

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, June 2, 2020 – 7:00 pm
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT

Members Present via Remote Access: Steven M. Everett, First Selectman; Robert Hellstrom, Deputy Selectman; Judy Ortiz, Selectman; William O'Brien, Selectman; Lisa Napolitano (arrived at 7:40 pm).

Also Present via Remote Access: Mark Walter, Town Administrator; Marc Volza, Recreation Director.

This is a web-based call, so we are operating under the following procedures: This session is being both video and audio-recorded. The Selectmen and staff will generally remain on mute except when speaking or voting and will generally be keeping video of themselves on throughout the meeting. There will be public comment during the Audience of Citizens and for the Lake Construction & Maintenance of Structures and shoreline on Columbia Lake. If a member of the public creates an audio or video disruption, they may be manually ejected from the meeting upon recommendation of staff or the First Selectman.

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

1. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** S. Everett asked for a moment of silence.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for May 19, 2020.** J. Ortiz asked to add to the minutes of May 19, 2020 the following: "At the end of meeting we had some discussion from the public about opening the beach and it was discussed that the Board of Selectmen would get the information about the changes that were going to be made on what we voted on." S. Everett MOVED to Approve the meeting minutes from May 19, 2020 with the added comments on the meeting by J. Ortiz. MOTION CARRIED 3.0.1, with W. O'Brien abstaining.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** No comments or new emails from PublicInput@columbiact.org.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 5.1 **COVID-19 Municipal Procedural Updates.** M. Walter explained this is a very fluid moving target as we all try to figure out how to come back to some version of normal. M. Walter has been working with town departments on coming up with goals to re-open. The library, fire department and the school have provided their operational goals regarding back to normal operations. M. Walter explained that we are evaluating different options to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be able to help departments start functioning as normal. There is no definitive date set for re-opening, but the target is somewhere between June 20th and July 5th. As June progresses, we will be tracking to see if there is any uptick; however, things are looking steady right now. We will know a lot more at the next BOS meeting on June 16th. We are still providing needed services to residents so far and employees have been very adaptive with mail, email, and our drop box. M. Walter said he is confident we can take this slow before opening to the public and that we will take it step by step to ensure that

employees are comfortable. S. Everett stated he has not gotten any complaints about the workload and he has been briefed on the plan and is ok with it.

- a) **Municipal Building Reopening Transition Plan**
- b) **Recreation and Beach & Lake Operational Plan**
- c) **Senior Center and Transportation Operational Plan.**
- d) **Library Operational Plan.**

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.1 Recommendations for Candidates to serve on the Charter Revision

Commission. S. Everett explained that every 10 years we are bound by the Charter to review and revise and he is asking the BOS for recommendations for 8 volunteers. J. Ortiz asked how many Democrats and how many Republicans. M. Walter stated he was not sure, but that it would have to probably be a balance, but he would find out and report back to the BOS. He explained that there should be representation from different boards such as, FiPAC, BOS, Building and Land Use, Planning and Zoning and LMAC. M. Walter stated that he already has some volunteers that expressed interest and some recommendations that he will be following up on.

6.2 CTDOT Proposed Install of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons near

Airline State Park Trail on Route 87. S. Everett explained that the line of site in that area is very dangerous and the proposed rapid flashing beacon is just an awareness beacon and will be installed in 2022. The State would pay for the design and we would have to commit to maintaining it. M. Walter explained that we would want to have some involvement in the design so that we understand what the long-term maintenance would be. Discussion ensued about why we are involved in maintaining the area when the State owns it; issues of improving the parking, and the dangers of crossing at that area.

7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH.

- 7.1 Columbia Lake Sign.** A design mock-up was provided to the BOS for review. S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Columbia Lake Sign. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.

J. Ortiz had questions pertaining to swim classes and how this will be set up. S. Everett stated that the governor's guidelines have changed, and we can now have up to 25 people gathered outside. M. Volza stated that we are going ahead with the Governor's guidelines with modifications being made. This includes requiring a parent or a guardian to stay with the child, cutting class size, taking temperature checks, limiting capacity and other guidelines. M. Volza explained that the softball camp is canceled. Discussion ensued about the state guidelines on temperature taking. M. Volza explained that this could change often and that they will keep re-evaluating.

- 7.2 Proposed amended and restated Guidelines for Granting Permission for the Construction and Maintenance of Structures and Shoreline on Columbia Lake and Public Comment Specific to Guidelines.** M. Walter explained this should be pushed back to LMAC again, because Paula Stahl, Land Use Planner had minor modifications to the wording for permits. The existing wording is "Special Note: Permission by the Board of Selectmen to construct a structure on or above the Town owned lake bottom shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other required approvals and if required permits". P. Stahl suggested the modification to read, "Special Note: Permission by the Board of Selectmen to construct a structure on or above the Town owned lake bottom shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other required approvals and permits from IWWC and Building Department". M. Walter stated that we should be clear on these

definitions and that it should be clearly addressed. M. Walter stated that we do not want to create a division between departments, and he recommends that the amended and restated regulations go back to LMAC. M. Walter explained that another comment had to do with deeded access to the lake and that this is a complicated issue. M. Walter stated that we might want to add minor language that the access is a prescriptive right that could be grandfathered or deeded rights could benefit the owner or deeded rights that could burden the adjoining property owners and disputes will ultimately will decided by the courts, not by the town or LMAC. He recommended that we might need language that says we are not going to make a decision on deeded rights and that the owner would need to go back to their deed and clearly understand what it says and how does the grandfathered guidelines work. R. Hellstrom stated that when it comes to wetlands, he felt we should leave it up to the enforcement officer to determine if it is an issue.

H. Beck stated that this is an issue that has needed to be addressed for some time and would have recommended this in phase 2 to LMAC. He said that he would like to pull some guidance together for residents to help map it out clearly, so everyone is comfortable. He stated that he will take it back to LMAC and get something back to the BOS in July.

M. Walter explained that in PublicInput@columbiact.org we received an email from Bruce Hopper about the height of the seawalls. M. Walter said that this is already in the regulations and that Mr. Hoppers concerns will be sent LMAC. M. Walter explained that we got another public input email from Brenden Sondergren on watercraft and placement of structures. This will also be sent to LMAC. Discussion ensued.

W. O'Brien asked about the addition of the new definition of property lines and how to measure frontage on an applicant's property. H. Beck explained that this is just clarification of concept of property lines for purposes of site lines and center lines, and location of rafts or moorings. Discussion ensued. S. Everett asked the BOS if they want clarity on any issues to please submit their questions and we will get the answers.

8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:

8.1 Resignation of Kathrine Tolsdorf from the Board of Education. S. Everett thanked Kathy Tolsdorf for her years of service and stated that everything Kathy did was always for the best of the children and she will be tough to be replaced. J. Ortiz stated she is sorry to see her go. R. Hellstrom asked if we could put together a letter thanking her for her services. L. Napolitano stated that she has worked with Kathy for years and she was very passionate about working with the kids. S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Resignation of Kathrine Tolsdorf from the Board of Education effective immediately. MOTION CARRIED 4.1 with W. O'Brien opposed. L. Napolitano joined the meeting.

8.2 Appointments of Marc Volza as Animal Control Officer and Nicole Morey as Assistant Animal Control Officer. M. Walter recommended the appointments of Marc Volza and Nicole Morey and explained that one big advantage is that they will be on duty during the day and a lot of the calls are involving Rec Park which they are already involved on a daily basis. He explained that eventually we may be able to join another town to increase coverage. R. Hellstrom asked how this will work financially. M. Walter explained that we would allow them to leave any time during their normal working hours to cover animal control as they are already being paid by the town

and that they will receive a stipend that they would split to cover them for weekends and nights. M. Walter explained that they will have to take an 80-hour course online. M. Walter stated that East Haddam and Hebron ACO will help as needed until we are up and running. S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Appointments of Marc Volza as Animal Control Officer and Nicole Morey as Assistant Animal Control Officer. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

- 9.1 Update on Access Agency.** M. Walter explained that we have documented our concerns to the agency about not receiving services and they have agreed to not bill us for April and May. B. Derring will follow up on whether we will be receiving services in June. We will also be determining if we will go forward with Access Agency for next year. M. Walter explained that we will get an ad this week for a social worker. We already have existing residents that are interested, and we have a proposal from AHM to provide a social worker through their agency. S. Everett stated that he would like to have Access help us out until July so that any residents are provided the help they need. M. Walter explained AHM has been available as well through their hotline.
- 9.2 EHHD COVID-19 Report 5-28-20.** M. Walter explained we did have one death in town and up to 22 cases with 5 hospitalizations. We have not had any big spikes.
- 9.3 CT-CHIP Rate Concession.** M. Walter explained that we did get a 19% increase and a negotiated a small concession of ½ percent.
- 9.4 Section 6, Executive Order (EO) 7S and Section 1, Executive Order (EO) 7W Suspension and Modification of Tax Deadlines and Collection Efforts due to COVID-19.** M. Walter stated that the EO 7s and 7W defines the suspension and modification of tax deadline and will be published on the towns website and we have sent a write-up to Chronicle it was included in the monthly newsletter.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

- 10.1 FY 20/21 Approved Budget.**
- 10.2 Thank you letter to Joyce Nasin for COVID-19 donation.**
- 10.3 “Welcome Home” 2020 Real Estate Guide featuring Town of Columbia.** Columbia was noted as a top 10 town in Tolland County.

11. BUDGET:

- 11.1 Transfers.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve \$80.00 to cover the cost above budget for the annual beach mailer postage. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

S. Everett MOVED to Approve \$975.00 to cover the unbudgeted cost for the replacement of the AED at the Murphy House. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

| TRANSFER#/AMOUNT | FROM A/C# DESCRIPTION | TO A/C# DESCRIPTION |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2020-034/\$80.00 | 10-4640-520/Prof/Tech | 10-4640-110/Postage |
| 2020-035/\$525.00 | 10-4640-500/Prof/Tech | 10-4640-300/Supplies |
| \$300.00 | 10-4640-515/Contracted | |
| \$150.00 | Services | |
| Total \$975.00 | 10-4640-520/Printing | |

- 11.2 Refunds:** None.

12. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Payment of Bills totaling \$ 65,433.92. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
13. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
14. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** J. Ortiz thanked M. Walter for getting information out before the meeting. J. Ortiz asked M. Walter to contact her weekly with updates. S. Everett stated that the Governor has made changes to how many people can gather in groups, which is now at 25. M. Walter and M. Volza will be in touch after to discuss the new changes.
15. **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).** None.
16. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to Adjourn at 8:04 pm. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie.