



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Stan Soby, First Selectman

**Board of Selectmen Minutes
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 18, 2014
Colchester Town Hall – 7:00 PM
Meeting Room 1**

MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectman Stan Soby, Selectman Denise Mizla, Selectman Rosemary Coyle, Selectman Bill Curran and Selectman Kurt Frantzen (via teleconference call)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Paggioli, Public Works Director; Don Phillips, Tax Collector; John Chaponis, Assessor; Dottie Mrowka, Registrar; Diana Giles, Registrar; Arthur Liverant, Gail Therian, Clerk and other citizens.

1. Call to Order

First Selectman S. Soby called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Additions to the Agenda – None

3. Approve Minutes of the September 4, 2014 Board of Selectmen Meeting

R. Coyle moved to approve the Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting minutes of September 4, 2014 as presented, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved MOTION CARRIED.

4. Citizen's Comments- None

5. Boards and Commissions – Interviews and/or Possible Appointments and Resignations

a. Fair Rent Commission – Christina Maher to be interviewed

Christina Maher was interviewed.

6. Budget Transfers - None

7. Tax Refunds & Rebates -

First Selectman Soby said that copies of the Tax Refunds and Rebates were not included in the Board member's packets. This item will be acted upon at the next meeting. No action was taken.

8. Tax Collector's Update

Don Philips, Tax Collector said that he has been researching on-line bill paying services and has narrowed it down to two (2) vendors that work with the present software used by the Tax office. He is presently in the process of contacting four (4) towns who each use one of the services for their input and recommendations. He hopes to have a decision to present to the Board of Selectmen by the end of the month. He is also exploring the possibility of taking debit card payments at the Tax office counter. Discussion followed regarding the compatibility of the systems with our current software and convenience fees.

B. Curran asked about the revenue amount collected to date in comparison to other years. D. Phillips explained that the collections in July and August are slightly ahead of previous years, but that this is no indication of the trend that will continue through the fiscal year. He also explained the delinquent tax collection process.

D. Phillips returned at the end of the meeting to answer a question asked by B. Curran. He had a report for collections through August for previous years prepared by Maggie Cosgrove, Chief Financial Officer which he reviewed.

9. Discussion and Possible Action on Exemption for Horses and Ponies

John Chaponis, Assessor, said that this year the Connecticut Legislature passed new legislation enabling a local option exemption for horses and ponies. He explained the current law that exempts the first \$1,000 in assessment of each horse and how this exemption affects the total tax bill. He also explained the work involved for the Assessor's office with

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little or no financial gain. He also provided sample language for an Exemption for Horses and Ponies Ordinance. Discussion followed. S. Soby will research other town's ordinances and will report to the Board members at the next meeting.

No action taken.

10. Discussion and Update on Youth Services Substance Abuse Counseling Services

S. Soby said that Rushford Center, Inc. has agreed to include the phrase "not to exceed \$11,200" to the contract as discussed at the last meeting.

R. Coyle moved to authorize the Youth & Social Services to enter into a contract with Rushford Center, Inc. for substance abuse counseling services and to authorize the First Selectman to sign all appropriate documents, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Senior Center Lease Agreement

S. Soby said that a couple of corrections had been made.

R. Coyle moved to enter into the Lease Agreement between Bacon Academy Board of Trustees and the Town of Colchester and to authorize the First Selectman to sign all appropriate documents, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

12. Discussion and Possible Action on Clean Energy Communities Pledge

S. Soby said that this is a pledge, not a contract and there is no doubt that the Town will fulfill the pledge on the conservation side with respect to clean energy. J. Paggioli said that the conservation portion of the project is all ready completed and that going forward with a RFP for fixed cost for electricity a lot of suppliers are mirroring this pledge. Discussion followed.

