

**Town of Chester  
Budget Committee  
Tuesday, January 28, 2020  
Draft Minutes**

**1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

By Roll Call, Chair Weider called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Attendance**

By Roll Call the following Board members were present: Chair Mike Weider, Vice-Chair Rhonda Lamphere, Ephraim Dobbins, Kathy Guilmette, and Chester School Board Liaison Brennan Holmes.

**3. Member Comments**

**4. Welcome and Announcements by the Chair**

**5. Public Comment**

None

**6. BOS Update – Selectman D’Angelo**

**7. School Board Update – Brennan Holmes**

Nothing new to report.

**8. Other Committee Updates**

None

**9. Minutes**

**10. Old Business**

**11. New Business**

**Town Budget/Warrants/CIP**

Pay Matrix

Selectman Landau reviewed the pay matrix which shows a dollar amount now and will be subject to change each year. Chair Weider asked if the dollars are associated from the pool and Selectman Landau added and individual departments. Chair Weider indicated under benefits it shows the current position and rate. Selectman Landau explained the Labor Pay Grade and Step increases. Someone with no experience would start under a Step 0 with a probation period. Vice-Chair Lamphere noted a Labor Grade 1 makes \$12.50 but according to the pay matrix now makes \$11.53? Selectman Landau indicated 1-7 are part-time and full-time starts at 8. Selectman Landau indicated starting with a certain grade, a step increase can be given each year.

Chair Weider noted \$61,775 is built into the increase for one step, next year. Selectman Landau indicated it would be at the Selectmen's discretion to give out \$15,000 for benefits, only one step would be done per year to be consistent with other towns. The pool would be \$15,000.

#### Request for Assistant Town Clerk

Ms. Guilmette asked about the request to add an assistant clerk. Selectman Landau was in favor of filing in with someone we have. Vice-Chair Lamphere noted they would still need to be paid. Selectman Landau noted there was a time period when the Clerk was alone and someone needs to be trained to assist. The Clerk suggested 12 hours per week.

Ms. Guilmette asked if eliminating the Clerk's Assistant would impact benefits and Vice-Chair Lamphere responded no, the position is not full-time.

#### Finance

Ms. Guilmette asked about the IT (4150) line 324. Selectman Landau indicated it is new software for the Finance Department to replace software going out of date.

#### Legal Services

Ms. Guilmette asked about legal services. Selectman Landau explained the pending matters, the amount spent \$45,536, average of \$60,000 which also pays for Planning Board legal, three attorneys right now and the pending utilities lawsuit.

#### Police Department

Ms. Guilmette asked about the Police Department (4210) line for Administrative Assistant with masters and additional full-time officer. Chair Weider indicated the salary increase would be \$5,000. Selectman Landau noted it fit into the pay matrix and one officer was lost to Auburn.

#### Maintenance

Selectman Landau indicated there is a lot of need with maintenance. The 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is coming up and groundskeeping went up due to Wason. One maintenance person retired and may not be replaced this year. Looking to hire one for housekeeping and carpentry.

Selectman Landau indicated the Selectmen reviewed the budget that was presented and made minimal cuts. The Asst. Clerk position is not essential and there are other ways to handle that. Two Firefighters is a need that should be seen in the Warrant Article. The re-evaluation didn't do much good and typically impact older citizens.

Vice-Chair Lamphere indicated if all the Warrant Articles pass the cost would be \$6.6 million with \$4.5 million to the Highway Department, some should come out.

Chair Weider indicated 3% is an increase he could live with. February 13<sup>th</sup> is the first Public Hearing. Mr. Holmes indicated the School District Meeting is March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Budget Committee will meet with the Board of Selectman on Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.

### CIP

Vice-Chair Lamphere recommended keeping at \$600,000 instead of \$700,000. Chair Weider recommended keeping it at \$700,000.

Chair Weider indicated can't charge for Master Plan and can't put Church in CIP. Chair Weider recommended putting J in the CIP instead, GIS will be the way to go. Chair Weider recommended eliminating L, M & N because there is no dollar amount.

### Warrants

### PACT

Selectman Landau noted Article L gives PACT their revolving fund with Article M to rescind their previous special revenue fund. If L fails then we will go to N.

### Trees

Chair Weider indicated the roadside cleanup line is \$36,000 and recommended trees be included in road repair.

### Cemetery

Selectman Landau noted having two sets of cemetery trustees preceded the regulation to only have one set. Vice-Chair Lamphere noted if someone left perpetual care funds in someone's name that could not be combined. Selectman Landau noted this doesn't take that away it makes one fund for the whole cemetery.

### Digital Records

Vice-Chair Lamphere noted there is not enough information for Article 5. Ms. Guilmette noted it is for service not a machine.

### Pay Matrix

Selectman Landau will provide the pay matrix information with grades and steps.

#### Bond

Selectman Landau indicated Road Agent Oleson planned to ask for \$5-\$7 million to do all 21. If we got \$3 million in one year, we could do about 40% of the 21 roads in addition to \$1.3 million.

Vice-Chair Lamphere asked the interest rate on the bond which is 2.5%. Chair Weider indicated the Town did not want to bond anymore and this should be in the CIP.

#### Petitioned Articles

Selectman Landau indicated the Indigenous People's article was checked but SB2 has not been heard about yet

#### Other

Vice-Chair Lamphere indicated animal control could be cut there are no expenditures.

Vice-Chair Lamphere indicated Line 4711 interest, doesn't have a dollar in it.

### **12. Closing Comments**

### **13. Next Meeting Date:**

### **14. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer  
Recording Secretary  
via PACT