

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
With BUDGET WORKSHOP**

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

7:00 PM

**Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room & Virtual
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Members Present: Steven M. Everett, First Selectman; Judy Ortiz, Deputy First Selectman; William O'Brien, Selectman; Christopher Lent, Selectman; Lisa Napolitano, Selectman.

Also Present: Mark B. Walter, Town Administrator; Beverly Ciurylo, Finance Director.

Also Present Remotely: Barbara Wilson, Horace Porter School Superintendent.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett Called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 pm.

1. **RULES OF CONDUCT FOR HYBRID VIRTUAL MEETING:** S. Everett read the rules of conduct for a hybrid virtual meeting.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Agenda as Presented.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 4.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for February 20, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes for February 20, 2024 and to add in attendance Beverly Ciurylo, Finance Director. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
 - 4.2 **BOS Special Meeting Minutes for February 27, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Minutes for February 27, 2024. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
5. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
6. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 6.1 **2024-2025 Budget Review Workshop.** M. Walter reviewed the Board of Selectmen's total expense budget of \$297,112 with a 5.91% increase from last year. The appropriation request for FY 24/25 Capital budget is \$1,005,820. This is a reduction of the Capital request from last year of \$44,676.

M. Walter said we just received good news that the state reduced the health insurance from 5% increase to 2% increase.

B. Ciurylo said there was an increase of \$3,500 in salaries for transfer station attendants and animal control officer.

6.2 Motion to Move the BOS 24/25 Operating Budget and Capital Budget to FiPAC. S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE sending to FiPAC the FY 24/25 as presented for the BOS budget with corrections to group insurance from 5 % to 2% to include capital and grants. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

7. NEW BUSINESS: None.

8. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH: None.

9. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:

9.1 Appointment of Austin Roser, Parks and Recreation Director. S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Appointment of Austin Roser to the position of Parks and Recreation Director. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

9.2 Appointment of Michele Manas, Tax Collector. S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Appointment of Michel Manas as the Tax Collector. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

9.3 Notice of Hire of Brittany Dalessio, Part-time Dispatcher/Program Assistant.

10. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: M. Walter explained that the CDC has changed the isolation period for COVID. There is no longer mandatory five days isolation period.

M. Walter reported that there was a good turnout for the Sustainability CT meeting.

M. Walter said that we had a surprise inspection from OSHA on Monday, March 4th and it went very well. We will be following up for corrective actions on Thursday, 3/14/24.

S. Everett said the Hunt Road box culvert has been installed and work is progressing on the project. S. Everett explained that the town met with the UCONN CT Circuit Riders to evaluate the problem road sites. The representative believes we can add our own signage on a town road that approaches a state road and will not need to get state approval. The representative is looking into getting more speed signs for the town and he will look at the issues on Old Willimantic Rd.

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

11.1 The Willimantic Chronicle

- **Café takes a leap of Faith.**

11.2 Thank you letter from Greg & Leslie Brand for DPW crew tree cleanup.

12. BUDGET:

12.1 Transfers: None.

12.2 Refunds: None.

13. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Payment of Bills Totaling \$82,341.07, Consisting of 2023/2024 Regular, Credit Card, and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
14. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
15. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** S. Everett said he will be working with Titan Energy to get an evaluation on adding additional solar panels at the back of the school to help with utility costs. B. Wilson said that they received the quote for the fence between Dartmouth Village and the school, and it came in lower than anticipated.

C. Lent gives a warm welcome to Austin, Michele and Brittany in joining Columbia.

L. Napolitano said she noticed there are not a lot of speed signs on our back roads.
16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statues Section 1-200(6)(A).** None.
17. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN 7:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie