

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, February 16, 2016 – 7 pm.
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT.**

Members Present: First Selectman Carmen Vance; Selectman William O'Brien; Selectman Robert Hellstrom; Selectman Robert Bogue.

Also Present: Town Administrator Natasha Nau; Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo; Public Works Director George Murphy; Rec Director Marc Volza; CVFD President John Hahn; CVFD Chief Peter Starkel; Library Director Su Epstein; Hank Stockmal; Ann Dunnack; Millie Ramsey; Cathie Rowe; Nikki Keldsen; Cindy Postemsky; Jeff Viens.

CALL TO ORDER: C. Vance called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **MINUTES: Regular Meeting Minutes of 2/2/16:** R. Bogue MOVED to approve the 2/2/16 Regular Meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED 3:0:1 with C. Vance abstaining.
3. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Jeffrey Viens of 132 Route 66 asked the BOS if there is a mill increase this year, what they anticipate it to be. C. Vance stated that at this point no mill rate has been calculated but we are trying to keep it even. He expressed concern with a "wish list" that was presented to FiPAC, which included large items such as a new salt shed for DPW, new DPW equipment, a significant request for Open Space, as well as other things. R. Hellstrom explained that the "wish list" that J. Viens is referring to is just that and that nothing is set in stone.

J. Viens discussed the Economic Development Commission (EDC). He feels that individuals on the EDC and officials in Town should be business friendly. J. Viens stated that he believes the town made a mistake in previous years when they did not allow Mr. Gates to build the expansion for the repair shop in town. He also feels that the town "hammered" Michaud Flooring regarding the painting on the side of the building not being in compliance with the zoning regulations. J. Viens stated that he feels the town needs to learn to be friendly to businesses and that it is very important to have individuals on the EDC that are "business friendly." Discussion followed.

4. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.

N. Nau provided an update on the Squier Dam. She stated that she is waiting to hear back from the second engineering firm regarding a proposal to breach the dam. W. O'Brien stated that he was under the impression that the BOS agreed to leave the dam as is at the 2/2/16 BOS meeting after reading the email that N. Nau received from DEEP that stated Columbia is not in violation. N. Nau stated that yes, the BOS did agree to leave the dam

as is however, the culvert that exists currently might fail which could cause problems in the future for the town. R. Hellstrom stated that it is a box culvert and doesn't anticipate it being an issue. Discussion followed. The BOS agreed to leave the dam as is. N. Nau will contact the firm and let them know that a proposal is no longer needed.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

5.1 Proposed Ordinance to Waive Tax Bills Under \$5 and Retain Refunds Under \$5: C. Vance explained that when individuals make errors when paying tax bills it often results in tax bill balances and/or refunds due in the amount of \$5 or less. She stated that many other towns have this same issue and choose to waive the bills and/or refunds under \$5. Tax Collector, Carol Price, provided documentation on other surrounding Town's ordinances as well as how much these over and underpayments typically amount to in total for the year, which is about \$112. The amount of time and money it takes to process these payments is not efficient. Discussion followed. R. Bogue MOVED to pursue the proposed ordinance to waive tax bills under \$5 and Retain Refunds Under \$5. MOTION CARRIED 4:0. N. Nau will work on creating an ordinance and will bring it back to the BOS for review.

5.2 BEACH FEE SCHEDULE: M. Volza discussed the proposed changes in the fee schedule for the beach fees. The age brackets were changed as follows: Children were 3 to 15 and now they are 5 to 17, Adults were 16 to 61 and now they are 18 to 61. Seniors remained at 62+. All three types of resident season passes were raised \$5 each and the non-resident was raised accordingly (ten times). Day passes remained the same. The resident only transferrable guest pass was raised \$10 for each of the three age groups. C. Vance MOVED to accept the fee schedule as presented. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

6. COLUMBIA LAKE/DAM/BEACH:

6.1 Application of Lurene Ekwurtzel and Michael Boyle to install a new dock at 82 Route 87: C. Vance MOVED to approve the application of L. Ekwurtzel and M. Boyle to install a new dock at 82 Route 87, contingent upon the recommendations set forth by LMAC. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

7. APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS:

7.1 Appointment of Brian Pedersen to the Rec Commission: W. O'Brien MOVED to appoint B. Pedersen to the Rec Commission. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

7.2 Resignation of Lisa Napolitano from the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC): C. Vance MOVED to accept the resignation of L. Napolitano. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

8. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: See report.

9. CORRESPONDENCE:

9.1 Connecticut State Police Monthly Activity Report for Columbia January 2016

10. BUDGET:

10.1 Transfers: C. Vance MOVED to approve the following transfer:

AMOUNT / TRANSFER #	FROM A/C #, DESCRIPTION	TO A/C #, DESCRIPTION
\$ 400 / 2016-014	10-4132-710, Assessor- Professional Improvement	10-4132-010, Assessor- Salaries
\$ 400 / 2016-014	10-4132-500, Assessor- Professional Tech Services	10-4132-010, Assessor- Salaries

(transfer total \$800) MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

C. Vance MOVED to approve the following transfer:

AMOUNT / TRANSFER #	FROM A/C #, DESCRIPTION	TO A/C #, DESCRIPTION
\$ 135 / 2016-2015	10-4530-500, Building Services- Professional Tech	10-4530-720, Building Services- Professional Dues

MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

10.2 Refunds: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the following refund:

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$7.01	Town of Columbia	Joshua Hoffman

MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

11. PAYMENT OF BILLS: C. Vance MOVED to approve the payment of bills including regular and emergency bills, credit cards and paychex in the amount of \$161,409.29.
MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: None.

13. Budget Workshop:

LIBRARY: Su Epstein discussed proposed increases for the Library's FY 16-17 budget. She explained that the Library is requesting a grant in the amount of \$381,690, reflecting a 1.7% increase from last year. She explained that the areas needing an increase include Health Insurance and Administrative Contracts, neither of which are avoidable. Discussion followed.

CVFD: John Hahn and Peter Starkel presented the proposed FY 16-17 CVFD budget to the BOS. J. Hahn explained that the FD has maintained a flat operating budget and grant request due to the lower rates in the fuel contract signed by N. Nau recently. He commended Chief Starkel and Line Officers in obtaining grants when possible. J. Hahn discussed future building maintenance and equipment maintenance within the FD. P. Starkel stated that the CVFD has recently applied for a grant for turn out gear and are also looking to purchase a washing machine that is made to clean great. C. Vance asked if gear can be retained and re-used when someone leaves the department. P. Starkel stated that it depends because gear is required to be replaced after 10 years. He explained that gear is fitted to the individual, however gear is reused if possible. Discussion followed.

CONA: N. Nau reviewed the proposed costs associated with purchasing a van, including salaries, supplies, fuel, repairs/maintenance, insurance, phones, etc. to the BOS. N. Nau stated that the timing of the grant is longer than anticipated, therefore the town will not see the funding until approximately 1 ½ years, so the town will not have to fund 100% up-front for FY 16-17. She explained that the annual cost AFTER year one would be \$45,460 (minus \$20,000). Discussion followed. R. Bogue asked what the probability of keeping a 12 passenger van at full capacity, why not an 8 passenger for example? Cathie Rowe stated that after speaking with surrounding towns that seemed to be the best size van to look into purchasing. She explained that 27% of Columbia residents are currently 60 years of age or older. C. Vance asked if the dollars for repairs and maintenance is sufficient. George Murphy said yes, he thinks so for the first year. N. Nau stated that as the van gets older, the amount for repairs and maintenance will increase. C. Rowe stated that the operating expense will be 3 months out of the year for year one, plus van purchase however, going forward, the operating expenses will be annual but the initial purchase of the van will be done. Discussion followed.

DPW: G. Murphy discussed the proposed FY 16-17 budget with the BOS. He stated that unfortunately, DEEP has mandated dam inspections which will require hiring an engineer for the two dams in town. G. Murphy explained that he anticipates each inspection to cost approximately \$5,000. G. Murphy also discussed an increase for more salt as the town is trying to slowly use less sand and more salt. He pointed out a major decrease in fuel costs. C. Vance asked if we are mandated to replace the salt shed. G. Murphy stated that the town is NOT in compliance with DEEP's standards for salt storage (salt contaminating ground water). He explained that the current shed only holds 200 tons and in reality the town needs approximately 1,000 tons to meet the requirements of the number of roads, property, etc.

REC: N. Nau reviewed the proposal for a FT Rec Director with the BOS and stated that currently, the Rec Director works 19 hours per week. The proposal includes new program ideas, salary and benefit requirements, etc. M. Volza explained that running a recreation department with two part time employees is difficult. He stated that advertising and marketing are very important and must be consistent. The current hours of the recreation department are inconvenient for residents and they do not coincide with town hall hours. They also do not allow for expansion of services/programs for residents. M. Volza stated that he works with the Assistant to the Rec Director once a week, which is very hard to coordinate and make things work and come together. He stated that currently, volunteers are scheduling basketball, running the scoreboard, etc. but volunteers are not going to always be available. Discussion followed. Nikki Keldsen and Cindy Postemsky expressed their support for a full time Rec Director. C. Postemsky stated she feels that M. Volza is doing a great job and has great ideas but doesn't have the time to implement them. She would hate to see M. Volza leave Columbia.

N. Nau reviewed proposed FY 16-17 revenues and expenditures with the BOS. She stated that currently, the projected collection rate is 98%. N. Nau explained major areas of increase in the proposed budget. The BOS will review this and discussion will take place at the Budget Workshop scheduled for February 23, 2016.

13. **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 Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A):** C. Vance MOVED to enter into executive session at 9:17 pm with N. Nau and Bev Ciurylo present. Executive session ended at 9:58 pm.
14. **ADJOURNMENT: C. Vance** MOVED to ADJOURN at 9:59 pm. and the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The next special meeting of the BOS is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 7 pm. This will be a Budget Workshop.

Respectfully submitted by Kimberly A. Bona