

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, August 21, 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, Robert Bogue, Selectman.

Also Present: Town Administrator, Mark Walter; Reporter for *The Chronicle*, Michelle Firestone.

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 August 21, 2018. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. S. Everett MOVED to add to the Agenda, 6.4: To discuss and approve the purchase of an 8 x 20 vinyl shed from Carefree Small Buildings for the replacement of the old shed at the Beckish Senior Center. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for August 7, 2018.** R. Bogue MOVED to approve the BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for 8/7/18. MOTION CARRIED 4.0, with S. Everett abstaining.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Brian Tarbell, Chairman of the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC). Millie Ramsey, Member of Commission on Aging (CONA), Ann Dunnack, Chair of Open Space.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 5.1 **Tax Incentive Program for Current and New Business.** S. Everett explained that several months ago the EDC presented their proposed Tax Incentive Program for current and new business' and he wanted to bring this back to the attention of the BOS. S. Everett has asked that the new EDC Chair, Robert Hellstrom and the EDC committee members along with the assistance of the Town Administrator to come up with a program that takes into consideration the proposal already put forth, to help attract new businesses to the Town of Columbia. R. Bogue asked if it is allowed that more than one BOS member be on the EDC committee. S. Everett stated that the BOS established a policy that in order to avoid the potential for conflicts of interest, either perceived or actual, residents should not serve concurrently as members for the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Economic Development Commission. S. Everett added that anyone can attend BOS and EDC meetings to offer their ideas. M. Walter stated that he put together for the BOS a packet that includes the new State statutes on tax incentives and what other towns similar to Columbia are doing for tax incentives for businesses. R. Hellstrom stated that the next EDC meeting will be held on 9/17/18 at 6:30pm in the Conference Room.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - 6.1 **Presentation by Honor Lawler from Trust for Public Lands on Benefits of a Community Forest and Open Space.** Honor Lawler, Field Representative from the Trust for Public Land (TFPL) provided a PowerPoint presentation on Forest and Open Space Community Forest model. The presentation included an overview of the Community Forest model; the benefits (economic, social and

ecological); steps in a community forest project (property prioritization, securing property, funding, community planning that includes governance and management plans); acquiring land, and activating the process. Several examples were provided, which included, The Preserve (1,000 acres) in Old Saybrook CT; Millbrook Open Space (100 acres) in Windsor, CT; Page Pond Community Forest, Meredith, NH, and Barre Town Forest, Barre, VT. The presentation wrapped up with an overview of the funding sources that included Major Funding Sources: USFS Community Forest Program (up to \$600,000); CT Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA Grant is 50% of FMV, or up to \$1.5M); Land & Water Conservation Fund - Stateside grants (varies, but roughly \$1.4M available in CT for FY 2016-2017). Other Sources of funding includes: Town contributions through existing funds or borrowing, local and regional foundations, local corporate donations and private individuals.

H. Lawler explained that the process for Community Forests are centered around the community and their input on what they would envision the uses for the Community Forest would be. She added that TFPL is a 5019c) (3) and will the due diligence, help with land negotiation, and secure the funding. Once the funding is secured then the next step is the Community Planning (what the town wants i.e., hunting, bird watching, trails) and that a part of the community planning would involve the Governance and Management Plan. Last step is to acquire the land. H. Lawler stated that the proposed Community Forest in Columbia is close to the Airline Trail and close to Mono Pond and that it would be a real asset to the community

R. Bogue asked how this process differs from our Open Space process. H. Lawler explained that the Community Forest program takes a national organization such as TFPL and marries it with our own Open Space program using the expertise of the TFPL due diligence process.

S. Everett thanked H. Lawler for helping us set the course and is encouraged that there is funding available and asked what our first step would be. H. Lawler stated that first it is the community's engagement in establishing a Community Forest, then the next step would be the negotiation led by TFPL with the landowners of Wellswood area. She added that the benefit is that TFPL negotiates and secures the options more quickly than most towns can.

- 6.2 Municipal Property Tax Relief for Retired Volunteer Firefighters.** M. Walter explained that the fire department would like to change the ordinance to include the tax relief for retired volunteer firefighters. W. O'Brien asked are there many other communities that are doing this. M. Walter stated that he did not receive a response from the fire department on what other towns had implemented this policy, but that he would do some research and get back to the BOS. He added that this is a trend to keep the volunteer firefighters as long as possible within the fire department. S. Everett stated that if anyone has questions, to please direct them to M. Walter and he will follow up with the BOS on what research he has found. B. Tarbell asked if this policy would apply to any other services in Town. S. Everett stated that it would also apply to, EMT's and emergency medical personnel.
- 6.3 Approval for The Creation of a Housing Authority.** S. Everett stated that he has had multiple request from seniors about senior housing. He stated that he has done some inquiries about potential properties for senior housing. He added that if we create a Housing Authority this would put the process of researching a viable

option for senior housing, funding and grants into the Housing Authorities hands. L. Napolitano asked what the cost would be to the Town. S. Everett explained it's all volunteer with 7 to 9 members. He added that other towns have implemented this such as, East Haddam and Lebanon. M. Ramsey from CONA stated that the Housing Authority normally hires a person that oversees the senior housing program. M. Walter explained for example that Wildwood Management is responsible for Dartmouth Village. W. O'Brien asked who would own the property. M. Walter stated he would find out this information. S. Everett stated that if you have questions please get those to M. Walter and S. Everett. M. Ramsey stated CONA meets tomorrow, 8/22/18 at 9:00 am at the Senior Center.

6.4 To Discuss and Approve the Purchase of an 8 x 20 Vinyl Shed from Carefree Small Buildings for The Replacement of The Old Shed at the Beckish Senior Center. S. Everett MOVED to approve the purchase of an 8 x 20 vinyl shed from Carefree Small Buildings for the replacement of the old shed at the Beckish Senior Center. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:

7.1 Approval for William and Phyllis Dunn, 14 Nuhfer Dr. for The Replacement of The Existing Wooden Deck, Side Rails and Support Posts. W. O'Brien MOVED to approve the replacement of the existing wooden deck, side rails and support posts as recommended by LMAC. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS: None.

9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: M. Walter explained that milling will begin at the Town Hall on August 30th and paving will follow on September 14, 2018. He also shared information on the Rte. 66 milling and paving. Milling will start August 30, 2018 and will take 5 days. Paving will start September 10th and will be finished September 19th.

M. Walter shared an article from *The Chronicle* on Columbia Plaza regarding bringing in new tenants to the plaza.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

10.1 Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern CT (SACCEC) Thank You Letter.

11. BUDGET:

11.1 Transfers: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the following transfers in \$340.00.

TRANSFER #/AMOUNT	FROM A/C#, DESCRIPTION	TO A/C#, DESCRIPTION
2018-#068 / \$230.00	10-4410-011 / Salaries - Public Works OT	10-4410-010/Salaries-Public Works
2019-#001 / \$110.00	10-4660-515 / Contracted Services	10-4660-811 / Mach/Equip < \$5,000

MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

11.2 Refunds: R. Bogue MOVED to approve the following refunds of \$2,754.54.

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$156.04	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	AMELIA BYINGTON
\$19.16	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	MARGARET M. GUSTAFSON
\$132.93	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	STEPHANIE F. KING
\$49.62	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	MARSHALL A. MARTIN
\$182.99	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	GARY F. REYNOLDS
\$55.11	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	DIANA S. SADLON
\$2,158.69	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	CORELOGIC FOR M. HOULE

MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

12. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** R. Bogue MOVED to approve the payment of bills totaling \$78,170.04, that included 2017-2018 Emergency, 2017-2018 Regular, 2018-2019 Emergency, 2018-2019 Regular, Credit Card and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

13. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** None.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

14.1 **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 8:12 pm with M. Walter. Executive Session ended at 8:35.

14.2 **Approval of a Position Reorganization and Budget Transfer.** No action was discussed or taken.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to Adjourn the meeting at 8:36 pm. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie