

Linda M. Hodge



First Selectman

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COLCHESTER, CT

2008 APR - 7 PM 1:20

*Nancy A. Bray*  
NANCY A. BRAY  
TOWN CLERK

**Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, April 3, 2008  
Colchester Town Hall  
Meeting Room 1 – 7:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** First Selectman Linda Hodge, Stan Soby, Rosemary Coyle, Greg Cordova, John Malsbenden

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Caplet, Dorothy Mrowka, Mark Decker, Ryan Blessing, Lorraine Conderino, and another citizen

- 1. Call to Order:** First Selectman L. Hodge called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Additions to the Agenda:** J. Malsbenden moved to amend the agenda adding “#14 Discussion and Possible Action on Proclamation of April 16<sup>th</sup> as National Start Walking Day”, adding “#15 Discussion and Possible Action on Financial Aid for Parks and Recreation Programs”, adding “#16 Discussion on CT WARN”, adding “#17 Discussion on the Elderly Tax Relief Task Force Ordinance”, with the previous #14 renumbered to #18, with the remaining items renumbered consecutively, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.  
  
S. Soby moved to add “#18 Discussion and Possible Action Related to the Tax Collector and Issuance of Foreclosure Notices, with the previous #18 renumbered to #19, with the remaining items renumbered consecutively, seconded by G. Cordova. Following discussion and the agreement that it would be added to the next agenda, the motion was withdrawn.
- 3. Approve Minutes of the March 20, 2008 Regular Meeting:** J. Malsbenden moved to approve the March 20, 2008 regular meeting minutes with an amendment to #19, correcting the word “joint”, seconded by G. Cordova. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- 4. Approve Minutes of the March 25, 2008 Special Meeting:** J. Malsbenden moved to approve the March 25, 2008 special meeting minutes as presented, seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- 5. Citizen's Comments:** Dorothy Mrowka spoke about her concerns for the Westchester Fire Department for the next election, specifically regarding the parking availability and possibly increasing the lot space. Dorothy further remarked that perhaps another location would serve better.
- 6. Boards and Commissions – Interviews and/or Possible Appointments - Fair Rent Commission (member; term expires 04/03/10):** Lorraine Conderino (to be interviewed): The Board of Selectmen interviewed Lorraine Conderino. The Board took no further action.

**7. Budget Transfers - None**

- 8. Tax Refunds & Rebates:** J. Malsbenden recused himself from discussion and voting on this item. After review R. Coyle moved to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$488.02 to Camrac Inc., \$79.19 to Laura Hanna, \$10.81 to Donald and Jennifer Bradley, \$10.39 to Nichole Bradley, \$15.59 to Jamie Roach and Mark Decker, \$29.62 to Gordon Coates, \$2193.35 to Alexander and Laurie Wood, \$300.30 to Nancy Wasniewski, \$1770.15 to Milan and Katherine Valencic, \$7.16 to Frank and Debra Logan, \$4.07 to Rick Henderson, \$5.35 to Daniel Goslin, \$58.45 to Honda Lease Trust, \$22.34 to Jeffrey Lawton, \$26.30 to Scott Siena, \$18.18 to Gary Fellows, \$812.90 to Jordan and Tamara Paullo, \$38.54 to Deborah Dolan, \$37.41 to Brandy Bunnell, \$6.93 to Thomas and Susan Fornabi, \$20.90 to Bruce Beauchamp, \$38.31 to Hryn Wojciech or Kuzniar Anna, \$18.11 to Adam Brais, \$12.66 to Michael and Eleanor Keller, \$36.58 to Stephen Lima, \$70.75 to Diana Chapman and Eduardo Lex, \$8.44 to Justin Larsen, \$10.00 to Gregory Vilardo, \$70.97 to Bert Greene, \$479.16 to Birmingham Utilities, \$91.57 to Wheels Lt., \$4.12 to Irene and John Malsbenden, \$746.38 to August Eva L/U Hagan PA, \$940.00 to Daniel and Juanita Rowland, \$12.34 to Robert Washburn, \$9.04 to Greg Caracoglia, \$254.30 to Michael Ventura, \$629.65 to GMAC, \$1908.18 to John and Lora Acona, \$40.14 to William Otfinoski and Jean Anderson, \$88.37 to Cherly Mcguire, \$43.58 to Michael and Donna Lynch, seconded by S. Soby. All members voted in approval, with exception to J. Malsbenden who did not vote. MOTION CARRIED.
- 9. Discussion and Possible Action on the Award of the Mulch Bid:** S. Soby moved to award the Mulch and Playground Surfacing bid to New England Bark Mulch and Playground Surfacing as per the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Director and to authorize the First Selectman to sign any necessary documents, seconded by J. Malsbenden. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- 10. Discussion and Possible Action on Proclamation for the Week of May 4 - 10, 2008, as "Municipal Clerks Week":** J. Malsbenden moved to authorize the First Selectman to sign the proclamation identifying the Week of May 4-10, 2008, as "Municipal Clerks Week", with the following changes: 1) third paragraph, change "provides the" to "provides a", 2) last paragraph, change "Mayor" to "First Selectman", 3) last signature line, change "Mayor" to "First Selectman", seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED
- 11. Discussion and Possible Action on STEAP Funding Program:** R. Coyle moved to approve the request that the Town of Colchester be designated a STEAP town and to authorize the First Selectman to sign any necessary documents, seconded by G. Cordova. Following discussion, all members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 12. Discussion and Possible Action on Small Cities Administrator RFP Award:** G. Cordova moved to award the Small Cities Administrator RFP for solicited consulting services to Larry Wagner and Associates on the recommendation of the Town Planner and to authorize the First Selectman to sign any necessary documents, seconded by S. Soby. Following discussion, all members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 13. Discussion and Possible Action on Parks & Recreation Job Description:** Following discussion, it was agreed that R. Coyle and S. Soby would work with the Parks & Recreation Director to further develop the part-time P&R position job description.
- 14. Discussion and Possible Action on Proclamation for April 16<sup>th</sup> as "National Start! Walking Day":** J. Malsbenden moved to authorize the First Selectman to sign the proclamation identifying April 16<sup>th</sup> as "National Start! Walking Day", seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

- 15. Discussion and Possible Action on Financial Aid for Parks and Recreation Programs:** G. Cordova moved to tie the financial aid award levels for Parks & Recreation programs to the CT Department of Social Services guidelines, seconded by J. Malsbenden. Following discussion, all members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 16. Discussion on CT WARN:** Mark Decker, Director of Public Works, explained his request to have a joint meeting with the Sewer & Water Commission and the Board of Selectmen so that CT WARN could be presented to both groups. First Selectman L. Hodge noted that she would arrange such a meeting.
- 17. Discussion on the Elderly Tax Relief Task Force Ordinance:** R. Coyle reported that the reason the town meeting was cancelled was because there were some additional edits that needed to be made to the ordinance amendment draft and that it would be taken back to the Elderly Tax Relief Task Force.
- 18. Citizen's Comments:** None
- 19. First Selectman's Report:** First Selectman L. Hodge reported the following:
- a. Received Greenways Small Grants Program -- \$5,000 for Sherman Brook
  - b. Received Senior Citizen Grants -- Additional funds are available and will be used to apply for Technology to develop a Resource Guide
  - c. Coffees, Saturday hours
  - d. Budget meetings
  - e. Town Budget including debt service & capital  
FY 2008-09 Proposed Budget: \$13,338,957  
FY 2007-08 Adopted Budget: \$13,636,350  
Amount Increase (Decrease): (297,393)  
Percent Increase (Decrease): -2.18%
- 20. Liaison Reports:** The selectmen reported on their respective boards and commissions.
- 21. Executive Session:** G. Cordova moved to enter into executive session regarding MEUI Local 506 employee grievance, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- The selectmen entered into executive session at 8:28 p.m. and came out of executive session at 8:37 p.m.
- S. Soby moved to accept the resignation of Mark Wozniak contingent upon his signing the "Separation Agreement and Release", seconded by G. Cordova. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- J. Malsbenden moved to return to executive session to discuss strategies for collective bargaining for MEUI, Local 506 Town Administrators, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
- The selectmen entered into executive session at 8:38 p.m. and came out of executive session at 8:44 p.m.
- 22. Adjourn:** J. Malsbenden moved to adjourn at 8:44 p.m., seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

**Attachments:**

1. Letter from David and Laurie Pudlo to First Selectman Linda Hodge regarding "Proposed Changes to Tax Code to Relieve Burden for Elderly"
2. Memo from State of Connecticut Department of Social Services Aging Services Division to Colchester Senior Center regarding approval of Request for Funds

Respectfully submitted,

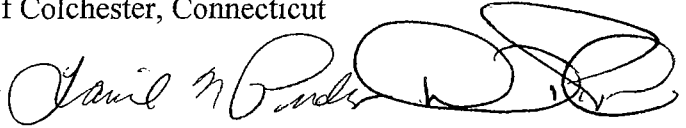
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Caplet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael J. Caplet  
Executive Assistant to the First Selectman

March 21, 2008

To: Linda Hodge, First Selectman, Town of Colchester, Connecticut

From: David and Laurie Pudlo, 92 Elm Street



Re: Proposed Changes to Tax Code to Relieve Burden for Elderly

I read with great interest the proposed changes to the tax code that would relieve burden for the elderly in town that was published in *The Regional Express*, March 20, 2008 edition.

Overall, the recommendations seem reasonable. We do, however, have some concerns and recommendations, that we would like to have considered.

We live next door to one of the elderly individuals who would likely be eligible for this tax relief.

The property is in shambles:

- The fence is broken and falling down
- The house is unpainted, and the window frames are rusty
- There is a shed in the back yard that is ready to fall down
- This year, he had plastic and cardboard on the windows of the house.

And yet -- he has a brand-new car in his driveway.

While his house is falling down around him, the value of my house – and the houses of my neighbors – is devalued. More importantly, “we” live in the center of town, and this makes the town look “trashy”.

It is possible that he may not be hooked up to the town water and sewer system. If this is correct, we would be very concerned about where his sewage is leaking, especially as there are designated wetlands at the back of the property.

If the town were to provide the proposed tax relief for this neighbor, by the time the property changes hands, the value of the property will be unredeemable, and the town will have a serious liability on its hands. The property would likely have to be auctioned off at a loss to the town, in addition to the loss of taxes.

How can this costly negative prospect be averted?

- (1) There needs to be a town ordinance regarding property condition, especially around the center of town. At a minimum, lawns should be manicured, and fences and houses in good repair and painted.
- (2) Whenever the town has a stake in a property, such as a lien on a property for elderly tax relief (with the understanding that the lien must be paid when the property changes hands), there should be annual inspections conducted on the property and the "owner" should be required to fix any/all problems.
- (3) There should be an established point where the town takes over the property and no more damage can be done. In other words, if someone lets their house deteriorate, at the "break-even" point where the liens on the home are equal to the value of the house, then the town takes the house for the liens, so that it can be sold to someone else (at no loss to the town) who can, and will, improve it.

My husband and I are proud to live in Colchester. The house that we are living in was built by his uncle. My neighbors are also second and third generation residents of Elm Street. As you drive down Elm Street, you cannot help but notice that most of the residents on the street take pride in their homes and make improvements on a continuing basis. It is a "pretty" road to live on. It is truly a shame that one house on a street can so negatively impact the value of the others in a neighborhood, and reflect poorly on the image the town is trying to portray.

Please share our concerns and recommendations with the Task Force and Board of Selectman. We urge you to ensure that the town does not "grow" additional liability in trying to provide tax relief for any of its at-risk citizens.



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES*  
*AGING SERVICES DIVISION*  
25 SIGOURNEY STREET – HARTFORD, CT 06106

**Memo**

**To:** Senior Center Directors  
**From:** Roxanne Aaron-Selph  
**Subject:** Connecticut Senior Centers 2008 Special Funding Initiative

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Greetings and Congratulations!

It is with great pleasure to inform you that your Request for Funds has been **Approved**.

We also want to announce that the amount of each award has been increased to **\$5,000.00** and the contract period has been extended. The contract period will **begin May 1, 2008 and end April 30, 2009**.

So that we can expedite your contract and payment in the most accurate and timely manner, please provide us with:

- 1) **a new budget as well as a new budget narrative and**
- 2) **the contact person (address and telephone number) who will be responsible for signing the contract.**

Please forward to Aging Services by April 7, 2008. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Jackson, Field Representative, by email at: [Cheryl.Jackson@ct.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Jackson@ct.gov) or (860) 424-5640.



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES*  
*AGING SERVICES DIVISION*  
25 SIGOURNEY STREET – HARTFORD, CT 06106

**Memo**

**To:** Municipal Agents  
**From:** Roxanne Aaron-Selph  
**Subject:** Connecticut Municipalities 2008 Special Funding Initiative

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Greetings and Congratulations!

It is with great pleasure to inform you that your Request for Funds has been **Approved**.

We also want to announce that the amount of each award has been increased to **\$3,450.00** and the contract period has been extended. The contract period will **begin May 1, 2008 and end April 30, 2009**.

So that we can expedite your contract and payment in the most accurate and timely manner, please provide us with:

- 1) **a new budget as well as a new budget narrative and**
- 2) **the contact person (address and telephone number) who will be responsible for signing the contract.**

Please forward to Cheryl Jackson by April 7, 2008. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Jackson, Field Representative, by email at: [Cheryl.Jackson@ct.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Jackson@ct.gov) or (860) 424-5640.