



**TOWN OF COLUMBIA**

**Fiscal Policy Board**

**January 10, 2018**

**Horace W. Porter School Conference Room**

**8:30 am**

Members Present: Beverly Ciurylo-Finance Director, Ernie Sharpe-FiPAC Chairman, Mark Walter-Town Administrator, Lol Fearon-Superintendent, Steven Everett-First Selectman

Others Present: Judy Oritz-FiPAC member, Kathy Tolsdorf, BOE Vice Chairperson

Absent: Christopher Lent-Board of Education Chairman

1. Call to Order Chairperson B. Ciurylo called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.
2. Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2017  
E. Sharpe MOVED, L. Fearon SECONDED to approve the minutes of Nov. 8, 2017.  
MOTION CARRIES 5:0
3. Correspondence  
No correspondence was received.
4. Old Business  
No old business was discussed.
5. New Business:
  - A) Follow up on the December Tri-Board meeting  
Mr. Sharpe reported FiPAC considered the Tri-Board meeting beneficial and commended everyone for a good job.

Mr. Walter noted the budget Public Hearing which had been scheduled on April 18<sup>th</sup> has been moved to April 25<sup>th</sup>.

- B) Town and ED001 16/17 Audit

Minutes approved 4/11/2018

Mrs. Ciurylo said the revised draft audit was filed on time and both audits were clean and had no exceptions.

She will be closing out 2016/2017 soon.

Mr. Sharpe said the question of changing auditors comes up annually. Should this be considered?

Mrs. Ciurylo responded even though the same audit firm is used different auditors are assigned to the Town. The firm has always done a good job and has been willing to help and advise us. If a change of auditors is recommended the process should be started now since OPM would need to be informed by April.

C) Long Range Planning and status of 17/18 Capital Projects (BOS & BOE)

Mr. Walter reported the Pucker Street Bridge is complete and was within budget.

The Village Hill Bridge project which is split 60/40 with Lebanon and is budgeted at \$25,700. Bids haven't been received but Columbia's portion of the cost could come in at \$30,400.

The Flanders Road Bridge expense was more than what was budgeted and a Town Meeting will be required to transfer funds to cover the cost. The shortfall is approximately \$36,000. Mrs. Ciurylo recommended the funds be moved from the General Fund and not the Capital Project line.

Mr. Walter said the salt shed is anticipated to cost under \$250,000. The retention wall project at the Town Beach is on target. The town van has been delivered and it came under budget. With some of the remaining funds, a portable AED is being purchased and will be kept on the van. Staff will be trained in its use.

A public hearing will be needed to present the Rec Park Master Plan and Open Space to residents.

Mr. Fearon reported capital projects at the school are going well. F Wing has been painted and windows replaced in the kindergarten rooms. Window balancers were replaced in A wing. The fire suppression pump was replaced and now meets code. The cafeteria stairs and balcony have been sheetrocked. An additional sprinkler head will be added at the top of the stairs and electricity will be re-worked in the balcony area. The project is expected to be completed by the end of June.

D) 18/19 Fuel Costs

The current contract ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Current costs are \$1.86 for heating oil and \$1.85 for diesel fuel. The price was blended from the 16/17 contract due to low usage last year.

Mr. Fearon suggested checking the EASTCONN consortium for fuel prices. In prior years purchasing through EASTCONN was not possible since companies did not service this area.

E) 18/19 Budget

Mr. Fearon said the BOE is meeting every other week to work on the budget.

Mr. Walter said he is meeting with department heads next week.

Mr. Sharpe asked if there are any updates on the State budget.

Mr. Walter said the proposal for teacher pension costs being passed on to towns was replaced by an increase in the teacher contribution. We are anticipating further cuts to ECS funding.

Mrs. Ciurylo said municipal aid funding has come in less than what was anticipated.

Mr. Fearon said there is a shift from property wealth to per capita income to determine ECS funding.

F) Board of Education Retirements

Mr. Fearon said a small retirement incentive which is being funded from this year's budget was offered and 4 teachers are retiring this year. The current budget would reduce full time staff by a total 3 full time positions so layoffs and unemployment costs can be avoided.

Mr. Everett asked about the incentive.

Mr. Fearon said the incentive provided payout for accrued sick time at a max of 150 sick days. A similar incentive had been offered in prior contracts but was removed from the current certified contract. The anticipated payout is approximately \$30,000.

G) Health Care Options

Mr. Walters has contacted Joe Spurgeon for quotes. The window for joining E-CHIP is not currently open. However, discussion will continue with EASTCONN regarding joining E-CHIP in the future. He is going to get current healthcare statistics to them so as to start the process of getting an idea of costs if the town and BOE were to join E-CHIP in the next year or so.

Mr. Fearon said E-CHIP is used by 9 municipalities and boards of education which spreads the risk. It is a high deductible HSA program.

6. Finance Department

Budget is the main focus of the Finance Department at this time.

7. Audience

No comments were received.

8. Adjournment

E. Sharpe MOVED, L. Fearon SECONDED to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

MOTION CARRIES 6:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Morey,  
Board Clerk

Minutes approved 4/11/2018

