



# Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

**Commission Chairmen Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 17, 2014**  
**Colchester Town Hall – 7:00PM**  
**Meeting Room 1**

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2014 APR 22 PM 2:15

HANCOCK A. DEAN  
TOWN CLERK  
*Hancock A. Dean*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** First Selectman Gregg Schuster, Selectman Mike Caplet, Selectman Denise Mizla, Selectman Rosemary Coyle, Selectman Stan Soby

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Ron Goldstein, Jim Paggioli, Dot Mrowka, Ryan Blessing, Cindy Praisner, Jim Ford, Sal Tassone, Donald Phillips, Maggie Wasicki, Dani Swenson, Tricia Dean and other citizens.

**1. Call to Order**

Selectman G. Schuster called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. Commission Updates – Commission Chairs**

Chris Borque reported that the **Agricultural Commission** participated in the C3 Field Day at Zagray Farm. Working with the Board of Education on the Free Lunch Program with Farm to School and utilizing Ledge Light to write a grant. Promoting the Food Hub, which is local food processing frozen food and then bought by the school systems in New London County. Gave Bacon Academy a raised Herb garden bed. Working on a tax abatement on farm buildings.

Ron Goldstein reported that the **Board of Education** created a GMO initiative for farm to school, which is comprised of student board members. They will be meeting the Agricultural Commission and State Reps in May. First round of SBAC testing has been completed although they are not using the results for evaluations this year. Grade 6 English teacher has been selected to advise the State Board of Education and Barbara Johnson at CES and WJMS was selected for the Advisory Panel Selection for Common Core.

Gary Sidell stated that the **Commission on Aging** has created a Resource Guide to give Seniors. The group is publicizing the good works for senior center; revising the Town Ordinance; looking at the physical requirements of the Senior Center; and they working on creating a liaison into the State Commission on Aging.

Jim Ford reported that the **Economic Development Commission** has a full membership. They conducted a community economic development survey for residential feedback. Also cleaning up their website.

Daniel Henderson reported that the **Ethics Commission** has five members with three as new members; they have met with the predecessors to work to get up to speed. They have set the meeting schedule and the next regular meeting will be in June, which they will create a road map to review the ethics code.

Kimberely Russo reported that the **Fair Rent Commission** worked with the town and IT to look at the website to clarify the role on the commission to the citizens of Colchester.

Rich Lemay reported that the **Sewer and Water Commission** is operating within budget and collections; conducting water sampling; evaluating three sites for new wells; reconditions of well 3A and coded has been complete. Upgrading of plant in East Hampton; and need more members for the commission.

**WRITTEN REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING (attached):**

Laurie Robinson regarding **Zoning Board of Appeals**  
Rob Tarlov regarding **Board of Finance**  
Falk von Plachecki regarding **Conservation Commission**

**NO REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING:**

Merja Lehetinen regarding the **Cable Advisory**  
Ellen Sharon regarding the **Historic District Commission**  
Janet LaBella regarding the **Housing Authority**  
Nick Norton regarding the **Open Space Advisory Committee**  
Sean O'Leary regarding the **Park & Rec Commission**  
Joe Mathieu regarding the **Planning & Zoning Commission**  
Brenden Healy regarding the **Police Retirement Board**  
Robert Parlee regarding the **Police Commission**

**3. Adjourn**

R. Coyle moved to adjourn the Commission Chair Meeting at 7:20 p.m., seconded by M. Caplet. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Dean  
Clerk

## Tricia Dean

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**From:** Rob Tarlov <ctparagon@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 17, 2014 5:10 AM  
**To:** Tricia Dean  
**Subject:** BOF Chairman Report

### BOF Chairman's Report

Over the past 4 budgets the Town has created, and funded, a new plan for reserves and capital accounts for the town's vehicles and equipment. Over the last quarter, with major work done by Jim Paggioli and Ken Jackson we have begun to do the same with the Town's buildings. Jim and Ken have created an inventory of our buildings and have identified the short and long term issues of maintenance, repair and replacement. Short term funding needs of repair and maintenance have been identified, with much work still to be done on funding plans for the longer term issues. Still to be worked on are plans for the replacement of major equipment, such as fire engines,

With budget workshops behind us, next Wednesday is the Town Meeting on the budget with a referendum on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The mil rate is up 2.94%, BOE budget up 2.83% and Town operating 3.09%. The capital and debt service budgets are flat as we continue to fund our capital needs per our plan.