R. Coyle motioned for the Town to commit to the Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge and to authorize the First Selectman to sign all appropriate documents, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Emergency Management Performance Grant

R. Coyle moved to accept the Emergency Management Performance Grant and to authorize the First Selectman to sign all necessary documents, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

14. Citizen's Comments - None

15. First Selectman's Report

S. Soby said that the KX contract is moving forward. The language has been reviewed by four (4) Town attorneys who are all comfortable with the language. The payment structure has been reviewed by our Board of Finance. Colchester and East Hampton met with the delegation for assistance to replenish the KX's reserve. He said that the Town of Colchester has joined a number of Connecticut Towns to request the Bureau of Indian Affairs to hold a public hearing on changing the recognition criteria language in Connecticut. The Town has received a notice about a law suit involving a recent Planning and Zoning Commission decision for a commercial development. The Town is working with all parties to try to resolve this with the least possible impact to the Town.

S. Soby said that he had attended the Building Committee meeting and that the Committee is attending all the school open houses. He said that the architect had discussions about the ages of construction renovation work on the existing space, reuse concepts and new construction concepts. These concepts will be refined and rough figures will be given for comparison for cost effectiveness for each option. The 57 Fest Committee has met several times to deal with the loss of sponsorship. It was decided to charge for a wrist bracelet for the kiddies' area to help defray costs. The fireworks are all set. The Emergency Planning committee held a meeting and the focus was on school security. Security systems have been installed at both the schools and the Town facilities. They are also working on evacuation plan at Bacon Academy for special needs students. He said that the Bacon Academy Unified Art program was a recipient of the Department of Developmental Services South Region Community Connections Award on Thursday, September 18 2014 at Camp Harkness.

16. Liaison Reports

K. Frantzen – No report

D. Mizla reported on the Parks and Recreation meeting on September 8, 2014. They discussed the vandalism at the Spray Park and how to address this. They also discussed the 57 Fest. The activities start at 4:00 p.m.; the band performance will begin at 6:00 p.m. with the fireworks beginning at 8:00 p.m. She attended the Board of Education meeting held on September 9, 2014. The first day of school went well. There were 60 additional students that were either transfers from magnet schools or private schools, home schooled or new to Colchester. Two hundred and ninety three students took the AP exams despite the fact that parents are responsible for the fee now. She attended the September 13 2014 Board of Assessment Appeals hearings. Six appeals were heard for motor vehicle assessments.

R. Coyle reported on the Tri Board Committee "A" meeting held on Tuesday, September 16, 2014. She said this Committee will be looking to talk to people about the budget until March 1. They are looking to have articles published bi-weekly in the Rivereast. There are eight (8) subjects they will be addressing in a question and answer format: enrollment; self insurance; 24/7 police; maintenance budget – what does it mean; magnet school and tuition; revenue sources; staffing questions, and budget timeline. She attended the Colchester Hayward Fire Department Monthly Officers meeting. The items discussed were the part-time weekend coverage that ends in December, the testing of equipment, their work with the ISO to change classes from 4 to 3, training and repair work to the building.

B. Curran said that the Economic Development Commission was not held again because of a lack of quorum. He suggested that the Board consider reducing the number of members to five (5) members and two (2) alternates to alleviate the problem of not having a quorum. He said that the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2014. A discussion of the draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development was held. He said that if the projected demographics included in the Plan are found to be true, the demographics in Colchester will change dramatically. He said the Commission discussed the need for funds to purchase Open Space and the creation of a village center in the Westchester area. He encouraged the Board members to read the document.

17. Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations

D. Mizla moved to enter into executive session to discuss contract negotiations, seconded by R. Coyle
Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

Entered into executive session at 8:25 p.m.
Exited executive session at 8:30 p.m.

18. Executive Session to Discuss a Personnel Matter

R. Coyle moved to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

Entered into executive session at 8:31 p.m.
Exited executive session at 8:42 p.m.

19. Adjourn

K. Frantzen moved to adjourn at 8:42 p.m., seconded by B. Curran. Unanimously approved MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Therian, Clerk