

**Town of Columbia**  
**Special Meeting Agenda**  
**Financial Planning and Allocation Commission**  
**March 31, 2010 - 7:30 pm.**  
**Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room**  
**323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. 06237**

Present: Chairman Earnest Sharpe, Joanne Gyure, Cindy Harrison, Scott Petrequin, Judy Szegda-Ortiz, Mike Robertson, Allen Smith.

Also Present: Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz and others.

**Call to order:** E. Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

*E. Sharpe MOVED to amend the agenda by removing item 3, entitled, "First Selectman Report" and removing item 4, entitled, "Audience of Citizens" and replacing these items with an item entitled, "Budget Conference with Board of Selectmen." J. Ortiz SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.*

- 2. Approval of Minutes of 3/17/10:** E. Sharpe MOVED to approve the Minutes of 3/17/10 with the following correction:

Page 4, last paragraph, line 2 states, "94.75%" and it should state "97.5%." J. Ortiz SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

**3/24/10 Minutes:** E. Sharpe MOVED to approve the Minutes of 3/24/10 with the following correction: Page 2, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, last sentence states, "MOTION FAILED 1:6:0 with A. Smith voting in favor" and it should state "MOTION DIED due to lack of a SECOND." J. Ortiz SECONDED THE MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

- 3. Board of Selectmen Conference:** FiPAC discussed the decrease in building permits and concurred that an increase in the Building Official's hours are not necessary at this time. J. Luiz explained that he recently met with the Building Official to discuss the issue. The Building Official provided three observations. First, despite the decrease in permits, there is still a significant amount of paperwork for him to handle. . Second, the Building Official worked more than his twenty hours per week amount years ago when permits were very high, yet he never put in for more than twenty hours per week. Third, the Building Official's feels that he needs no more than twenty hours per week, on average. C. Vance stated that the BOS feels that a reduction in the Building Officials hours from 20.0 hours per week to 15.0 hours per week is acceptable at this time, considering the significant reduction in permits. M. Robertson MOVED to strike the

proposed \$8,145 increase for the Building Official's hours from the FY 10-11 BOS budget. E. Sharpe SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

The Commission discussed the proposal for the hiring of an Assistant to the Town Clerk II. J. Luiz explained that the BOS feels as though this is a necessary item to remain in the proposed budget and stated that he is in agreement with this. Discussion followed. The Commission concurred that it is important to keep this item in the BOS budget.

M. Robertson questioned the proposed salary, duties and hours for the Deputy Fire Marshal. J. Luiz explained that this is a stipend position and that there are not designated hours for this position that the Deputy Fire Marshal works. He stated that the Deputy Fire Marshal assists the Fire Marshal. J. Luiz explained that as of July 1, 2009 the Fire Marshal has been required to keep track of inspections that he completes. Discussion followed. M. Robertson MOVED to strike the proposed \$4,599 for the deputy fire marshal salary. E. Sharpe asked if the fire marshal would be able to handle everything on his own if this position of the deputy is removed. Discussion followed. M. Robertson withdrew the MOTION until further documentation is provided.

Discussion ensued regarding money that is allocated for Capital Projects that may not necessarily require funding this year, but will down the road.

A. Smith spoke about the Library budget. C. Vance explained that the library originally proposed an 8% increase which they then reduced to 5%. She stated that the BOS cut to 3%. Discussion followed. A. Smith MOVED to cut the library's budget by \$30,000. M. Robertson SECONDED. MOTION FAILED 2:5:0 with E. Sharpe, C. Harrison, J. Gyure, S. Petrequin and J. Ortiz OPPOSING.

Discussion took place regarding the lawn mower capital project and the school door replacement capital project.

E. Sharpe asked the BOS for its input regarding the \$20,000 allocated in the BOS budget for Open Space. C. Vance explained that BOS feels strongly about keeping the \$20,000 in the budget for Open Space because this area of great concern has been neglected in the past and may be needed in the relative near future to purchase land. R. Szegda stated that up until a couple of years ago \$50,000 was budgeted for Open Space and that this year the original proposal for Open Space was \$50,000 but the BOS cut it to \$20,000. He expressed that Open Space is very important to the community. He feels it is time to resume putting money in the account in case the town has to purchase land. E. Sharpe explained while no one on FiPAC is against preserving money for Open Space, FiPAC just did not

see a practical reason for funding open space this year. Rob Hellstrom reminded FiPAC of that Szegda Farm was purchased with available money *from* the Open Space account. He feels it is the responsibility of the town to be able to purchase land when it is available before all of the land is developed. Discussion followed. E. Sharpe MOVED that the \$20,000 for Open Space that was cut at last week's FiPAC meeting remain cut from the BOS budget. MOTION CARRIED 5:2:0 with A. Smith and J. Ortiz OPPOSING.

Discussion regarding the undesignated fund balance ensued. M. Robertson MOVED to leave the undesignated fund balance at approximately 1.26 million, and also approve a Town Budget funded at approximately 23.56 mills – a 2.4% Mill Rate increase from FY 2010-2011. A. Smith SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 6:1:0 with E. Sharpe OPPOSING.

**4 Old Business**

**4.1 FY '10-'11 Budget**

- 5. Adjournment:** S. Petrequin MOVED to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED 7:0. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Bona