

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, September 18, 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; Michelle Hamilton AHM Executive Director; Peter Starkel, Town of Columbia Fire Chief.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett called the meeting to order at 7: 00 pm

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to approve the Agenda for September 18, 2018. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
- 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for September 4, 2018.** R. Bogue MOVED to approve the BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for 9/4/18. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Karl Then; Ann Dunnack; Mary Roickle; Denise Morell, Youth Services Committee Member.

Mary Roickle, 34 Erdoni Road addressed the BOS with a response to Paul Kubala's statement related to CLA Actions documented in the minutes of the September 4, 2018 BOS meeting. M. Roickle said "In the September 4, 2018 Audience of Citizens section of the minutes Mr. Paul Kubala's remarks related to the illegal use of fireworks on the lake included the following "He (Mr. Kubala) 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." I was that representative who attended the August 4th meeting. For the record I am entering the following update related to my remarks that evening.

First, the August 4th approved BOS minutes read, "M. Roickle stated that the Columbia Lake Association formally and officially withdrew itself from any fireworks, expressed that fireworks are illegal but that it is not their position to enforce the law. Although accurate here is further context to fully understand our CLA position.

In July of 2017 the CLA created a Fireworks Committee with the charge to craft a proposal for the CLA to consider organizing and sponsoring a legal, regulated fireworks display to include a protocol to protect eagles and newborn eaglet(s) residing on the lake. The overarching issues discussed were the illegality of consumer fireworks, as well as the authorization processes to have legal displays. The discussions boiled down to two issues. One, was it technically feasible and practically viable

to sponsor a legal commercial firework display and two, the CLA's role regarding illegal fireworks.

In May of 2018 the committee's report to the CLA BOD recommended the CLA not pursue sponsoring a legal firework's display and that the CLA periodically inform the membership regarding the consequences of illegal fireworks especially during eagle breeding season. In addition, the CLA went on record that as a private organization we cannot enforce state laws in this instance as related to illegal fireworks usage. In July of 2018 the CLA membership accepted the committee's recommendations.

Thus, the CLA did something. We decided to not sponsor legal fireworks displays and we do not condone illegal fireworks. Also, our CLA mission is to protect the lake as a natural and recreational resource extends to protecting the resident eagles, especially during their breeding season. Yet, the CLA can't do everything, as we are not authorized to enforce the law.”

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

5.1 **Tax Incentive for Town of Columbia Volunteer Fire**

Department. S. Everett explained that in the previous BOS meeting on 8/21/18 the fire department would like to change the ordinance to include a tax relief for retired volunteer firefighters. The BOS tasked M. Walter to do some more research and report back to the BOS.

Peter Starkel, Columbia Volunteer Fire Chief explained that since June 2016 a Tax Abatement Program was established pursuant to section 12-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes for active members of the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department. To be eligible for the program active members must meet the eligibility requirements below:

- 1) Responds to at least 50 calls;
- 2) Attends at least 10 drills; and
- 3) Attends at least 5 monthly meetings.

S. Everett asked why the State is involved with Columbia regarding the Tax Abatement Program. P. Starkel explained that the State gave the Town of Columbia the option to include the Tax Abatement Program to active members of the fire department and per Public Act 5277 it has added the option of including retired eligible members.

P. Starkel explained the additional research that he conducted to answer some of the BOS question included:

- The Columbia Volunteer Fire Department currently has 38 active members; 6 currently meet the qualification of having actively served for 25 + years. There are approximately 23 active members that are on track for the tax abatement. A handful of the members fall within the 10-15-year range. Most of the other members are less than 10 years.

- P. Starkel poled other departments within Tolland County, and of the four or five responses he received, two currently extend the tax abatement to life members or retirees and one or two offer the tax abatement to those who have served only 15 years.

W. O'Brien asked if a lot of people stay on and not retire. P. Starkel responded that they typically stay for 5 to 8 years and that people are not sticking around for 25 years.

