Town of Chelmsford Select Board Minutes
50 Billerica Rd., Room 204
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Regular Meeting MINUTES
January 31, 2022

Attending:

Virginia Crocker Timmins, Chair	Paul Cohen, Town Manager
Kenneth Lefebvre, Vice Chair	John Sousa, Finance Director
Mark Carota, Clerk	
Patricia Wojtas, Board Member	

Absent:
George Dixon, Board Member

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. The meeting was recorded by Chelmsford Telemedia.

Chair Timmins called the meeting to order at 6:00PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS
Town Manager Cohen announced that on February 28th a presentation will be made on the roadway and sidewalk construction multi-year plan. Public participation is encouraged and welcomed.

PUBLIC INPUT
There was no public input.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES
Vice Chair Lefebvre read the list of current vacancies. Interested applicants can apply online at http://www.chelmsfordma.gov or through the Town Manager's office.

TOWN MANAGER'S PROPOSED FY23 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS
Town Manager Cohen noted that the charter requires the Town Manager to deliver the proposed budget for the following fiscal year ninety days prior to the Town Meeting, this year to be held on April 25, 2022. He reviewed and noted the following bullet-points of the PowerPoint presentation on the proposed FY23 operating and capital budgets as follows:
- Budget highlights
- FY23 budget line item changes
- Five fiscal year expenditure comparison
- Ten fiscal year expenditure comparison
- School department funding increases
- Chelmsford's state chapter 70 education funding history
- Chelmsford public schools funding
- Chelmsford public schools per pupil expenditure
- Per pupil expenditure comparison
- Chelmsford public schools foundation enrollment and student/teacher ratio
- Enrollment and student teacher ratio FY21
- Average class size FY20
- FY23 school department budget drivers
- Nashoba Tech enrollment

- Nashoba Tech per pupil expenditure
- FY22 Nashoba Tech budget drivers
- Employee compensation
- Employee and retiree health insurance
- Health insurance subscribers
- Health insurance premium
- Middlesex County retirement assessment
- Middlesex County retirement assessment ten-year history/analysis
- Snow and ice removal
- Solid waste and recycling collection and disposal
- State and town elections
- Property, casualty and workers compensation insurance
- Medicare payroll tax
- Debt service
- Excluded debt service
- Non-excluded debt service
- FY23 budget drivers
- Available FY23 new revenue sources
- Five fiscal year revenue comparison
- Ten fiscal year revenue comparison
- FY22 $7,829 average single-family property tax bill allocation
- Property tax valuation
- Average single family property tax bill
- Property tax comparison
- State aid
- Local receipts
- Available funds
- Inflationary measure
- Structural changes to reduce reliance on property taxes – state aid and OPEB reform

John Sousa, Finance Director, reviewed the PowerPoint presentation on the FY23 Capital Plan with the following highlights:

- FY23 capital summary
  - Municipal technology
  - Municipal administration – Town Clerk
  - Public libraries
  - Public safety – Fire Department
  - Public works
  - Municipal facilities
  - School facilities

Chair Timmins asked the Town Manager to address Vice Chair Lefebvre's previous question regarding the individual budget allocations for each department, their percentage increases and impact to the overall budget which Manager Cohen had stated could be addressed in the detailed budget document. He then stated that this is a measured and conservative level services budget. As the pandemic winds down to an endemic, there is still an unstable economic climate due to inflation and the withdrawal of federal aid. Proposition 2.5 does not increase at inflation increases but remains at 2.5%, and municipalities are dependent on the state for local aid. With a new Governor coming into office after the November election, there is additional uncertainty as to his/her commitment to continuing local aid partnership. The last

resource for municipalities is an override, and history shows that this would not be successful in Chelmsford.

Town Manager Cohen stated that the Superintendent will present his level services budget to the School Committee tomorrow night. The Finance Committee will hold budget hearings with individual departments and vote on the budget recommendations in March, as will the Select Board, in time for publishing of the Finance Committee Report for the April Town Meeting.

USE OF STATE BUDGET EARMARK of $200,000 for PARK IMPROVEMENTS
Town Manager Cohen suggested that this item be deferred until the full Board is present. The Select Board agreed.

TOWN MANAGER REPORTS
Municipal Cybersecurity Grant Award
Town Manager Cohen reported that the Town had received an award from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security for the Town's participation in end-user training and threat simulation. Department heads are tracking employees to ensure their participation in training to recognize threats of ransomware and malware. Employees respond to phishing exercises and report suspicious activity to the IT department. Additional training on the specific topic is offered the employee if he/she fails to recognize the threat. Over three-hundred employees, including Board and Committee members, will participate in the program. A report specific to efforts to control cyber threats will be provided at an Executive Session of the Board by the IT Director at a later date.

Northern Middlesex Council of Government's District Local
Technical Assistance Request for Proposals
Town Manager Cohen reported that NMCOG had requested proposals for technical assistance to be submitted by Wednesday, February 9th. The Planning Board had suggested a project to update the Master Plan to include a list of zoning and land use conflicts and provide a menu of options to address. In answer to Board Member Wojtas's question about the viability of the permit extension act referenced in the request for proposals, Town Manager Cohen stated that the 40B project on Riverneck Road still qualifies for the extension.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Community One Stop for Growth
Expression of Interest
Town Manager Cohen reported he and Evan Belansky, Community Development Director, discussed areas of interest, including assistance with planning for the 255 Princeton St. project for upgraded water main connections, similar to the MassWorks grant obtained previously for Groton Road. Other projects may include planning for center village, Vinal Square, Route 129 and the Drum Hill corridor.

Massachusetts Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission's
Other Post Employment Benefits Summary Report
Town Manager Cohen reported that the Public Employee Retirement Commission (PERAC) had issued a summary report of all cities and towns and their current OPEB liability. At a funding ratio of 25%, Chelmsford was funded above several neighboring towns. Discussion ensued on the possible factors involved in the assessment of funding rations, including specified discount rates of individual towns.

Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association 2021 Risk Management Award
Town Manager Cohen reported that the Town had received an award from the MIIA Property and Casualty Division for its efforts in loss prevention.

Latest Snowfall

Town Manager Cohen expressed his appreciation for the efforts of public safety and public works crews for snow preparedness and snow and ice removal. With the shortage of private plow contractors, the burden fell to the employees of public works in doing whatever it took to maintain the safety of the community on its roadways and sidewalks. He stated that work continues this evening in snow removal in public parking spaces.

SELECT BOARD GOAL – MEETING MINUTES PROCESS

Clerk Carota reviewed the document he had created with regard to detailed guidance on the process for drafting, processing, voting, and posting regular public session and executive session minutes and the audit process. Discussion ensued on various changes to the processing of executive session minutes as well as the audit and review process. Clerk Carota will vet suggested changes with Town Counsel and submit a redraft of the guidance document to the Board at its next meeting.

LIAISON REPORTS AND REFERRALS

Board Members Carota: no report.
Vice Chair Lefebvre: no report
Board Member Wojtas:
- Budget breakfast of Nashoba Tech will be held on February 11th at 10:00AM.

Chair Timmins:
- The School Committee is meeting on February 1st to present its preliminary budget recommendations for FY2023. A public hearing will be scheduled on March 1st.
- Dore & Whittier will be at the February 1st School Committee meeting to finalize their approach for a new building project proposal to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority this spring.

PRESS QUESTIONS

No press were present.

Adjournment

> **Motion:** by Vice Chair Lefebvre to adjourn at 7:38PM. Seconded by Board Member Carota. **Motion carries 4-0, unanimous**.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: February 14, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
Recording Secretary

Supporting documents:
-Committee vacancies
-FY23 budget presentation
-FY23 Town Manager budget
-Municipal cybersecurity awareness grant
-NMCOG RFP
-NMCOG project criteria
-NMCOG project description

-Best practice areas within NMCOG staff capabilities
-Permit extension act FAQ
-District local technical assistance request for proposals
-One Stop expression of interest
-PERAC OPEB summary report
-OPEB cities and towns
-MIIA 2021 risk management award
-Draft procedure Select Board meeting minutes