

# Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Board of Selectmen Minutes  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, July 6, 2017  
Colchester Town Hall @ 7pm

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** First Selectman Art Shilosky, Selectman Stan Soby, Selectman Rosemary Coyle, and Selectman John Jones

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Selectman Denise Mizla

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Chairman Board of Finance R. Tarlov, PW Director J. Paggioli, Registrar L. Grzeika, Town Planner R. Benson, Tax Collector, M. Wyatt, Board of Education R. Besaw, Evan Evans, Charles Logan, Dan Henderson, J McNair, and Chairman Charter Revision G. Lepage.

**1. Call to Order**

A Shilosky called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**2. Additions to the Agenda – none**

**3. Citizen's Comments –**

J. McNair (attached letter) spoke in support of D Gesiak remaining on the Planning & Zoning Commission

S. Schuster (attached letter) spoke in support of D. Gesiak remaining on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

J. Kelly spoke about Cabin Road and the 3 way stop sign by Lakeview and also expressed feelings that there is a double standard among the treatment of elected officials.

Atty. Mark Balaban spoke in regards to the first amendment and felt the Board was not allowing D. Gesiak his civil right by removing him from the Board.

**4. Consent Agenda**

1. Approve Minutes of the June 15, 2017 Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting
2. Approve Dime Oil Heating Oil and Diesel Fuel Contract for 2017-2018
3. Approve Resident Trooper Contract for 2017-2019
4. Approve Senior Center Tai Ji Quan Contract 7/1/2017–6/30/2018
5. Approve Senior Center Yoga Instructor Contract 7/1/2017–6/30/2018
6. Approve Senior Center Zumba Gold Instructor Contract 7/1/2017-6/30/2018
7. Approve Senior Center Sittercize Instructor Contract 7/1/2017-6/30/2018
8. Approve Senior Center Exercise Instructor Contract 7/1/2017-6/30/2018
9. Commission on Aging – Resignation of Robert Gustafson
10. Tax Refunds and Rebates  
\$29.31 to Rossi Law Offices and \$200.45 to Vault Trust

S. Soby moved to approve the consent agenda minus item #1, seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

R. Coyle moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2017 regular Board of Selectmen Meeting, seconded by S. Soby with J. Jones abstaining. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

**5. Budget Transfer**

S. Soby moved to approve the transfer of \$14,250 from Snow-Other Purchases and \$993 from Snow-Sand, Salt, and Gravel to Snow-Professional Services, seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

**6. Boards and Commissions – Interviews and/or Possible Appointments and Resignations**

a. Parks and Recreation Commission

1. Matt Pulse possible appointment for a four year term to expire 11/1/2020 - NO ACTION

2. Steve Langello to be interviewed – was interviewed

3. Tracey Bruni to be interviewed – was interviewed (Showed up later in the meeting and was interviewed after item #12 Citizen's Comments.)

b. Police Commission – Christopher Cameron possible appointment for a three year term to expire on 11/1/2019

S. Soby moved to appoint Christopher Cameron as a member to the Police Commission for a three year term to expire on 11/1/2019, seconded by J. Jones. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

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GAYLE FURMAN  
TOWN CLERK

c. Open Space – Sandra DeRusa to be interviewed – was interviewed

**7. Public Hearing, Discussion and Possible Action Regarding an Appointed Official**

A. Shilosky turned the hearing over to S. Soby who has some experience with a Public Hearing of this nature. S. Soby addressed the reason for the Public Hearing. He then asked D. Gesiak if the post was legitimate, and his reply was "On the advice of counsel, I'm not at liberty to discuss this matter at this time. Thank you" Board members spoke to D. Gesiak. S. Soby made a motion to remove D. Gesiak from the Planning & Zoning Commission based on the charter and the authority of the BOS, seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

**8. Discussion and Possible Action on Charter Revision Final Draft Document**

G. Lepage was stated that 5 of the 6 questions have language that they like. At next meeting they will be working on the 6<sup>th</sup>. The 6 questions do not need to be done in the 45 day time frame. The Charter Revision Commission need the feedback from the BOS on the red line draft. R. Coyle showed a correction on what she had red thus far. BOS would like to have a public hearing at the next meeting. R. Coyle asked that the red line draft be published to the public, as well as the public hearing information.

**9. Discussion and Possible Action on Proposed Open Space Land Swap**

A resident purchased 36 Waterhole Road. The original as-built for the home, was incorrect. The property has since been resurveyed and the home encroaches onto current Open Space. Through several meetings the Planning & Zoning department has agreed to readjust the lines and add an additional 2825 sq. ft. of Open Space. R. Coyle moved to approve the proposed Open Space Land Swap, seconded by J. Jones. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

**10. Discussion and Possible Action of a Policy Regarding the Use of Remotely Controlled Aircraft (Drones) on Town Property**

Fire department was given a drone as a gift. A. Shilosky would like the Board to research, FAA Regulations, State Regulations, and request to CCM to see what other Towns might have for rules & regulations.

**11. Discussion and Possible Action on Sending Out the Motor Vehicle Tax Bills**

State of Connecticut had a cap of 32 mils for MV. Our mil rate was over that. If the MV bills went out and we needed to send supplemental bills out that it would be an additional \$6,000. A. Shilosky, CFO M. Cosgrove, and BOF R. Tarlov, delayed the sending out of MV bills until the State Budget is set and we know what our mill rate will be. A. Shilosky would like to make a plan incase this situation should ever arise again. S. Soby and R. Coyle expressed concerned that the Tax Payers may be unaware of the change. M. Wyatt has posted a letter around Town Hall, as well as in the newspaper, website, and Real Estate & Personal Property Bills that did go out.

**12. Citizen's Comments**

E. Evans spoke in disagreement of the removal of D. Gesiak from the Planning & Zoning Commission.  
J. Kelly spoke against the term change for First Selectman for 2 years to 4 years in the Charter Revision and against the appointment of Mr. Egan on Sewer & Water Commission.  
C. Logan stated that the Board should act on all facebook posts and not just the one.  
A. Shilosky went back to item 6A3 to interview Tracey Bruni.

**13. First Selectman's Report**

A. Shilosky reported the Fire Department received a drone as a gift. Town of Andover has a ladder truck that they have offered to the Town for \$1. The purchase can save the Town \$350,000. The contract for the fuel has been signed. The contract amount is \$.30 less than anticipated for the initial purchase. Electric bill was brought down from 5.999 to 5.984. The Mexican restaurant opening on 85 will be opening July 11<sup>th</sup>. There is a developer interested in opening a Dairy Queen. A. Shilosky will be meeting with him and the Town Planner to go over some properties that are available. Final approval for Dunkin Donuts on Rte 16/149 and construction will start in September. The police department was given a trailer that was cut from their budget.

**14. Liaison Reports**

S. Soby reported that the Planning & Zoning approved the land swap as previously talked about. Ag. Commission has an American Garden Association meeting in Hartford. Colchester Garden Club will be hosting a tour, and luncheon.

**15. Adjourn**

J. Jones moved to adjourn at 8:17 p.m., seconded by R. Coyle. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Attachment: J McNair letter  
S Schuster letter

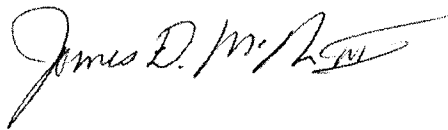
Respectfully submitted,

*Jean Campbell*, Clerk

July 6, 2017

The public hearing for Mr. Gesiak is an interesting choice of words. The First Selectman's letter of June 14<sup>th</sup> stated the Board of Selectman intends to remove; not is considering. As a result a public hearing seems like putting the cart before the horse. In addition, since the charter is very vague, the BOS can remove any appointed commission member for whatever it wants. So the outcome of this hearing seems pretty much a done deal without any real due process.

The Board sees Mr, Gesiak as aiding and abetting the evasion of rightful property tax to the Town. Yet, in my opinion, there is a deeper story resulting in his frustration. The whole process of the Board of Assessment Appeals is shrouded in mystery. The public record does not reflect why appeals were approved or denied. I'm not sure if those appealing are even told the reasons. After 2013, the Board of Assessment Appeals stopped recording how much in reductions were made in the minutes. Unlike the Boards of Finance and Selectman, to the best of my knowledge deliberations are not recorded. Given the lack of full transparency, the appealers and the public is left to wonder. Is the process consistently fair? Are those politically connected or deemed "team players" by the town given preferential treatment? If citizens have no faith in the BAA system, is it entirely unreasonable for a business owner to move assets out of town? In closing, I pray the Board realizes they are ready to embark on a very slippery slope. Many citizens will.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James D. McNeil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Colchester Board of Selectmen Meeting, July 6, 2017  
Steven A. Schuster's Comments

Good evening everyone. My name is Steven Schuster and I am a resident of Colchester.

First Selectman Shilosky, members of the Board of Selectmen and fellow Citizens of the Town of Colchester. It's nice to see such a pleasant group attending tonight's meeting to get involved in the running and have a say or opinion on your town. I guess quite a few people are here to listen and maybe partake on number 7 on the agenda. I am somewhat disappointed that this Public Hearing wasn't delayed until Mr.G's complaint wasn't litigated in court as I feel that for some reason He is being admonished for some other reason that the Board of Selectmen hasn't fully disclosed. As for that matter, I haven't even seen where this topic was ever brought up, discussed, voted on or warned as an agenda item on the town meetings web site. That all being said, our BOS wants to remove Mr.G from our P&Z Commission for comments he made on Facebook that have some valid questions regarding property assessments and appeals, many I feel are valid and should be looked into. This action seems frivolous to me compared to a sitting member of a board that once was arrested for striking a child during a football game and demonstrated uncontrollable anger and harassed a citizen during last years budget season.

We elect citizens to represent us on the various boards we have. Sometimes their good and sometimes not so much. We expect them to appoint citizens to represent us on the various commissions we have in town. Sometimes their good and sometimes not so much. However, their main duty as either elected or appointed officials is to protect all of the Citizens of Colchester and provide the services to the town at a reasonable & responsible cost to the taxpayers. Don't you think it's about time some of them take that trust that have been put in them and do just that? I do.

Thank you and have a good evening.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S.A. Schuster', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven A. Schuster

*For the Minute*