

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Tuesday, December 3, 2019 – 7 pm  
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room  
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

**Members Present:** Steven M. Everett, First Selectman; Robert Hellstrom, Deputy Selectman; William O'Brien (arrived at 7:05), Selectman; Lisa Napolitano, Selectman; Judy Ortiz, Selectman.

**Also Present:** Mike Gnazzo, Chairman of LMAC, Henry M. Beck, Jr., LMAC Member.

**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 as written for December 3, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
  - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2019.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2019. 2.0.1 with R. Hellstrom abstaining. MOTION DID NOT CARRY.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - 6.1 **Discussion Regarding Veterans Exemption Options.** S. Everett stated that recently the issue of Veterans exemption options was brought to his attention. He explained that there are 3 options that the Town should consider 12-81 h, 12-81 f and 12-81ii.

He explained Section 1281-h is an exemption to remove the total assessment on a disabled veterans motor vehicle that is specially equipped for someone with disabilities. S. Everett said that we currently have an exemption on personal property taxation on any motor vehicle specially equipped for a person with a disability, so the new ordinance would just have a change in wording to include disabled veterans.

S. Everett explained that Section 12-81f allows towns to offer a local exemption of up to \$25,000. There are maximum income limits of \$43,000 if married and \$35,300 if unmarried. We currently allow an exemption of \$6,000.

S. Everett explained that Section 12-12-81ii is an option to provide exemption for a parent or surviving spouse of person killed in action while performing active military duty.

J. Ortiz asked about Section 12-81j that provides exemption for veterans not eligible for certain other exemptions and what else would that offer? S. Everett stated that the Veterans office determines this.

S. Everett stated that he would do some more research on 12-81g(b) that offers 3x the current veteran's exemption for 100% disabled. J. Ortiz agreed we should look into this.

L. Napolitano asked to look at the exemptions some more.

S. Everett stated we will put this on the agenda at the next meeting to discuss and agree on amounts to offer, any changes, and the course of action.

**6.2 Discussion Regarding Transfer Station hours.** S. Everett stated that this discussion is informational. S. Everett said that he has spent some time at the transfer station and did some fact finding. He said that the Town may want to adjust the hours on Wednesday either an hour earlier or an hour later. He added that if we extend an hour later this may cause safety issues since it will be dark during the winter. S. Everett said in the next budget we would like to add a third person on Saturday. R. Hellstrom suggested the Town could do summer hours and winter hours.

**6.3 Letter of Support for the formation of the CRCOG Economic Development District.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve a letter of support from the Town of Columbia for the formation of the CRCOG Economic Development District. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**6.4 2020 Municipal Holiday Schedule.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Municipal Holiday Schedule as written for 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:**

**7.1 Standard Guidelines for Construction and Maintenance of Structures and Shoreline on Columbia Lake.** S. Everett asked if the watercraft covering is part of the dock structure. Henry Beck, 41 Sleepy Hollow Rd. stated that is correct; the watercraft covering, or lift must be part of a dock.

S. Everett asked if the guidelines could include the definition of "grandfathered". H. Beck said yes, they could make that change.

S. Everett asked if the language in Section II-q could be changed from "shall join" to "must join"? H. Beck said we can change it to "must join."

S. Everett asked for clarification on the Town's obligation to a right-of-way owner regarding docks. H. Beck stated that the owner of the land can put in an application for a dock and agree to let everyone use it, but the right-of-way owners can not apply on their own. He added that the right of way person has the right to go back and forth to the lake to launch a boat, or swim but not to moor a boat.

Mike Gnazzo, Chairman of LMAC stated that any agreement between the right-of-way owner and the owner of the dock would be informal, none of this would bear on any formal agreement.

S. Everett asked about adding under the Special Conditions section of the guidelines that blowing leaves into the lake is prohibited. H. Beck stated that it would have to be a Town ordinance and added this does not have to do with construction on the lake.

S. Everett asked under the section on docks in the second to last line in the paragraph shouldn't it spell out "twenty-five" instead of "twenty"? H. Beck said he will clarify that.