State and Federal Aid remained flat despite rising costs, many of which are unfunded mandates coming from the same. This had a negative impact on our mil rate by adding about 24 cents. An increase in the Grand List helped lower the mil rate by about 18 cents. So these two net plus 6 cents, and when added to the Town's 83 cents from operation cost increases, is an 89 cent increase.

We have tried to balance the need for services of a very diverse population with the ability and desire of the same taxpayer to pay for maintaining those services.

The survey was very successful, with over 650 responses, almost 2x last year's number, which had been our best year. Many good comments on the budget and on how to improve the survey. Next year we will incorporate many of those as well as doing 2 surveys, one in the early fall when BOE begins their budget, and one in January, both earlier than this year's.

Work has begun with the BOF and Police Commission working on quantifying the funding needs of moving towards 24/7 coverage. BOF also working to understand the existing data on overnight activity so that we can weigh the needs and cost of this additional service to the Town..

Last night the BOF discussed how we would work with the Building Committee in assessing the costs and budgets for the School project, In discussion, it was felt that to come up with a dollar limit up front would not account for the needs or the true cost and would be an extraneous number. It was decided that the project should come out with cost estimates as early as possible so that the BOF can assess the impact on the mil rate and the actual dollar impact to the taxpayers. So rather than wait until the end of the project we would work with impact as the project evolved.

We are quickly reaching a point, ahead of plan, where we can begin funding the health benefit fund with a combination of contributions and reserves. This will lower the risk of coming up short on the higher claims years, as well help to remove the spikes up in funding needs in those high claims

years. Last year on the health funding, the Town and BOE were up about 15% plus additional cost to adjust an actuarial error from the year before. This year both funding levels are flat, partly because of good claims experience, and on the Town side because we have reached the reserve amount to cover the risk and smooth out the new funding and with the BOE being ahead of plan to do the same. The Boards will meet soon, along with our benefits consultant, to create a long term funding policy. We also need to continue the assessment of the negative impact of the Affordable Care Act on our plan's benefits and the increased costs as a variety of new taxes on plans phase in over the next couple of years.

Rob Tarlov



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## Tricia Dean

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**From:** Jay Gigliotti  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 17, 2014 9:55 AM  
**To:** Tricia Dean  
**Cc:** Gail Therian; Adam Turner  
**Subject:** FW: Colchester Conservation Commission Chairman's Report

The Chairman of The Conservation Commission shall be unable to attend tonight's Quarterly Chairman's. Please see the below Chairman's Report for the Conservation Commission.

The following items have been completed since the January 16, 2014 Commission Chairman Meeting.

The Colchester Conservation Commission has completed the CT DEEP Regulatory & Legislative updates to the Regulations. The process to update the regulations was accomplished over the course of 5 meetings and was approved at the February Meeting. The updated regulations have officially been adopted as of April 1st, 2014.

The Commission has also been able to resolve an enforcement action for pond construction that has been on-going for better than a year.

Additionally, the commission has acted on several applications for timber harvests and a couple small non-impact subdivision applications.

Staff for the Conservation Commission, Mr. Jay Gigliotti, continues to do an excellent job.

Sincerely,  
Falk von Plachecki  
Chairman, Colchester Conservation Commission

## Gregg Schuster

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**From:** H & L Robinson <robinson@snet.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 17, 2014 6:29 PM  
**To:** Gregg Schuster; Tricia Dean  
**Cc:** stan152@sbcglobal.net; pmreading@yahoo.com; robinson@snet.net  
**Subject:** ZBA Report for Commission Chairman Meeting

Hello Gregg and Tricia,

Please accept this summary of the Zoning Board of Appeal's actions for this evening's Commission Chairmen Meeting:

- The Zoning Board of Appeals has not held any public meetings in the past few months, due to lack of applications.
- The Board continues to have five members, but no alternates.
- I attended two of the long-term town planning meetings, representing the ZBA.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laurie R. Robinson  
Chairman, ZBA