

Town of Chester
Budget Committee
Approved Minutes
March 5, 2018

I. Meeting to Order

Chairman Weider called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Weider led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Attendance

Michael Weider, Chairman
Rhonda Lamphere, Vice Chair
Brian Shankey
Becky Owens
Brennan Holmes
Chuck Heuer

Liaisons:

Selectman Stephen D'Angelo

Absent: Mike Romick

Also Present: Selectman Dick Trask

IV. Public Comment

None

V. BOS Update – Selectman D'Angelo

None

VI. Committee Updates

None

VII. Minutes

Tabled

VIII. New Business

a. Budget

The winter maintenance item which had increased to \$105,000 from \$85 last year was discussed briefly. While some of those funds were left, the huge storm coming in a few days would likely help with that.

Mr. Heuer, who also volunteers on PACT, recommended that if the \$5 or so dollars each household were to pay in the cable bills were to be in their tax bill instead, then everyone would be contribute. Cable subscriptions are down this year.

b. Warrant Articles

Mr. Heuer, using the tractor as one example, raised the issue of the behavior of items going all in and all out each year. This was not the purpose of saving up for these things. Chairman Weider opined that there was a learning curve. Vice Chair Lamphere agreed that more was coming out than going in.

The Board discussed the \$70,000 study for the police station area.

The Board discussed the cost of the well so that the road agent vehicles could be washed down regularly which was projected to increase their lifespan by two-thirds. Selectman Trask explained that there was a catch basin to collect the runoff to keep the salted water from entering the wetlands and that the building was enclosed and heated so that there would be no freezing. Chairman Weider requested the capacity volume of the basin. Selectman Trask will get that figure to him.

An off-road ATV was requested by the Police Department to deal with the number of complaints from residents asking to break up parties in the woods and could be used to patrol trails however they did not believe this would be a shared vehicle that could be used at Wason Pond. Selectman Trask spoke to some of the expenses that added to the cost of the vehicle such as initial outfitting with lights and radios.

The police cruiser item was discussed briefly. Vice Chair Lamphere opined that this used to be an every other year expense for half of the cost that they are now.

Wason Pond is seeking to have a seasonal part-time ranger position salary of \$10,000. Selectman Trask explained that the park ranger could hand out citations and would be trained and supervised by the police department.

Selectman Trask presented that he is in the process of putting together a detailed job description for a Town Administrator and it was discussed how to best present it to the town. While the Selectman had the authority to hire anyone they needed, the salary would be noticeable and the town lacked the business revenues of other town's who had them. In past years the item has been tabled or discussions have been so convoluted as to confuse the public. This would be the first year where a majority of Selectman as well as the Budget Committee could agree on the need for the position evolving due to the growing complexity and volume of what the Selectman are having to do on a daily basis. Putting it into the budget at town meeting may cause the budget to be ripped apart on the floor.

Mr. Heuer commented briefly on how he would like to see more business revenue in the town and how he felt the public lost out on the Busche Academy site because the purchase potential wasn't well presented.

Recreation would be reseeding and regarding the fields and Mr. Holmes explained why this was needed to be done again so soon.

The Town's 300th Anniversary Fund was a \$5,000 item.

Keno is proposed. The Town has to pay a fee. This is based on full-day Kindergarten. Keno would be available in establishments that serve alcohol.

Mr. Heuer questioned the salary pool sheets and in particular giving a new line item number so that its on its own page. Vice Chair Lamphere noted that the three sheets they usually get that showed all of the salaries weren't there and they will try to have them next time.

IX. Member Comments

Vice Chair Lamphere stated that the PTA was having an information session tomorrow night (3/6) at the library with a question and answer panel concerning the budget and articles. Mr. Heuer added that CH 20 had aired a two-part interview with Royal Richardson.

X. Next Meeting Date – March 12, 2018

XI. Adjournment

Vice Chair Lamphere motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Heuer seconded her motion, all were in favor, so moved. The meeting of the Budget Committee was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer

Recording Secretary