

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, September 4, 2018 – 7 pm
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Members Present: First Selectman, Steven M. Everett; Deputy Selectman, Robert Hellstrom; Selectman, Lisa Napolitano; Selectman, William O'Brien, Selectman, Robert Bogue.

Also Present: Town Administrator, Mark Walter; Bill Dicristofaro, Financial Advisor from MML Plan Solutions.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett called the meeting to order at 7:16 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to approve the Agenda for August 21, 2018. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for August 21, 2018.** W. O'Brien MOVED to approve the BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for 8/21/18. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Paul Kubala, 37 Lake Rd. said that the audience of citizens part of the agenda is very important and should be at both the beginning and at the end of the agenda. He stated that other boards have audience of citizens in the beginning and at the end and he felt that would be appropriate for the BOS meetings. He said that he was disappointed with what the minutes from the August 7th BOS meeting showed and stated that the minutes reflected only briefly what he said about the fireworks and missed the whole point. He re-read the meeting notes and the notes included his remarks about the smoke being heavy, but nothing about being a pollutant and almost closing Rte. 87 due to the heavy smoke. He added that the noise was terrible, but that is expected with fireworks and that the fireworks caused both air pollution and water pollution; as water pollution is a very important issue with the lake. He stated that the most important distinctions are that basically it is illegal to set off fireworks and that it is also illegal to transport fireworks into Connecticut. He added that the Board of Selectmen should have addressed this and that he did not like the Board of Selectmen's statement about living across town and not knowing anything about it. He stated that the minutes should reflect the essence of what the audience says and that it missed everything he said. He felt that the Board of Selectmen were negligent and should have done something and that the First Selectman, Chief of Police should have done something. He also added that the representative from the Lake Committee stated in the last BOS meeting that they (Columbia Lake Association) choose to do nothing about it.

Ann Dunnack, 103 Lake Rd. asked when we are treating the phragmites at the lake. S. Everett answered that we will be discussing that in the Town Administrators Report section under 9.1.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - **Discussion on The Contract Award for Lead Abatement and Painting Services at The Moor's Indian School.** S. Everett . S. Everett explained that we

were awarded a 20,000 grant from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the restoration work and that with the grant we worked towards meeting the stipulations set by SHPO. One of the stipulations was that we go back out to bid to meet SHPO's specific requirements. The original bid received was for \$45,000, subsequent bids included pricing of up to \$192,000. Joan Hill asked what the details were on the increase. S. Everett explained that one of the issues was with prevailing wages which added to the project. Joan Hill asked if the contractor will certify that the building will be lead free. S. Everett stated yes. Paul Kubala asked if this was a Board of Selectmen meeting and stated that this is not a Town Meeting, so there should not be discussions going on with the audience. W. O'Brien stated that there is not supposed to be discussion with the audience. S. Everett responded that he was sorry, that was his mistake. S. Everett MOVED that the Town of Columbia enter into a contract for the lead abatement, painting, refurbishing windows and siding for the Moor's Indian Charity School with Rockfall Company, Inc. for \$45,665.13 and to rescind the grant offer from State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

- 5.1 Discussion of the Markel Property Appraisal.** S. Everett explained that at the last meeting we had the discussion of the Markel property appraisal and that in order to move forward we would need an updated appraisal; however, it ended in a tie, so no action was taken. R. Bogue MOVED that the BOS approve the \$3,000 for an updated appraisal of the Mark Kelly/Markel LLC Property. S. Everett, R. Hellstrom, W. O'Brien and R. Bogue were In Favor, L. Napolitano was Opposed. MOTION CARRIES 4:1.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- 6.1 Gypsy Moth Infestation.** S. Everett explained that the DPW Director said that a lot more trees are dying due to the gypsy moths and there is a concern that with the winter storms more trees will be coming down. S. Everett added that this does not mean the DPW Director will spend the 50,000, but instead wants to be more proactive rather than reactive. R. Hellstrom said that it's a good idea to start getting rid of trees now because there will be more to come. S. Everett MOVED that the BOS set a date for a town on 10/2/18 6:45 PM meeting to appropriate \$50,000 from the general fund to set up a tree removal capital account to cover the estimated cost of tree removal due to gypsy moth infestation. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
- 6.2 Approval to hire MML Plan Solutions as the Advisor for The Town of Columbia's 401(a) and 457(b) retirement plans.** M. Walter explained that several employees came to him regarding their retirement investments and they felt their investments were not performing at what they thought they should be. He added that as the Town Administrator it is his fiduciary responsibility to the employees to research strategies for their retirement. He has invited Bill Dicristofaro, Financial Advisor at MML Plan Solutions and Chairman of the Board of Finance in East Haddam to give a brief overview. Bill Dicristofaro explained that he has over 20 years of experience with retirement plans with most of his experience in the private sector. He noted that the private sector has more stringent standards and a number of requirements that municipalities do not. B. Dicristofaro explained that an RFP went out to evaluate other companies and then to evaluate the investments. R. Bogue asked are the assets pooled and what are the investment choices. B. Dicristofaro explained that it would be mostly mutual funds and that each individual will have their own balance and can make their own decisions. S. Everett asked M. Walter to meet with the employees before the BOS would make a motion to hire. M. Walter agreed he would meet with employee's.

6.3 Trust for Public Land Regarding Land Conservation and Community Forest. S. Everett explained that Trust for Public Land (TPL) helps municipalities, cities, or states to set aside open space by utilizing grants, donations, and different funding avenues that provide funding entirely or close to it for open space. TPL will do the leg work and then turn it over to the towns. S. Everett stated he is very comfortable with putting forth an agenda to TPL or asking them to see if we can obtain the Wells Wood property. He noted that taking the tax rolls associated with this property would cost the Town of Columbia \$6,356.68 in taxes per year. He stated that he thinks that we can cover that. In addition, he stated that it takes care of a lot of desires for open space in Columbia. S. Everett explained that initially he was not a big advocate on purchasing property; but is always striving to make the right decision for the Town. After talking with Honor Lawler, Field Representative from TPL he would like to move forward and see what they can do for the town. He noted that this request for technical advice has no financial obligation to the Town of Columbia. S. Everett asked if any of the BOS have any questions or would like to discuss this further.

L. Napolitano stated that she hikes Mono Pond and Rec Park and does not see a lot of people using Columbia's open space; however, she understands the desire to protect it. She added that we do not know the needs of the future for our private citizens; for example, we do not know if our children need housing in the future and it confines their choices if the available land is used for open space.

R. Hellstrom stated that he liked the idea of getting more information and at no cost to the Town.

S. Everett MOVED that the Town of Columbia officially request technical advice and assistance from Trust for Public Land in connection with our efforts to conserve the ±1000-acre forest block owned by multiple landowners and commonly referred to as Wells Woods in the Town of Columbia, with the understanding that any and all town funds for this project will ultimately need town voter approval. S. Everett, R. Hellstrom, W. O'Brien and R. Bogue In Favor, L. Napolitano Opposed. MOTION CARRIES 4:1.

7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH: None.

8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:

8.1 Resignation of Paula B. Cahalan from CONA.

8.2 Resignation of Matthew Jorgensen, Facilities Maintainer. R. Bogue MOVED to accept the resignation of Paula B. Cahalan from CONA and the resignation of Matthew Jorgensen, Facilities Maintainer. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

9.1 Target Date for Invasive Species Treatment on Columbia Lake. M. Walter explained that Solitude would be applying the treatment for the Phragmites on Tuesday, September 11, 2018 and is weather dependent. He explained that Solitude will be using a hand application that sticks to the plants and can't apply this to the plants during inclement weather.

9.2 Legislative & Regulatory Updates. M. Walter stated that our focus will be on the MBR and working with CCM to help obtain a more reasonable solution.

9.3 Eversource use of drones: M. Walter explained that Eversource will now be using drones to fly over power lines instead of planes/helicopters. Eversource drone personnel will be identified by their FAA jacket.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

10.1 Connecticut State Police Troop K Colchester Monthly Police Report. S.

Everett has asked for extra patrols. M. Walter explained that there has been a recent uptick on car invasions at night in surrounding rural towns.

10.2 Windham Region No Freeze Thank You Letter. The Town of Columbia provided a 2018 donation of \$500.00 to the Windham Region No Freeze shelter.

10.3 CTDEEP Award Notification for Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant. The Town of Columbia Volunteer Fire Department received an award for Volunteer Fire Assistance grant totaling \$2,500.00, which can be used for training, water handling equipment, communications, prevention projects, safety supplies, suppression gear and other related items.

11. BUDGET:

11.1 Transfers: S. Everett MOVED to approve the following transfers totaling \$1,200. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

11.2 Refunds: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the following refunds totaling \$1,493.11 appraised of the schedule.

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$5.01	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	LISA M EASTABROOK
\$70.68	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	JENNIFER N BRIGHT
\$85.29	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	WILLIAM H BRIGHT JR
\$36.78	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	MARTIN G CHAMPAGNE
\$25.14	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	CHOWANEC WELL DRILLING LLC
\$0.76	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	CHOWANEC WELL DRILLING LLC
\$18.95	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	ZACHARY D COBB
\$33.35	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	CHRISTINE A CRUMLEY
\$19.74	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	DAVID P DOIRON
\$5.00	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	RAYMOND J FOSTER
\$98.11	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	PETER J FRANCIS
\$53.88	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	RONALD T HOLMES
\$170.00	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	HONDA LEASE TRUST
\$12.93	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	SUSAN C KANCLER
\$33.94	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	JANE M MCCOY
\$21.85	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NICKEY I MOHAMMED
\$17.74	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NICKEY I MOHAMMED
\$73.38	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NICKEY I MOHAMMED
\$23.85	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	SANDRA L MOHAMMED
\$204.78	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NISSAN INFINITI LT
\$204.78	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NISSAN INFINITI LT
\$132.92	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	RUSSELL A POULIOT JR
\$35.41	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	JOSEPH RUCHALSKI
\$21.15	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	DARRA J STEPHENS
\$87.69	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	ROBERT A STICKEL

MOTION CARRIED 5.0

12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the payment of bills totaling \$48,190.38 comprised of 2017-2018 Emergency, 2017-2018 Regular,

2018-2019 Emergency, 2018-2019 Regular, Credit Card and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: None.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

14.1 Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A): S. Everett MOVED to enter into Executive Session at 8:12 pm with M. Walter. Executive Session ended at 8:17 pm. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

15. ADJOURNMENT: S. Everett MOVED to Adjourn the meeting at 8:18 pm. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie