



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

Fiscal Policy Board

Minutes

February 12, 2020

Horace W. Porter School Conference Room

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 8:35
Attendees: Bev Ciurylo, Finance Director; Maria Geryk, Superintendent; Ernie Sharpe, FiPAC Chairman; Chris Lent, BOE Chairperson

Absent: Steven Everett, First Selectman; Mark Walter, Town Administrator; Judy Ortiz; Selectman
2. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2019
M. Geryk Moved, C. Lent seconded to approve the minutes of 11/13/2019. MOTION CARRIES 4:0.
3. Correspondence
B. Ciurylo received an email from CCM indicting ECS funding has been reduced by approximately \$52,000. She noted this is an initial proposal by the governor. Copies were emailed.
4. Old Business:
 - A) Empower transition update - B. Ciurylo reported that the transition from AXA Equitable to Empower Retirement is complete and the Empower website is live. Paperwork has been given out to employees who would like to now enroll. Also, the participants with loans will

be having their loans reamortize to coincide with the payroll schedule. This only effects 6-8 people.

M. Geryk commended Bev on her work on this massive project.

B. Ciurylo noted that the Empower staff that she has been working with have been very helpful. There are some questions remaining on the town side concerning fee restoration due to an increase of .08% in the fees due to Empower. M. Walter and B. Ciurylo are working on responding to the questions.

B) IT Security Assessment – B. Ciurylo indicated the BOE and the Town IT Assessments are underway and anticipates there will be a budget impact next year. M. Geryk anticipates a onetime project cost of \$60,000 to next year's budget and then \$40,000 per year after 2020-2021. B. Ciurylo that the 20/21 budget impact is approximately \$10,000 to \$14,000 for the Town. The assessment result included upgrading Town emails to Office 365, creating a password manager, and providing additional training to avoid email scams.

C) Follow up on the Tri-Board Meeting – E. Sharpe requested budget calendars. He is working on a table of contents to be included with last year's budget for FiPAC members. No other comments were made regarding the Tri-Board meeting; other than it was thought it went well.

5. New Business

A) BOE Nonlapsing Account – B. Ciurylo indicated there has been a change in the law.

C. Lent said the statute has been revised to increase the allowable amount up to 2%. The BOE would like FiPAC to consider reviewing the existing MOA for the statute change.

E. Sharpe is hopeful the language in the MOA reflects language based on updates per statute and not percentages. He suggests funding the non-lapsing account with additional funds if they are available to offset potential unanticipated costs in the future. M. Geryk agreed.

B. Ciurylo said the account balance is \$215,000. There is no limit on the account balance but there is a limit on what can be added per year.

B) CT-CHIP / Cigna 20/21 renewal – B. Ciurylo said the potential budget impact for next year was calculated at 19.5% due to not having a full year of claims history. She is hopeful the percentage will be reduced following review of claims by the broker. The Town is discussing increasing copays by 1% to help cover the increasing cost. More information should be available at the next CT-CHIP meeting.

C) Minimum Budget Requirement – B. Ciurylo and M. Geryk spoke with Kevin Chambers at the State Department of Education for guidance on how MBR calculations are reached. The current computation includes a 5 year historical view of student enrollment and then selecting the highest drop in students to calculate the residential student credit. The high school credit is the highest drop times the applicable high school tuition rate. The Nonalliance District credit is the decrease in the Education Cost Share Grant. Based on the

calculations, the Board of Education's budget was in compliance for the 19/20 budget year and well above the Minimum Budget Requirement.

M. Geryk noted that this is a difficult calculation and also noted that special education costs are not included in MBR calculations.

B. Ciurylo said the State is discussing a cap of 2.5% for municipalities. Currently there are no caps.

E. Sharpe is disappointed there has been no feedback from our state senator and state representative when there was a change in the Minimum Budget Requirement statute. He asked if this will impact the budget this year.

M. Geryk said last year the budget was increased in order to meet MBR and at this time the BOE budget is over the estimated MBR state calculation. She feels population will be fairly stable in subsequent years and calculations going forward will be closer to what is actually budgeted.

E. Sharpe asked if the SDE could calculate upcoming years budget now?

M. Geryk responded yes, it could be calculated by the State Department of Education.

D) FY 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Budgets – B. Ciurylo said the 19-20 budget process is running smoothly. The BOE may be considering moving some projects and purchases to this year as she anticipates there will be some funds available.

C. Lent suggested looking into funding IT conversions this year instead of next year as well as place in capital.

B. Ciurylo said it is too early to predict definite BOE surplus number yet for this year but there will probably be one.

M. Geryk feels funding are consistent with last year unless something changes. She would like to recommend purchasing curriculum materials this year.

B. Ciurylo said a fire truck may need to be purchased earlier than anticipated at a cost of approximately \$600,000. The current Rescue truck is having issues. The Fire Department is going to get quotes and will be coming back to the Town.

E) Tentative – Legislative Update – M. Walter is not in attendance and the item will be tabled until next month.

F) Other Business

E. Sharpe shared his perspective when reviewing budgets. He reviews what has been spent from year to year.

B. Ciurylo said 20/21 capital is being reviewed for adjustments.

6. Adjournment

C. Lent MOVED, E. Sharpe SECONDED to adjourn at 9:12. MOTION CARRIES 4:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Morey, Clerk

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