

Chesprocott Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
Unapproved Minutes
Cheshire Town Hall Room #207
84 South Main Street, Cheshire, CT 06410
Wednesday, April 16, 2025, 5:30 pm.

Board Members Present: Lauren Backman (C)-Chair, Barbara Ecke (C)-Vice Chair, Jim Jinks (C)-Finance Chair, Sarah Montavon-via phone call (W), Andrew Albert (W), John Schieffer (P)

Others Present: Hilary Norcia-Acting Director of Health, Darlene Miakos-Chesprocott Office Manager, Emily Gomes-Chesprocott Public Health Nurse, Jeff Andrews-Chesprocott Sanitarian, Mayor Robert Chatfield-Prospect, Don Walsh - Cheshire Council Member, John Milone- Cheshire Council Member, David Veleber-Cheshire Council Member, Faith Hamm-Cheshire Resident, Ernest Montavon-Wolcott Resident

Board Members Absent: none

I. Roll Call

The roll call was taken at 5:30 p.m. and a quorum was determined to be present.

II. Welcome

- a. Welcome Mr. John Schieffer, the new BOD member representing the Town of Prospect. L. Backman welcomed John. John stated he started his business in 1970. He started working with Chesprocott in 1976. He does septic repairs and installations and works well with the inspectors.
- b. Welcome, Mr. Andrew Albert, the new BOD member representing the Town of Wolcott. L. Backman welcomed Andrew. He is the Deputy Chief with Wolcott Ambulance. He has a relationship with Chesprocott as well.

Motion made by Jim Jinks to go into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation and the Board leadership.

L. Backman stated as the Board Chair she has comments to make she has sought legal representation and to protect her legal rights and to assert all legal action for things that have happened to her and or will happen to her, Council has indicated to her that all action be placed on hold until all the facts are reviewed. She has read 1,217 FOIA emails. She also knows the truth and has evidence of the truth. Council is asking that all action be put on hold, which is her legal right, as the Board Chair. There has been a lot of litigation against her, and she has now retained her own Council. She mentioned attorney client privilege. All pending litigation is put on hold.

J. Jinks stated we cannot approve the minutes right now. J. Jinks stated that if she can't address this as Board Chair, she shouldn't be the Board Chair. L. Backman stated that is not true. J. Jinks stated that we can't approve minutes that State something that may be incorrect. L. Backman stated, then we will not

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approve those minutes. February 19th minutes cannot be discussed under the advise by Council. J. Jinks stated he thinks the Board needs our representation here.

J. Jinks stated February 20, 2025, was an illegal meeting. L. Backman stated no it wasn't.

III. Approve Minutes

a. February 19, 2025, Regular Board Minutes-Tabled

Motion made by S. Montavon, seconded by B. Ecke to approve the February 19th, 2025, Regular Board Minutes other than the pending litigation portion.

J. Jinks opposed. A. Albert and J. Schieffer abstained. **Motion carried.**

b. February 20, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes-Executive Session

Motion made by S. Montavon, seconded by L. Backman to approve the February 20, 2025, Special Meeting-Exec. Session Minutes. J. Jinks opposed. A. Albert and J. Schieffer abstained. **Motion carried.**

c. March 19, 2025, Regular Board Discussion-Official Meeting Cancelled

There were no minutes. There was just discussion.

IV. Comments by the Chair & Vice Chair

- a. S. Montavon received an e-mail from David Ioime. He requested the FOIA e-mails to begin with. She read it into the record. Explaining Chesprocott has had more than ample time to. She apologized for the delay, and we will be working on separating them by the FOIA exemptions.

V. Communications

- a. Letter from Mayor Chatfield appointing John Schieffer as our new board member representing the Town of Prospect
- b. Letter from Mayor Dunn appointing Andrew Albert as our new board member representing the Town of Wolcott.
- c. Legal Notice that was posted in the Waterbury Republican. H. Norcia stated she did not see it posted. L. Backman stated she will follow-up.
- d. Notice of supplemental billing opportunity that we received from the State Health Dept. H. Norcia stated that there is a stop work order from DPH for the Immunization Grant. We had to stop all work and pay any invoices through March 24th. We basically paid for everything that we were supposed to. We shouldn't need this supplemental program.
- e. Notice of per capita costs to CEO of the Town. Attached in our packet letters to Cheshire, Prospect & Wolcott.
- f. Resignation of Liz Normand, Prospect Board Rep. for over 20 years. She will include this in the next meetings packet.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Finance
 - i. Monthly Financial Report

L. Backman stated that Mike Federico was not able to make tonight's meeting. He did not send us a financial report. He apologized. He has had a very unbelievable tax season. J. Jinks asked if he would be able to send us one soon; L. Backman stated yes.

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ii. Review proposed annual budget report: due April 30, 2025

L. Backman stated that M. Federico will review our Proposed Annual Budget. He will look at it and have comments by next Monday or Tuesday. He suggested having a zoom call to go through the whole packet, adding his comments. She will then submit it to all board members and then discuss the proposal. The meeting on April 29th is to have a Public Hearing. So, we need to discuss it first.

H. Norcia wanted to point out some big differences from last year's budget, including the facilities and equipment page 5. It has gone up to \$762,650. This is due to the building and future renovation and maintenance to the ARTS Place building. It's a 91% increase. That does not include the \$350,000 from Cheshire. The other thing she wants to point out, we have reduced our operations and personnel services by 5%. The grand budget is over \$2 million but that's basically because of the building/ARTS Place. She also wanted to bring up the total cost of this transition, on page 5 the top paragraph, when we moved to the trailer, was \$108,000. She also wants to bring up the fact that the lawyers' fees were way over budget. We budgeted \$10,000 last budget and it increased 700%.

L. Backman stated it has been an exceptional year with HR issues starting in January.

J. Jinks stated we have had more legal needs than we anticipated but also the rate we are being charged is probably twice what we should be charged. We need to maybe look into another firm. At some point we need to make a change.

S. Montavon asked if we voted on Robinson and Cole, was there prior vetting of other law firms.

H. Norcia referred to page 15, per capita for the Towns. We proposed to decrease to \$10.15 per capita for each town.

L. Backman stated she discussed this with Mike Federico. He is going to take a look at everything. She thinks it's too steep. We have no idea of federal and state funding cuts.

J. Jinks stated that we do have a very healthy fund balance. We haven't had a Director of Health for the past year, we have lost some staff. To him it seems like it is reasonable to work with the Towns this year by lowering our per capita.

L. Backman stated we have a lot of unknowns right now.

H. Norcia referred to page 17, Grants. She did contact the Dept. of Public Health Section Chief for Emerg. Preparedness-Fran Provenzano and she assured her we have funding for the Emerg. Preparedness Grant which is \$523,012. They haven't received anything from CDC otherwise, so we are putting that in our budget. Chesprocott gets about \$140,000 of that.

She also applied for the Tobacco Control Grant. We partnered with 2 other Health Depts. We should hear back from May 12th.

She also applied for another grant yesterday, Steps to Safety Program. Fall Fire Prevention Program. \$5,000.

L. Backman asked about the Workforce Development Grant. H. Norcia stated you have to do yearly reports. N. Norcia and D. Miakos explained it goes to 2027. We only have about \$28,000 left of that.

H. Norcia stated they will be making a list of goals and objectives for the coming year.

D. Miakos stated that everything in the budget was calculated as if they were at full staff (insurance etc.)

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J. Jinks asked about the vehicle replacement schedule. Can they give an idea on how pressing that is. D. Miakos explained the vehicles. The cars are low mileage. The problem they are running into is that since they aren't going out every day, they have to try and rotate them, so they are getting driven. The vehicles will all be used once they get back to full staff. J. Jinks mentioned \$60,000 to replace a vehicle for this budget. H. Norcia mentioned not replacing them all at the same time. L. Backman asked for a chart with all the vehicle information. We will revisit in 6 months.

VII. Division Report

a. Acting Director of Health Report

- Already discussed Immunization Grant
- Work Force Dev. Discussed
- NACCHO Grant has been spent on Stop the Bleed Kits and Training
- Per Capita Grant has been received. We reduced it for the next budget by 10% because of Lamont's budget.
- Prospect Promise-Lt. Abarzua will be in charge until there is a permanent Director of Health. They will apply for the grant again.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey- They still have gotten no more.
- Operations Quality Control-still having staff recording and measuring reports for all 3 Towns.
- Syntrio Complaint hotline. No reports in March.
- Food Service Software is coming along. They have meetings every Tuesday. They have to order 5 tablets for sanitarian staff. Inspect-To-Go.
- Move to ARTS Place-on hold. Nothing has gone out to bid. They did a radon test on both floors (for free). The radon came back high. Mitigation systems need to be put in place; it will need to be put in by the Town of Cheshire.
- 2025-2026 Flu Season-they ordered 560 total vaccines, 350 high dose and 210 regular dose. Last year they way over ordered. They can always order more.
- Emily Gomes-Public Health Nurse stated that they need a Clinic License and CDC pin number. So she partnered with Cheshire Academy. They will store vaccines for children so she can vaccinate the kids that go there and charge the admin. fee. It will be a good partnership for both of us. They also did a wonderful Narcan training there the other day as well.
- Staff Positions: Chief Sanitarian Position is still open. 2 out of 3 Sanitarian positions are filled. We do have someone else we are still interviewing. We filled the Public Health Nurse position. Director of Health we have 2 applications that are viable for interviewing.

S. Montavon presented the resumes that she thought were interviewable. The other thing is she has questions we put together a while ago. She talked to Darlene and Hilary via e-mail about using 3 other district Health Director's to interview then we would either do Board Members and staff together or separately. She wanted the whole board to see the 2 resumes and say yes and set up interviews. She thinks one of them previously worked here.

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- H. Norcia put a list together of potential grant opportunities. She already talked about the Tobacco Control Grant; that's the biggest one. She is looking into Community Foundation Grants. Prospect and Wolcott don't have Human/Social Services they would like to incorporate into Chesprocott to help those 2 Towns. Also, Steps for Safety and Prospect Promise.
- L. Backman also mentioned private grants.
- H. Norcia referred to the monthly numbers from the nurse in the back of the packet.
- Darlene mentioned that the extended lease is not in the packet for the Willscot Trailer.

VIII. Old Business

- a. Status of Director of Health job search and other staff open positions-already discussed
- b. CT DPH Tobacco Control Grant Application 3 Yr. Grant-1,076,014.25 with two subcontractors -partnered with HVHD and Danbury HD. Will hear if we get it on May 12th. - already discussed
- c. Update and contract renewal for Willscott trailer-already discussed
- d. Status of Town of Cheshire approval of Jacunski and Humes Architects design plans for former ARTS Place building renovation-L. Backman talked to Michael Rinaldi and Brian Humes. They are working on value engineering and the mechanicals etc. She asked for an update for the next meeting. They have encouraged us to send plans out to bid once we receive them.
- e. Status of CHD Employee Handbook (last updated June 2018)
- f. Status of CHD Bylaws (last updated May 2018)
 - Need to assign Andrew and John to committees. Darlene was working with Bill Ryan on the Handbook. It has all been started. L. Backman stated she contacted Town of Wolcott and Prospect and got their Handbooks. She did ask Cheshire for theirs but never received it.

IX. New Business

- a. Director of Health Transfer of Checking Account Money into STIF Account-J. Jinks stated we haven't made any changes.
- b. Update CHD-BOD binder-May 2025-The new members did receive BOD Binders. H. Norcia added more to the binder. Everyone will get a new updated binder.
- c. H. Norcia mentioned new Draft Annual Report she has been working on. She sent it to all the Board Members for review. It is for 2023-2024. We base this on the 10 Essential Services of Public Health.

Mayor Chatfield stated he has been working in Prospect for 48 years. He wants to see us get through all our issues and not go through what we went through a few years ago.

Andrew would like to see something put on the schedule sooner rather than later in terms of updating us on outstanding concerns. The next board meeting is a bit too far out in his opinion. He doesn't know what needs to happen in order to facilitate that and who needs to be excused and not excused, and he thinks it would be important to get us all on the same page, with the attorneys. S. Montavon stated that if that were to happen maybe we could meet with Michael Rinaldi or Brian Humes then.

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S. Montavon mentioned other options outside of our space. We can talk about that as well. J. Jinks stated the Building Committee should meet. Andrew stated he is happy to sit on that Committee.

J. Schieffer asked if there are other options other than ARTS Place. The Board discussed there are other options. L. Backman briefly explained the history of choosing ARTS Place. S. Montavon asked if the Radon issue is being taken care of in the meantime. No, it is not. Darlene stated it is very difficult and trying to be crammed in the trailer and they aren't even fully staffed.

X. Adjournment

Motion made by J. Jinks, seconded by A. Albert to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 p.m. **Unanimous.**



Lauren A. Backman
Chairperson, Board of Directors
Chesprocott Health District
April 23, 2025