees had asked previously and the Town maintainer was not interested in mowing the cemeteries.

Mr. Millette asked if the Trustees have ever advertised to sell lots.

The Trustees stated that they thought that there were no more lots available, however after doing some research and scanning the ground, they have found additional lots. Once they have a better feel for what is available, they would be willing to advertise.

Mr. Peterman asked what other Towns charge for lots.

Mr. Shaw stated that Chichester is much less expensive.

The Trustees stated that they would be willing to consider that.

Ms. Boswak stated that the last couple years have been working on housekeeping items and the next phase will be looking at increases.

Mr. Millette could get behind the warrant articles with different wording and even if you raise the cost of the lots marginally, it will help offset the cost of maintenance.

Mr. Shaw asked what the Board proposed to do with the \$15,000 in capital reserve.

Mr. Millette stated he would not recommend draining the account.

#### **Highway-**

Mrs. Pinard commended Mr. Sykes for going back to the vendor for the loader and getting the price reduced by \$24,000.

For 2023 there will be no State loader bids so we will not be able to piggyback off of a state contract.

My Sykes stated that there were some issues with the quote, the machine is unavailable with requested tires so addition 17000. He stated that Beauregard has the best customer service, and he has been using them as a vendor for over 25 years and has been very happy. He spoke with them in regard to price and they agreed to reduce the cost of the machine but also all three implements and gave an additional 3k for trade in. That came in less than the other two bids. He stated that they currently have a 4 cylinder which they currently experience problems with. Due to this the quote is for a 6 cylinder. He stated that the quoted price is good until Town Meeting and the machine would be available by the end of the year.

Mr. Sykes that he is looking to repair three roads this year. Fredwood Drive, Ring Road and Kaime Road which are all in are terrible and Horse Corner needs the topcoat completed. The estimates for roads are approximately: Kamie Road, \$42500. Ring Road, \$134,465. Horse Corner, \$112,065.00

Mr. Sykes stated that Fredwood Drive is of grave concern and at the top of the list as far as danger goes. Ring and Kaime are a close second.

Mrs. Pinard recommended that \$300,000 a year would be good for the road reconstruction budget. Mr. Sykes has approx. 5 years left on the 20-year plan and then that could possibly be reduced.

Mr. Sykes would like to have a revolving trust fund for projects. This would have to go to Town Meeting to be voted on. He explained that this way, extra funds could be deposited in the account and if some years the budget goes over those funds extra could be utilized.

Mrs. Pinard will find out if the first payment for the loader could be taken out of the covid funds.

Mr. MacCleery stated that he would like to use the \$5 fund to make a payment.

Mrs. Pinard stated that the Town cannot use capital reserve fund for the first lease payment. The Town could use the funds for the back end of the payment. She stated that there is currently 108,000 in the capital reserve fund.

Mr. MacCleery proposed reducing the projects to \$300,000 and leaving the road budget as presented.

Mr. Sykes stated that none of the numbers are fixed, and everything has to go out to bid.

Mr. Sykes stated that he is trying to take care of all the dead or dangerous trees, trying to take the most dangerous ones down first.

Mr. Bouchard would like to add some more funds so he can be more proactive with tress removal.

The consensus of the Board was to change the tree line to 14,000.

#### **Discussion on wage increase-**

Mrs. Blaney stated that she does not agree with the 8% wage increase and believed it should be reduced.

Mr. Bouchard stated he did not agree and that cuts should be made elsewhere to ensure the employees receive a cost-of-living adjustment.

The consensus of both boards was to keep the wage increase at 8%.

#### **Nonpublic-**

Mr. Bouchard made a motion and Mr. MacCleery seconded to go into nonpublic **RSA 91-A:3, II (a)** The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee. Roll call vote. MacCleery, aye. Millette, aye. Bouchard, aye.

#### **Motion passes.**

Mr. Bouchard made a motion and Mr. Millette seconded to come out of nonpublic. Roll call vote. MacCleery, aye. Millette, 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,

Kristy Jobin, Administrative Assistant

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Richard Bouchard

Edward Millette

Stephen MacCleery