S. Everett read Section 4 - Watercraft Coverings and Watercraft Lift Structures and asked for clarification. "There will be a maximum of one watercraft covering and one watercraft lift structure per lake front property; provided, however, that a conforming watercraft lift under a conforming watercraft covering will be counted only once. For each permitted watercraft covering or watercraft lift, the allowed capacity per structure is one watercraft". H. Beck stated that you could have one cover and lift. This does not allow you to have two.

S. Everett stated then you could have two lifts with one cover covering them on the same dock.

S. Everett asked about the 100 ft mean water line from the shore and do you have to stay outside that or at no wake speed. H. Beck stated this is a Town ordinance and has been enforced differently recently. He said that motorboats inside the 100 ft go in perpendicular for purpose of docking. He said that fisherman do that now and it has been condoned. He explained that motorboat operation is within 100ft to make it safe for swimmers. That is also why Lake Patrol has the swimmers within that safety zone.

Karl Then of Woodland Terrace stated that jet skiers also come in perpendicular and that the State regulates the water allowing steering speed within 100ft. S. Everett stated he will take a look at this.

S. Everett asked if we have towers on rafts? H. Beck stated that some are grandfathered. S. Everett asked who enforces this. H. Beck stated that this is usually brought up by Lake Patrol then to BOS. H. Beck stated that there may be 5 rafts that have towers on them. S. Everett stated we should get an accurate count. H. Beck stated we will get an accurate account.

S. Everett asked about rafts having some sort of identification marking them and is this new. H. Beck said that in the past rafts had registration numbers assigned to them and currently he thinks there are 5 on the lake that have numbers assigned to them. He said the purpose of identifying the raft is so if it gets loose from its mooring the owner can be identified.

S. Everett asked about Section 7 (b) in the guidelines that state "Watercraft coverings, watercraft lifts and rafts must be located so that all parts thereof are at least 15' from abutting property boundaries, including the imaginary extensions of those property boundaries over water." M. Gnazzo stated these are guidelines are at most practical and balance the needs of property owners and geography of property lines.

S. Everett asked if we allow buoys 100ft off the property owners line. H. Beck said this is an informal practice to mark 100ft. He said that there is a Town ordinance that the town can do this. There are 6 or 8 places around the lake that can have a Town buoy. It is not regulated by these regulations now and no one can have a grandfathered buoy.

S. Everett stated we have some changes to make to the guidelines before bringing this to a Public Hearing. He said he felt it is important that everyone in Town should be notified about what is happening to the lake.

H. Beck asked if we can limit it to the topics on the principal changes. Particularly respect to watercraft lifts, regards allowing electricity and so forth. There are few things here that are substantive in nature.

M. Gnazzo stated if we open this up, this will not go well. W. O'Brien stated he appreciates all the time LMAC has put into this, but he expressed he wants to put it out to the Town.

W. O'Brien MOVED to schedule a Public Hearing on Standard Guidelines for Construction and Maintenance of Structures and Shoreline on Columbia Lake on Tuesday April 15, 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:**

**8.1 Resignation of Brian Pedersen from Columbia Recreation**

**Commission.** S. Everett MOVED to Accept the Resignation of Brian Pedersen from Columbia Recreation Commission. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**8.2 Appointment of Brian Pedersen to FiPAC.** Tom Currier, Chair of the Democratic Town Committee provided a letter of recommendation for Brian Pederson to serve on FiPAC. S. Everett MOVED to Appoint Brian Pedersen to FiPAC. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:** None.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**10.1 Connecticut Water Donation to Town of Columbia Social Services Account.**

**11. BUDGET:**

**11.1 Transfers:** None.

**11.2 Refunds:** None.

**12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve payment of bills totaling \$39,623.93 as listed here. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**13. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.

**14. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** L. Napolitano stated that her daughter came home last night after midnight. and there was no plow on the Town roads. Is that standard? R. Hellstrom asked what is DPW's policy.

S. Everett stated that Mark Walter had a meeting with the department heads from Finance, DPW and Parks and Recreation on what to expect for the coming budget year.

**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**15.1 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);**

**16. ADJOURNMENT:** W. O'Brien MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:32 pm. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.