

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
(to be approved at next BOS meeting)
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, January 4, 2011 - 7:00 P.M.

Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room

Selectmen Present: First Selectman Carmen Vance. Selectmen Richard Szegda, Rebecca Stearns, Robert Hellstrom and William O'Brien.

Also Present: Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz.

CALL TO ORDER: C. Vance called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **MINUTES:** W. O'Brien MOVED to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2010. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
3. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Henry Beck stated on behalf of the Law Firm of Halloran and Sage that they have enjoyed providing legal services to the town for the past several years and hopes that the relationship will continue. He explained that he would like to know if the BOS would like to see improvement in the services that has been provided and inquired as to whether or not the quality of service is the reason why the town is going out to bid for legal services. R. Szegda explained that now may be a good time for the Town to try and save money by putting legal services out to bid, and that going out to bid has nothing to do with the quality of work from Halloran and Sage. R. Hellstrom concurred.
4. **FIRST SELECTMAN REPORT:** None.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
C. Vance MOVED to add item 5.1 entitled, Credit Card Resolution to the agenda under Old Business. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
- 5.1 **Credit Card Resolution:** C. Vance MOVED to approve the following resolution:
"Beverly Ciurylo, Finance Director for the Town of Columbia, is hereby authorized to create and enter in an agreement with Webster Bank for a credit card on behalf of the Town of Columbia. This authorization shall remain in effect unless revoked by vote of the Columbia Board of Selectmen. Upon revocation, the Town shall duly notify Webster Bank of the same and Webster Bank shall be indemnified in acting in reliance upon this authorization." MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:**
- 6.1 **CL&P's voluntary "Midnight Out" street light option:** J. Luiz explained that this provides an option for the town to pay CL&P to make modifications to certain lights in town causing the lights to turn off at midnight. J. Luiz explained that a concern is the

possible liability that comes with the lights being turned off. R. Szegda asked how much money the town would save. J. Luiz said that he estimated that the cost to operate a modified street light would be cut in half. J. Luiz said that any savings would be offset by the cost the town would incur to pay CL&P to modify particular lights. R. Szegda would like to see some lights turned off provided that they are on back roads and are not necessarily needed/ R. Szegda said he would like J. Luiz and the Public Works Director to come up with a more precise estimate of savings. W. O'Brien questioned whether or not the town's liability insurance costs would increase due to the possible increase in liability associated with turning street lights off at midnight. R. Hellstrom expressed that the existing lights are there for a reason and that he would not be in favor of turning them off at midnight. He feels if there are lights that are not needed then something should be done besides shutting them off at a certain time. R. Stearns said that street lighting is important, but that she is concerned with the dramatic cost of street lighting increases over the past few years. Discussion followed. W. O'Brien said that CL&P may be trying to mitigate their increase in costs. J. Luiz will speak with other towns about this issue at the next WINCOG meeting.

6.2 Appliances in Old Firehouse: J. Luiz explained that a resident has inquired about an appliance in the old firehouse and expressed interest in purchasing it. J. Luiz explained that they are not being used and there is no plan for them to be used in the future. R. Szegda MOVED to authorize Town staff to sell unused appliances that are owned by the Town and located in the Old Firehouse. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

6.3 Establishment of a Town Meeting: J. Luiz explained that the cost for the replacement of the shingles/roof on the school is more that anticipated. Also, once the shingles were removed, the workers found rotted wood that required removal and replacement. He also explained that creation of a capital account outside of the budget process may only take place at Town Meeting. He explained that electrical work is needed at the Senior Center, and that the kitchen floor needs to be re-grouted and sealed. He stated that medical trip fees have collected in a special revenue account over a period of several years and that another special revenue account contains money from special functions (pancake breakfasts, etc.) held to raise money for improving the Senior Center kitchen. He suggested the money in the two special revenue accounts be transferred to a new capital account created with the express purpose of improving the kitchen floor and kitchen electrical capacity. C. Vance MOVED to establish a Special Town Meeting on January 18, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Adela G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room to facilitate a vote by the legislative body on the following items:

- (1) Transfer of \$9,213.44 from Capital Account #20-6403-014, entitled "DPW Removal of Tanks," to Capital Account 20-6403-010, entitled "Dartmouth School Renovations."
- (2) Creation of a Capital Account entitled "Senior Center Kitchen" and transfer into said Capital Account \$1,800 from Special Revenue Account #36-3260-450 entitled "Transportation Fees." and \$932 from Special Revenue Account #36-3260-813 entitled "Sr. Center Special Items." MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH

7.1 Letter from Mark Coleman to C. Vance: The BOS reviewed the letter from M. Coleman. Discussion followed. C. Vance instructed J. Luiz to speak with M. Coleman about scheduling a Public Hearing regarding the designated swim area at Erdoni Road.

7.2 Email from J. Luiz to various Land Use Boards concerning development around the Lake

8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:

8.1 Resignation letter from (Lake Management Advisory Committee) LMAC member Lawrence Jacques

8.2 Appointment of Pamela Missal (R) to FiPAC: R. Szegda asked P. Missal to provide her qualifications relating to Finance. P. Missal discussed her background with the BOS. She stated that dealing with budgets was something that she has done routinely during her career in law. He asked if she considers herself good with numbers. She said that she does. He asked her to explain why she was opposed to the recent teachers' contract. She stated that she believes her position on that issue is not relevant. He asked what her feeling is about the BOE and what she feels on town economics in general. He asked if she feels that the town budget should be cut a lot. P. Missal said that she is generally concerned that the taxes have increased too much. R. Szegda feels that the town has done a good job on keeping the budget to a minimum and that over the past two years the BOE and BOS have finished with a surplus. W. O'Brien asked P. Missal how long she has lived in town. Pam explained she has lived in town for ten years. W. O'Brien asked P. Missal what she was doing now for work and where she was working now. P. Missal said that she is teaching at E.O. Smith. W. O'Brien asked P. Missal if she has ever served in government office. P. Missal answered no. R. Stearns said that she believes P. Missal is more than qualified to handle this sort of position. R. Hellstrom explained that he received a call from another resident that is interested in the FiPAC vacancy. C. Vance said that she spoke with the other resident and told him that someone has already been recommended. She explained that she spoke with the other resident again and that he said he had been approached by several democrats to apply for the vacant FiPAC position. The other resident told C. Vance that he did not want to get in the middle of a BOS appointment dispute. C. Vance said she believes this is the one and only time she has dealt at the board level with one political party trying to dictate to a board how to fill a position that has been vacated by a member of the other political party. R. Szegda said that he believes that the more candidates there are, the better the final choice will be. R. Stearns explained there is also a formal process to be followed and that only P. Missal undertook that process. P. Missal sent a letter expressing interest in the vacant position and then met with the Republican Town Committee. W. O'Brien said he is concerned by P. Missal's desire to reject the teachers' contract. R. Stearns stated that the town needs people to speak up and express what they feel on issues like the teachers' contract. C. Vance spoke of a situation that took place in 2009, when a Democrat resigned from FiPAC and that four months went by where R. Szegda said nothing, but that R. Szegda now wants to select his candidate to be placed in a seat to be filled by a Republican. R. Szegda stated that the difference with the present vacancy is that there is more than one candidate to choose from. R. Szegda said that interested candidates do not have to express their interest to the town committees. R. Szegda stated that the other resident

expressed interest in the FiPAC vacancy to him and that he suggested to the other resident that he call J. Luiz in order to express his interest in the vacancy. C. Vance feels R. Szegda opposes P. Missal for the FiPAC appointment because P. Missal voted against the teacher's contract. Dick stated that he was concerned about P. Missal based on her public statements about the teachers' contract and that is why he wanted P. Missal to come in and answer questions so he could get to know her better. He stated he would like someone cooperative to join FiPAC and work together as a group. R. Stearns explained that the town has the final say on the budget and that is what should be kept in mind. W. O'Brien asked P. Missal if she is comfortable with the fact that a teachers' contract was established at the bargaining table and the Town Meeting interfered with the established contract. P. Missal explained that the Town did not interfere, but that the Town exercised its right by statute to approve/reject the contract. C. Vance said that P. Missal is bright, articulate and thoughtful in decision making. C. Vance went on to say that although P. Missal is conservative, she is not extreme. C. Vance said that the BOS should move forward with appointing her. R. Szegda stated that he feels the current BOE, FiPAC, BOS and J. Luiz have done great with the Town's finances, and it concerns him that P. Missal feels things still need to be fixed. P. Missal and J. Luiz discussed the Town's bond rating. R. Stearns MOVED to appoint P. Missal to FiPAC to fill the current vacancy for the remainder of the term. (3 years). MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

- 9. TOWN ADMINSTRATOR REPORT:** J. Luiz said the audit is done and that he is waiting for final documents to arrive from the auditor. J. Luiz provided an update on the proposed RFP for Town Counsel/Legal Services. He said that proposals received for financial software have been opened and are being reviewed by the Finance Director and School Superintendent. J. Luiz said he attended a risk management workshop which was very insightful, and that he met with all department heads, chairs, etc. to review their budget submissions for the 2011-2011 Fiscal year. He is compiling all the budgets and is getting them ready for the first week of February.

C. Vance MOVED to add item 6.4, entitled "Ag Viability Grant Contract", to the agenda under New Business. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

- 6.4 Ag Viability Contract:** J. Luiz explained that this grant for \$1,200 will go towards costs associated with the Farmer's Market. R. Szegda MOVED to authorize the First Selectmen to sign the Ag Viability Grant Contract. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

- 10.1 Email from Terri Hahn to the Route 6 Economic Development Committee**
10.2 Letter from Lilly Molina of the CT DEP to J. Luiz
10.3 Email correspondences between Shirley Riemann and J. Luiz

11. BUDGET:

- 11.1 Refunds:** R. Szegda MOVED to approve the following refunds:

TO	FROM	AMOUNT
BAC Tax Services	Town of Columbia	\$25.91
Yan Gilchenok	Town of Columbia	\$5
Timothy Skinner	Town of Columbia	\$22.82

MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

11.2 Transfers: R. Szegda MOVED to approve the following transfer:

AMOUNT	FROM	TO	REASON
\$128	Contingency, Line item # 10-4800-900	Celebration, Line item # 10-4250-540	Needed more lights for Holiday Tree on Town Green.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

C. Vance MOVED to approve the following transfer:

\$668.50	Contingency, Line item # 10-4800-900	Legal Notices, Line item # 10-4112-130	Legal Notice- Open Burn Ordinance published in full.
----------	--------------------------------------	--	--

MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

12. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** R. Szegda MOVED to approve the payment of emergency bills in the amount of \$59,930.44. MOTION CARRIED 5:0. R. Hellstrom MOVED to approve the payment of non-emergency bills in the amount of \$76,057.97. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
13. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** C. Vance thanked the BOS for supporting the P. Missal appointment to FiPAC.
14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Real Estate pursuant to CT State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Personnel pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(A). C. Vance MOVED to enter into Executive Session to discuss Real Estate pursuant to CT State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D) with J. Luiz present. R. Szegda left the meeting. MOTION CARRIED 4:0. Executive Session ended at 9: 05 pm.
15. **ADJOURNMENT:** C. Vance MOVED to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED 4:0 at 9:05 pm. The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2011, immediately following the conclusion of the Special Town Meeting scheduled to commence at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kimberly A. Bona