

Regular Meeting Minutes
Financial Planning and Allocation Commission
Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 7:30 pm
Town Hall Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. 06237

Present: Chairman Earnest Sharpe, Vice-Chairman Carol Wiggins, Greg Roy, Joanne Gyure, Cindy Harrison, and Scott Petrequin.

Also Present: Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, BOE Chairman Nelson Petron, Superintendent Francine Coss, Special Education Director Jackie Middleton, Caroline Schussler. Selectman Carmen Vance arrived at 8:59 pm.

1. **Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance:** E. Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Guest Speaker – Special Education Director:** F. Coss introduced Jackie Middleton to the Commission. J. Middleton discussed Special Education and its funding. She explained that Special Education comes from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which is a federal law that protects students with disabilities. She explained that IDEA ensures that students receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), regardless of their ability. J. Middleton discussed the IDEA grant with the Commission. She explained that the IDEA grant is a 2 year grant that covers speech and language pathology, paraprofessionals, in-service, student program extensions, and property. She then discussed the American Recovery and Rehabilitation Act (ARRA) grant with the Commission. She explained that the ARRA grant is a 2 year grant that covers paraprofessionals, tutors, in-service, and instructional supplies. J. Middleton went on to speak about Excess Cost, explaining that Excess Cost is the amount of money spent to support any special education student in excess of the state calculated per pupil expenditure by either 4.5x or 1x. The amount of reimbursement from the state is determined by the situation of the pupil, and the reimbursement from the state is not always 100%. Discussion followed. C. Wiggins and the Commission thanked J. Middleton for her time and the presentation.
3. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1 **FIPAC Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2009:** C. Wiggins MOVED to approve the Minutes of September 16, 2009. MOTION CARRIED 6:0.
4. **Correspondence**
 - 4.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2009**
 - 4.2 **BOE Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2009**
 - 4.3 **BOE Regular Meeting Minutes of September 21, 2009**
 - 4.4 **BOE Regular Meeting Minutes of October 5, 2009:** C. Harrison pointed out that a copy of the BOS September 15, 2009 Minutes were not included in the

FIPAC agenda packets. She commented on the transfer that was approved by FIPAC in the amount of \$1,000 for the purchase of a new refrigerator at the Beckish Senior Center. She explained that the total funds that were transferred only came to \$973. J. Luiz explained that a second refrigerator was found at a lower cost and that is why the transfer was not done for \$1,000. C. Harrison then commented on the statement made by Mr. Mulcahy in the BOE October 5, 2009 Minutes that requests “the Town to consider hiring a Fiscal Manager and competent staff to support the school.” She expressed concern to Mr. Luiz and the Commission explaining that she feels as though the Town has not been abiding by the Charter, because the Charter states the Town has a Fiscal Manager. She stated that she also feels that the budget was approved by taxpayers that were under the impression that a salary for a Fiscal Manager would be paid for out of that budget. J. Luiz said that the Town does have a Fiscal Manager as required by Charter and that the current arrangement of the Interim Fiscal Manager and Town of Mansfield was explained and approved at a Town Meeting that occurred after the passage of the budget and that the town has every intention of hiring a permanent Fiscal Manager to begin work July 1, 2010. J. Luiz acknowledged that the town is in need of a full time accountant and explained that interviews have been completed and job offers have been made but the town has not received an acceptance yet. He stated that the search is continuing for an accountant.

E. Sharpe commented on an article in the Chronicle dated September 30, 2009 stating that it was FIPAC’s idea to issue employee increases. He explained that this suggestion came from a Selectman and not FIPAC, therefore the information in the article was incorrect.

5. Old Business

5.1 ECS Grant: J. Luiz discussed state of Connecticut legislation allowing the BOS / FIPAC to reduce its FY 09-10 budgeted appropriation to the Columbia Board of Education by an amount equal to the ARRA Stabilization Funds provided directly to the Columbia Board of Education by the State of Connecticut. He explained that the BOS has not made any decisions at this time in order to allow the sufficient time to become acquainted with the legislation. F. Coss stated that the BOE is very appreciative of this. F. Coss discussed the Education Cost Sharing grant (ECS) and emphasized that the ECS grant is different from the ARRA grant. Discussion followed.

5.2 Finance Department update: J. Luiz explained that he is still currently accepting applications for the accounting position. He informed the Commission that he has posted the job opportunity on Career Builder and hopes to fill the position as soon as possible.

5.3 08-09 Financial / Audit: J. Luiz explained this is due to start at the beginning of November.

6. New Business

- 6.1 09-10 Financials:** J. Luiz reviewed the 09-10 financials with the Commission. E. Sharpe feels as though there is “too much, too early” coming out of Contingency. G. Roy concurred. J. Luiz explained that \$58,004 is currently remaining in Contingency. Discussion followed.
- 6.2 Quarterly review of Fiscal Year 09-10 Budget Expenditures & Revenues:** J. Luiz discussed the quarterly review of fiscal year 09-10 budget expenditures and revenues with the Commission.
- 6.3 Transfers:** G. Roy MOVED to approve the following transfers with respect to the FY 09-10 budget: \$3,000 from Finance, Salaries to Finance, Professional/Technical; \$2,000 from Finance, Salaries, to Finance, Professional/Technical. C. Wiggins SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 6:0.
C. Wiggins MOVED to approve the following transfer with respect to the FY 09-10 budget: \$15,000 from Contingency, to Exec/Admin, Unemployment; E. Sharpe SECONDED the MOTION CARRIED 5:0:1 with G. Roy opposing.
C. Wiggins MOVED to approve the following transfer with respect to the FY 09-10 budget: \$2,000 from Contingency, to Rec Area Operations/Repairs and Maintenance. J. Gyure SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 6:0.
- 6.4 Re-opening of FY 2009-2010 budget to account for ARRA funds going to BOE:** J. Luiz discussed state of Connecticut legislation allowing the BOS / FIPAC to reduce its FY 09-10 budgeted appropriation to the Columbia Board of Education by an amount equal to the ARRA Stabilization Funds provided directly to the Columbia Board of Education by the State of Connecticut. He explained that the BOS has not made any decisions at this time in order to allow the BOE time to look into this further. F. Coss stated that the BOE is very appreciative of this. Discussion followed.
- 6.5 10-11 Budget Cycle Consideration:** This item was TABLED.
- 6.6 2010 FIPAC Meeting Schedule:** E. Sharpe MOVED to approve the 2010 FIPAC Meeting Schedule. S. Petrequin SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 6:0.
- 7. Audience of Citizens:** None.
- 8. Next Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at 7:30 pm.
- 9. Adjournment:** G. Roy MOVED to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED 6:0. The meeting adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Bona