R. Bogue asked if this will be extended to other groups (emergency services) that donate their time. P. Starkel answered that the town ordinance would extend to the administrative officers within the Fire Department. He added that those administrative officers are active firefighters. W. O'Brien asked if this must be approved by the BOS and then sent to a town meeting for approval. M. Walter explained he wants to run this by Town Attorney, Henry Beck before it goes to the BOS for final approval and then to a town meeting.

S. Everett asked if upon death of the eligible member will the tax abatement go to the surviving spouse. M. Walter stated he will look into this and will report back to the BOS.

W. O'Brien MOVED to approve the Town Administrator to go forward with consulting the Town Attorney for the proposed ordinance for the tax incentive for Town of Columbia Volunteer Fire Department. MOTION CARRIED 5.0

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.1 AHM Contract Renewal Presentation of Services. Michelle Hamilton, AHM Executive Director presented an overview of AHM's services that are provided to the Town of Columbia. AHM has been working with the Town of Columbia since 2014 and a 5-year contract was entered into with AHM.

AHM Programs:

- Elementary School Based Student Support Services.
- Positive Youth Development Programs (K-12).
- Regional AHM Summer Youth Theater Program.
- TASKS- Senior Citizen's Youth Work Program - MS & HS Students.
- Power of Words Program (5th and 6th graders).
- Leadership Club, formerly known as Get Outside Program (K-8).
- Garden Club Program (K-8).
- AHM CHEC Coalition and Prevention Education & Activities for School.
- Juvenile Review Board Services and associated resources.

New Programming includes:

- Peer Mentoring Program- K-4 mentees, gr. 5-8 Mentors.
- Peer Mediation Program: Grades 5-8.
- SHARP Program (Safe Home Alone Readiness Program - Ages 10 and up.
- Peace at Home Parenting: Families with Children ages birth – 18.
- Family Resource Center: For birth to age 5 and parents includes Preschool.
- Play and Learn and in-home development screenings.
- Parent Education and Family Outreach.
- Life Skills Classes - Anti- bullying Pro Kindness presentation.
- Narcan training.
- Drug Take Back event.
- Porter Supply closet.
- True Colors Presentation.
- Trauma and Resilience Training.
- SMART Recovery - Substance Abuse support group for 16-18-year old's & Families and Friends group.

M. Hamilton explained that The HW Porter School created the Porter Supply closet that is filled with supplies, such as school supplies, snacks, and mittens, that can be given to students who don't have these items

S. Everett asked about some cancellation of events and asked if there was a drop in activity or a need? M. Hamilton stated that the presentation was canceled because they found that parents were not coming to the program because it was difficult to get back out and attend the program. AHM decided to utilize the Peace at Home on-line classes/webinars to help parents access information and training online.

R. Bogue asked if AHM works with other entities within Columbia. M. Hamilton stated that AHM works with the Youth Service Bureau, the Recreation Department, Juvenile Review Board, and the Horace Porter School. She added that Columbia has had 30 teens go through Juvenile Review Board and that in the 2016-2017 data, 424 children were served through various AHM program.

W. O'Brien MOVED to enter into a 5-year renewal contract with AHM Youth and Family Services, Inc. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

6.2 401 & 457 Plan Recommendation. S. Everett explained that in the prior BOS meeting he had asked M. Walter to go back and talk with the Town employees as well as the BOE and ask for their feedback on the current 403 (b), 401(a) & 457(b) Plans. Lol Fearon, Interim Superintendent expressed that the BOE would like to enter into a contract with MML Plan Solutions.

S. Everett MOVED that we authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a contract with MML Plan Solutions as the Advisor for the Town of

Columbia's 401(a) and 457(b) retirement plans and a 403 (b) plan.
MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

