

**Town of Columbia**  
**Financial Planning and Allocation Commission**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 7, 2016 - 7 pm**  
**Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room**  
**323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. 06237**

**Members Present:** Chairman Earnest Sharpe; Vice Chairman Jeff Viens; Kelley Peck; Todd Shepard; Judy Ortiz; Richard Szegda; Dean Toepfer.

**Also Present:** First Selectman Carmen Vance; Superintendent Lol Fearon; Town Administrator Natasha Nau; Principal Alyssa Gwinnell; Finance Director Bev Ciurylo; Ann Dunnack and other Open Space members; Student Services Director Mary Kate Farley.

1. **Call to Order:** E. Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **FiPAC Budget Discussion (continued):** N. Nau reviewed a list of changes that were made to the budget based on decisions made at the March 30, 2016 FiPAC Meeting. L. Fearon reviewed the proposed BOE budget with FiPAC stating that the pre-k thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade budget was below last year's appropriation by approximately \$18,000. He explained that the impact to the proposed FY 16-17 BOE budget has been in areas of fixed costs such as high school tuition and special education costs, which are state mandated. L. Fearon feels as though the BOE has presented a responsible and honest budget to FiPAC, pointing out that they do not have much control over state and federal requirements. He stated that he understands the concern regarding the impact of MBR but stated that if there is an additional appropriation in the FY 15-16 school year, it will reset the MBR. L. Fearon explained that the BOE went through an administrative process to see what would be impacted most with the \$200,000 cut issued by FiPAC. L. Fearon discussed areas of reduction within the BOE budget involving special education. He explained that there is currently a special ed student in a residential placement program scheduled to be transitioned to a treatment program. He stated that the anticipated savings would be approximately \$118,000, which includes transportation.  
Also, he discussed possible savings in Professional Services. He explained that by grouping children in Occupational Therapy versus one on one services could further reduce costs which would result in approximately \$18,500 in cost savings. In addition to these reductions, L. Fearon stated that volunteers could be used for landscaping and grounds work versus contracting services, and that small equipment such as desks and chairs could be deferred. L. Fearon stated that reducing the BOE Capital Plan by \$27,500 would reduce the budget by approximately \$165,000, but anything more would begin to impact programs and cause discomfort for the children and community. Discussion followed.  
K. Peck MOVED to put \$50,000 back into the BOE operating budget and removed \$27,500 from the BOE capital project budget. T. Shepard SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

Discussion ensued regarding Land Acquisition. C. Vance stated that the BOS was in favor of bringing the funding request for Open Space back to FiPAC for reconsideration. R. Bogue spoke in favor of allocating funding in the FY 16-17 budget for Land Acquisition. C. Vance explained that currently, the Plan of Conservation and Development is being revised. Open Space is a big issue in town and very much wanted in this community. Discussion followed. FiPAC consensus was not to allocate funding for Land Acquisition in the FY 16-17 budget.

R. Szegda MOVED to put \$17,000 in preschool tuition revenue. J. Ortiz SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

4. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be the Public Budget Hearing on April 27, 2016 at 7 pm in Yeomans Hall.
5. **Adjournment:** D. Toepfer MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:20 pm. T. Shepard SECONDED the MOTION and it CARRIED 7:0.

Respectfully submitted by Kimberly A. Bona