



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

Fiscal Policy Board

Virtual Meeting through Zoom

Minutes

June 10, 2020, 8:00 a.m.

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

Absent: Chris Lent-Board of Education Chairman

Other: Judy Ortiz-Selectman

1. **Call to Order** – B. Ciurylo opened the meeting at 8:00 a.m.
2. **Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes** May 13, 2020: E. Sharpe MOVED, M. Geryk SECONDED to approve the minutes of May 13, 2020. MOTION CARRIES 5:0.
3. **Correspondence** – No correspondence has been received.
4. **Old Business**
 - A) Non lapsing Account Policy Update - E. Sharpe is revising a draft which FiPAC will act upon at their next meeting.
5. **New Business**
 - A) **Reopening plans for Town & School Facilities** – Mark Walter has been working with all departments repositioning desks and moving employees to insure social distance. Screens are being put in place and cloth masks are on order. Social distance stickers will be placed on floors. The Senior Center will be the most cautious to reopen. The van will be up and running within the month – possibly July 6th. He expects the Town to be up and running by appointment in July. The Town transfer station is up and running with the exception of the swap shop.

Maria Geryk noted that in terms of the school there are many unknowns. Summer instruction will be remote for students requiring support. Summer cleaning lists are complete and facilities projects will be completed by July to allow time to prepare for the Fall. Massachusetts has provided direction which is

helpful and includes restrictions of 10 students per classroom, 2 adults per classroom and maintaining the same cohorts. Distancing students at Porter has been reviewed and would require possibly an

additional 15 classrooms if all grade levels return. Hand sanitizing stations, face coverings for staff and students, more support in the nurse's office and 2 nursing stations are a few of the areas the school administration has reviewed. Desks will need to be 6 ft. apart. Cleaning procedures would be dramatically different with additional cleaning throughout the day. Transportation will be another challenge and would most likely be diagonal seating and seating at a distance. She is anticipating additional transportation costs. Supplies for the first 12 weeks have been planned and supplies will be ordered. So far, the state of CT Dept of Education has not provided a resource for ordering supplies. Discussions related to partial return schedules have been discussed. She anticipates changing FT schedules to include more staff during the day and additional staff in the nurse's office. Instructionally, she is looking at purchases of FM systems – to be assist students to hear teachers wearing masks. Swivels will be ordered so iPads can provide teacher instruction in other classrooms. Contractual conversations will be occurring because staff will be asked to work in a different way. She notes there are many unknowns related to facility needs, staffing, transportation, change of protocol and procedures. Most children will be in a cohort with limited traffic in the building. Foggers will be purchased to disinfect classrooms and outdoor equipment. Mark requested information concerning the foggers from Mike. Repurposing classrooms within the building seems possible at this time. Other districts will be using town buildings to accommodate student classes.

S. Everett asked if we are in touch with any school systems who attend school year-round and if they are experiencing increases in illnesses. The illness has been horrific for the over 60 age group. He would like to see statistics of those under the age of 40. He is very happy to hear there are plans in place and modifications have been incorporated as needed. Kudos to Porter for the way they have handled this difficult situation.

M. Geryk noted there have been questions of starting the school year earlier. This would involve renegotiating contracts.

B) FEMA & OPM COVID Reimbursements – B. Ciurylo reports COVID funding by the State Department of Education for Columbia is looking to be approximately \$20,000. However, school reimbursements are on hold for now since the state is reviewing the funding from the Federal Department of Education. At a recent OPM email, the Town will receive up to an estimated \$39,000 for the first round for state reimbursement. This is to cover the 25% of COVID reimbursements that won't be covered by FEMA. FEMA will cover 75% of approved reimbursement requests. She will need to apply first to FEMA, then apply to the State. Deadlines are evolving as well as changing. The goal between FEMA and the State is that all towns will be reimbursed at 100%.

C) 2019-2020 Preliminary Year End Budget Estimates - B. Ciurylo reports the revenue side for the Town could end up at a \$250,000 surplus due to tax collection, the Education Cost Share grant and other revenue lines coming in above budget. The Special Education Grant was short by \$50,000 due to the increase in Special Education costs. Preschool tuition is coming in close to budget but about \$10,000

in refunds were issued to those families who paid for the period when Porter closed due to the COVID 19 outbreak. Approximately \$234,000 is expected from Local Capital Improvement (LOCIP) entitlement.

B. Ciurylo then moved on to discuss expenditures. For the Board of Education, the 19/20 projection is slightly lower than previously reported and currently there is approximately \$550,000. M. Geryk noted that there is current spending being planned for COVID supplies and summer projects. She mentioned that the renegotiation of the transportation contract resulted in a savings of approximately \$100,000. She anticipates that funds will be returned to the Town as well as the Board of Education will be reviewing the year end numbers for consideration of an appropriation to the Non-Lapsing Account. She noted that this will be looked at in July once year end numbers are more solid. She anticipates an additional \$100,000 of purchases will be required to address PPE and COVID preparations.

B. Ciurylo then reviewed the Town's expenditures and noted that the Town will also be returning funds to the General Fund. She was not ready to commit on an estimate since there were still June payrolls to be processed and posted as well as COVID spending in process.

B. Ciurylo did a quick review on the 19/20 capital and noted that projects were in process and being completed. M. Geryk noted the generator project has been started. Permits are delaying progress at this time. Camera work is underway. Sinks are in but we are waiting for the plumber. Ceiling tiles are being installed. Painters are being hired. School projects are on track and she noted that additional work is being reviewed to be completed over the summer.

M. Walter reported on the Town Capital Projects - Road at Rec Park is finished. A purchase request for guard rails will be at approximately \$20,000. B. Ciurylo noted two land purchases are complete. COVID purchases will be posted for both the Town and School.

E) Legislative Updates – None to report

F) Other Business – None to discuss

M. Walter noted that the Town purchased a Fiduciary policy from CIRMA due to the retirement plan. The cost is approximately \$1,900 per year.

6. **Adjournment:** The next meeting: July 8, 2020

E. Sharpe MOVED, S. Everett SECONDED to adjourn at 8:37 a.m. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Morey, Clerk