- 6.3 **Columbia Autumn Classic Road Race, October 28, 2018.** S. Everett MOVED to approve the Columbia Autumn Classic Road Race, October 28, 2018 at 12:00 pm at Rec Park. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
7. **COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:** None.
8. **APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:** None.
9. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**
 - Update on Invasive Species Treatment on Columbia Lake.** M. Walter explained that the treatment application for the Phragmites was applied on September 11, 2018 on all 6 sites. Three were by boat and three were on foot. The Solitude representative shared that he believed he was able to impact 75% of the Phragmites with the first treatment. M. Roickle explained that there were a few reasons that the first application impacted only 75%. On Woodland Terrace it appeared that someone had cut the plant, which impacts the process of killing the plant. She added that they are encouraging residents to not cut the plants.
 - 9.1 **CCM's Workshop October 3, 2018 on How to Run Legal and Effective Public Meetings.** M. Walter explained that CCM is sponsoring a workshop that will be put on by Halloran & Sage on *How to Run a Legal and Effective Public Meeting*. He added that this is a requirement that Halloran & Sage provide this type of service to the Town as part of our contract with them.
 - 9.2 **Update on Flag Poles.** M. Walter explained that we are in the process of putting up the flag poles that will fly both the State of CT flag and the POW Flag and that there will be a dedication on Veterans Day. He added that the Lions Club has generously donated funds for one of the flag poles.
 - 9.3 **Columbia Lake Water Level Monitoring.** M. Walter explained that he and George Murphy, DPW Director will be meeting with the LMAC sub-committee on how to best communicate to all residents about actions taken when monitoring the lake water level and reviewing procedures.
 - 9.4 **Collection Rate for the Grand List.** M. Walter shared that the collection rate for the Grand List of 10/1/16, fiscal year ending June 30, 2018 was 99.25%. This is the highest it has been in since 2007, the last time we reached 99.% collection was at the end of the fiscal year.
10. **CORRESPONDENCE:**
 - 10.1 **Letter to State Department of Education Commissioner from Lol Fearon, Interim Superintendent Regarding Waiver of the MBR Requirement for 2018/2019 Fiscal Year.** S. Everett explained every year we tackle the MBR requirement and this year Lol Fearon, Interim Superintendent has written a letter to the Commissioner, Dianna R. Wentzell at the CT. State Department of Education requesting a waiver from the MBR requirements for the 2018/2019 fiscal year

11. BUDGET:

11.1 Transfers: S. Everett MOVED to approve the following transfers totaling \$894.00.

TRANSFER #/AMOUNT	FROM A/C#, DESCRIPTION	TO A/C#, DESCRIPTION
2019 #003 / \$894.00	10-4800-900 / Contingency	10-4610-300 / General Supplies

MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

11.2 Refunds: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the following refunds totaling \$10,578.74 as per schedule.

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
1,534.68	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	MOUND SOLAR PARTNERSHIP X LLC
2,085.72	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	BLUE SKIES SOLAR 1 LLC
2,306.36	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	SPARROW HAWK SOLAR I LLC
1,579.16	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	VISIGOTH SOLAR I LLC
2,272.86	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	SOLAR INTEGRATED FUND III LLC
308.73	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	STEVEN J. BRODEUR
95.02	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	NANCY A. CLAPP
370.73	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	ACAR LEASING LTD
75.38	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	BRUCE C. CHAMBERLIN
153.10	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	BRUCE C. CHAMBERLIN
82.12	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	CHRISTINE A. CRUMLEY
285.38	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	LINDA S. FERBRACHE
100.02	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	GARY V. HARRIGAN
456.37	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	HONDA LEASE TRUST
153.98	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	ABIGAIL A. LINDSAY
271.60	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	JANICE CRYAN
224.08	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	THOMAS OR JANET URGO
151.34	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	LAURA A. ZURELL

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the payment of bills totaling \$58,994.13 comprised of 2018-2019 Emergency, 2018-2019 Regular, Credit Card and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: L. Napolitano would like the BOS to consider moving the Audience of Citizens section to the end of the Agenda. Discussion ensued. S. Everett MOVED to have the Audience of Citizens at the end of the BOS Meeting. MOTION CARRIED 5.0

14. 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); S. Everett MOVED to enter into Executive Session at 7:54 pm with M. Walter, Town Administrator and Peter Starkel, Fire Chief. Executive Session ended at 8:37 pm. MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to Adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm.
MOTION CARRIED 5:0.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie