

PUBLIC HEARING and
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015, 7 P.M.
Yeomans Hall, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237

Members Present: Chairman Earnest Sharpe, Judy Ortiz, Jeff Viens, Kelley Peck, Todd Shepard, Richard Szegda (arrived 7:05 p.m.), and Marcia Morrison

Also Present: Town Administrator Natasha Nau, First Selectman Carmen Vance, Deputy Selectman Stephen Everett, Selectman Robert Bogue, Mark Paquette, Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo, Superintendent of Schools Lol Fearon, Board of Education (BOE) Chair Kerry Hoffman, BOE Vice-Chair Karin Vertefeuille, BOE member Linette Dooley, BOE member Lisa Napolitano, Recording Secretary Linda McDonald, Paul Kubala, Carol Kubala, Carol Wiggins, Lou Scotti, President of CVFD John Hahn, Gary Littlefield, Ann Dunnack, E. Jay Starkel, Carol Price, Su Epstein, Robin Kenefick, Henry Beck Jr., and others.

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** E. Sharpe called the FiPAC special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget:** The public hearing was opened at 7:02 p.m.
- 2.1 **Presentations of the proposed budget by representatives of the Board of Education (BOE) and the Board of Selectmen (BOS):**

BOE Chairman Kerry Hoffman introduced Superintendent of Schools Lol Fearon to present the proposed BOE budget. He presented an overview of the increases and decreases proposed. The total request is \$11,922,466.00 with a net increase of \$336,511.00 and an increase of 2.9% over last year. He went on to explain the district is high performing, the focus of the school district is on individual student needs and the district is actively planning for the future. The budget addresses enrollment changes, the district's long-range plan (LRP), planning for the phase- in of LRP, and how to have better community involvement. L. Fearon spoke about the budget drivers, including staffing, increases in health benefits, transportation, tuition, and supplies. There are decreases in Unemployment Compensation, legal services, professional services, contracted services, heating oil and diesel, software, and equipment anticipated in the proposed budget. Overall student enrollment is anticipated to decline. Magnet school tuition is projected to be \$220,500.00.

First Selectman Carmen Vance introduced Mark Paquette and the new Town Administrator Natasha Nau. She said Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo has worked hard on the two budgets since the departure of the last Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz. C. Vance spoke to the major pieces of the town budget including the capital projects and maintaining the infrastructure of the town roads.

M. Paquette gave a power point presentation on the town budget. The proposed budget is a 4.69% increase over last year or \$3,614,800. He spoke about appropriation increases for the registrar, assessment, public records, police protection, library (Library Director Su Epstein

described the specific increases), lake management, and planning and zoning (updating the Plan of Conservation and Development). The increase in current/new property taxes is almost entirely offset by Grand List growth. M. Paquette described the town capital budget new appropriation projects which are offset by STEAP and Library grants. The proposed mill rate is expected to remain at 27.13, the third year of no mill rate increase.

2.2 Opportunity for any elector or qualified voter to be heard regarding the recommended appropriations:

Paul Kubala of 37 Lake Road asked if there will be any relief from the MBR. L. Fearon responded that there is a proposal in the legislature sponsored by the Speaker of the House to lift the cap on the MBR. P. Kubala asked the Board to consider funding a part-time Superintendent. K. Hoffman said the BOE researched this issue and determined that with a part-time Superintendent additional staffing would be necessary.

Carol Kubala of 37 Lake Road said she would like to hold her comments at this time.

Gary Littlefield of 123 Pine Street asked about motor vehicle taxes being discussed in the legislature and if this would affect this budget.

Karin Vertefeuille of 2 Fox Run asked for an explanation of the Phase 3 Library expansion. C. Vance responded that the library expansion did not go to a town vote because there is no money being borrowed for the project. She explained there are several renovations needed for the Library, including heating, ventilation, new roof, carpeting and painting. Architectural and engineering services have been donated for the project. Total cost to the town is \$463,000.00 if the additional 2,000 square feet is added to the existing building.

Lisa Napolitano of 7 Hunt Road asked how long the project would take as the town has to put all the money up front until the project is finished and the grants come through. C. Vance explained the plan is to begin work September 1, 2015 and be finished end of summer of 2016.

Carol Kubala thanked all the people who put the capital project for the library expansion.

P. Kubala asked who would do the Clerk of the Works for the library project. C. Vance responded that a town employee would probably do the work.

With no other comments from the audience, E. Sharpe closed the public hearing at 8:01 p.m.

3. Recess: A brief recess was taken at 8:01 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:10 p.m.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

4.1 Modification of the proposed Fiscal year 2015-2016 budget as FiPAC deems advisable:

Chairman E. Sharpe asked the Board for input on the budget. After brief discussion, R. Szegda MOVED to send the budget unchanged to the public vote at the annual town budget meeting, May 12, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Yeomans Hall, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. K. Peck SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

5. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of March 18, 2015 were amended as follows (in bold): Item 3.1: R. Szegda MOVED to approve the special meeting minutes of **March 11, 2015** as presented.

E. Sharpe MOVED to APPROVE the FiPAC Special Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2015 as amended. R. Szegda SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

E. Sharpe MOVED to table approval of the FiPAC Special Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2015 to a future meeting. J. Ortiz SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

6. New Business: There was no new business for discussion.

7. Transfers: M. Paquette explained the transfers. Discussion followed. R. Szegda MOVED to APPROVE the following transfer:

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$4,567.00	10-4800-900, Reserve for Contingency	20-6190-001, Rec Area Improvement
\$1,284.00	10-4410-240, DPW Fuel	10-4115-240, Old CVFD Fuel
\$600.00	10-4420-500, Professional/Tech	10-4420-230, Transfer Station Electricity

T. Shepard SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

R. Szegda MOVED to APPROVE THE FOLLOWING transfers:

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$1,284.00	10-4410-240, DPW Fuel	10-4115-240, Old CVFD Fuel
\$600.00	10-4420-500, Professional/Tech	10-4420-230, Transfer Station Electricity

M. Morrison SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

On behalf of the Board, E. Sharpe thanked Mark Paquette for his service to the town. He welcomed Natasha Nau to the Town.

8. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be the Town Budget vote on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Yeomans Hall, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT.

9. ADJOURNMENT: M. Morrison MOVED to adjourn the special meeting at 8:22 p.m. J. Ortiz SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.