

FINANCIAL PLANNING and ALLOCATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Via Zoom Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2020 – 7 pm
Yeomans Hall
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT

Members Present: Ernie Sharpe, Chairman; Richard Szegda, Co-Vice Chairman; Kelly Peck, Co-Vice Chairman, Judith Jordan; Brian Pedersen, Jeff Viens.

Members Absent: Mike Patel.

Also Present: Mark Walter, Town Administrator; Bev Ciurylo, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER: E. Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

1. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 2.1 **FiPAC Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for 6/17/20.** R. Szegda MOVED to Approve the FiPAC Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for 6/17/20. J. Viens SECONDED the MOTION and the MOTION CARRIED 6.0.
3. **CORRESPONDENCE:**
 - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for 6/16/20 and 7/21/20 and BOS Special Meeting for 6/25/20.**
4. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.
5. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - 5.1 **COVID 19 costs: Mar to June 2020.** E. Sharpe started the discussion by thanking K. Peck for the work she did to finalize the revisions to the Non-lapsing account resolution. B. Ciurylo stated that she been compiling the costs associated with the COVID pandemic. There are 3 pools of funds: the CARES Act from the State Department of Education, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM). The Board of Education applied and was awarded the Cares Act grant totaling \$22,991 which will be used for technology purchases. It was requested that costs be submitted to FEMA on a quarterly basis. The first request for COVID related costs up to June 30th was just submitted. The total came to \$104,204 and was submitted for the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD) - \$6,700, Town - \$7,700 and BOE -\$90,000. The BOE's costs included purchases for technology, supplies, masks gowns, sanitizers, and on-line remote access learning programs. B. Ciurylo stated we will know in about a month what costs were approved. FEMA will cover about 75% of the costs and the State will cover the remaining 25% of approved costs. B. Ciurylo stated that the BOE are continuing to purchase additional items, such as plexiglass and technology for remote learning. There may also be additional staff hired and the BOE will be using the REAP grant money. B. Ciurylo said she will have a tally of the costs by next meeting. In addition, the school has bought tents for kids to be outside totaling over \$6,000 and it is anticipated that this cost will be reimbursed. B. Ciurylo explained that the BOE purchases are from March 12th

to June 30th and it is actual costs and not encumbered costs. Also, any COVID costs, between the Town, CVFD, BOE are not supposed to affect the budget. This was verified with the auditors. Any costs for 2019-2020 and for this year that are currently posted against the budget will be reversed and reposted to separate account.

- 5.2 **Hunt Road Bridge/Culvert Replacement and STEAP Grant.** M. Walter explained that the Town applied for a STEAP Grant for \$128,000. The grant money will help the Town finish the project sooner. The project is tied into the Mono Pond State Park and we emphasized that the safety of the bridge is the most important aspect of the project.
- 5.3 **Tropical Storm Isaias.** M. Walter stated that the Town fared pretty well. Damage from the storms did not hit any of the Town buildings. There were about 13 roads blocked as a result of the storm. M. Walter said that there will be a post-op Emergency Operation Center meeting. E. Sharpe asked if there were any impacts on the \$100,000 tree removal budget. M. Walter stated he thinks the Town is on track with the tree removal budgeted. B. Ciurylo said she has not seen any costs come through yet this plus there were some funds carried over from last year.
- 5.4 **BOE Non-lapsing Account.** B. Ciurylo explained the preliminary changes to the Board of Education (BOE) budget surplus due to reposting COVID related costs could cause the surplus to grow to \$650,000. The BOE met this week and did not make any decision regarding a request to add to the current Non-lapsing account balance. B. Ciurylo noted that a decision will need to be made in September by both the BOE and FiPAC so that this is set prior to the town. B. Ciurylo stated that M. Geryk is possibly looking to put in 2% which is approximately \$254,000 - \$255,000. The balance of the BOE surplus would go back to the to the Town. The BOE's next meeting is September 1st and the request would be submitted for the next FiPAC meeting. B. Ciurylo stated that we have \$210,000 in the non-lapsing account and potentially adding \$254,000 to \$255,000 would bring the balance to \$460,000. The reopening of school was mentioned and B. Ciurylo noted that this account could be used to cover some of those costs. Additional staff may be hired when the school opens. B. Ciurylo explained the plan for Porter School opening is that on Monday and Tuesday, Group A will report to school; Wednesday is remote learning for the entire school; and Thursday and Friday, Group B will report to school. M. Geryk is working on renegotiating the bus contract since the buses won't be running on Wednesday.

B. Pederson asked if the \$650,000 surplus for BOE is typical? B. Ciurylo stated this is not a typical year. The BOE did not place a lot of purchases due to school closing early. Regular purchases were not made, or the staff used what they already had. The District received over \$100,00 refund from the bus company because buses were not running, and outplacement tuition was lower. E. Sharpe said that the previous year's surplus was \$350,000. E. Sharpe said that the minimum budget requirement forces us to give them more money than what they really needed.

E. Sharpe stated that the school may have \$250,000 more than they need, and that the town has no control over that. He expressed concern that adding another 2% to the Non-lapsing account. That is a lot to add and with this pandemic ongoing, the Town doesn't know what will happen with ability for Town residents to pay their taxes.

E. Sharpe stated he is concerned about making sure the Town can get through the next 3 years without a substantial tax hike. Tying up a lot of money in the Non-lapsing account takes away from the General Fund.

B. Ciurylo asked M. Walter if he had heard from the Tax Collector on how the tax collection went so far this year. M. Walter stated he will get back to FiPAC with the numbers from the tax collector on tax revenue.

- 6. TRANSFERS:** R. Szegda MOVED to Approve the seven Transfers as presented by B. Ciurylo. K. Peck SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6.0.

TRANSFER/ AMOUNT	FROM A/C# DESCRIPTION	TO A/C#, DESCRIPTION
#2020-049 / \$1,111.00	10-4250-010 / Salaries -Van Services	10-4250-600 / Repairs/Maintenance
#2020-051 / \$3,520.00	10-4310-500 / Professional/Tech	10-4310-811 / Mach/Equip <\$5,000
#2020-053 / \$1,309.00	10-4410-515 /Contracted Services	10-4410-600 / Repairs/Maintenance
#2020 -057 / \$1,395.00	10-4133-010 / Salaries-Tax Collector	10-4130-010 / Salaries Assessment
#2020-059 / \$900.00 \$310.00 \$380.00 Total: \$1,590.00	10-4260-300/ General Supplies 10-4260-600 Repairs / Maintenance 10-4260-710 Professional Development	10-4410-010 / Salaries-Public Works
#2020-061 / \$3,079.00	10-4410-011 / Salaries-Public Works OT	10-4410-010 / Salaries-Public Works
#2020-065 / \$3,117.00	10-4410-500 Professional/Tech	10-4410-600 Public Works Repairs/Maintenance

- 7. NEXT MEETING:** September 16, 2020

- 8. ADJOURNMENT:** J. Viens stated he would like to serve on Charter Revision Committee. M. Walter said there is not a full roster yet. K. Peck was also interested but asked if members on FiPAC can serve on this committee? M. Walter stated he will check with the Town attorney and follow up with FiPAC.

R. Szegda stated that he was recently at the Transfer Station and Tristan Kandolin was very helpful and he couldn't have been nicer.

- 9.** E. Sharpe MOVED to ADJOURN at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Jennifer LaVoie