

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
BOARD OF FINANCE – REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL
127 NORWICH AVENUE
Monday, March 5, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rob Tarlov, Rob Esteve, Art Shiloksy, Thomas Kane, and James McNair

MEMBERS ABESENT: John Ringo.

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman Gregg Schuster, Selectman Mike Caplet, Selectman Denise Mizla and Selectman Rosemary Coyle; Gregg Cordova, Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove; Public Works Director James Paggioli; Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein, Board of Education Vice Chairman Donald Kennedy; Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Mathieu; Barbara Gilbert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Rob Parlee, Mary Tomasi, Mike Voiland, Brad Bernier, Dot Mrowka, Diana Giles, John Jones, Justin LaFountain and other citizens.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tarlov called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Finance to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chairman Tarlov asked the Board for a motion to move Item 12D – “Discussion of 2014 Budget” to Item 6A on the agenda.

So moved by J. McNair, seconded by R. Esteve. All members voted in favor MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting February 19, 2014

Motion by R. Esteve, seconded by J. McNair to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 19, 2014. All members voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Special Meeting February 25, 2014

Motion by R. Esteve, seconded by J. McNair to approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 25, 2014. Abstentions: A. Shiloksy All others voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

4. CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

5. 2014/2015 BUDGET PRESENTATION

a. Board of Education

R. Goldstein, D. Kennedy, J. Mathieu and B. Gilbert presented the Board of Education 2014-2015 Proposed Budget. The presentation was divided into four segments with Chairman Goldstein speaking about comparisons of Colchester to other towns; J. Mathieu, Superintendent of Schools speaking about the major proposed budget increases; B. Gilbert Director of Teaching and Learning talking about class sizes; and Vice Chairman D. Kennedy speaking about why the budget is increasing. Discussion followed about class sizes, the number of students enrolled and the cost per student ratios.

b. First Selectman

G. Schuster, First Selectman, presented the Town of Colchester 2014-2015 Proposed Budget. He thanked the Town staff members for their work on this budget. He said that his particular area of focus for the proposed budget would be on public safety. His presentation covered three areas: a comparative look at like size towns and surround towns; the proposed budget adjustments; and the fiscal impact of the proposed

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budget. Discussion followed regarding the number of accidents in Town and the TAR funds from the State for road repairs.

6. CITIZENS COMMENTS -

J. Kelly, citizen, thanked the Board of Education for explaining the DRG number. He asked what amount of the Debt Service is the Board of Education portion. G Schuster said he would get this information for him. Mr. Kelly also said the Selectman did a good job over the last budgets to keep the Town side at about \$13million. He said he hoped that any budget cuts required by the Board of Finance would be made proportionately between the Town side and the Board of Education side.

6A. Discussion of 2014 Budget

Chairman Tarlov said that the Board of Finance would hold a Budget Meeting on Thursday, March 06, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall to discuss the Board of Education's proposed budget and the Maintenance, Repair and Replacement Plan for school facilities. He said that a Public Forum will be held on Monday, March 10th so citizens can ask questions and make comments on the budgets. This will be followed by a Board of Finance meeting to discuss the Town side of the budget. Budget Forums are also scheduled for Tuesday, March 11th, Wednesday March 12th and possibly Thursday, March 13th.

J. McNair said that approximately 270 responses to the survey have been received. He compared this survey with last year's survey and said that the comment section on this year's is proving to be insightful. He reviewed some of the preliminary results. Discussion was held regarding how long the survey should be kept on the website and it was decided to keep it on until Wednesday, March 12, 2014. At that time the First Selectman's office will collect all hard copies of the survey.

J. McNair also said that the term "maintaining services" is recurring in the comment section of the surveys. He suggested that the Board educate the public about the fact that in order to maintain services at the present levels there may need to be an increase in budget due to rising costs.

7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- a. Finance Department – No Report
- b. Treasurer – No Report
- c. Tax Collector – No Report

8. FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

- a. Transfer Requests - None
- b. First Selectman's Update

G. Schuster said that the CEO's of the towns involved with MIRMA met and voted unanimously on a portfolio transfer. This will impact the Worker's Comp line item in the proposed budget for just under \$7600.00. This will end the relationship of Town of Colchester with MIRMA.

Chairman Tarlov asked the Board of Education members for clarity on the Capital budget transfer. M. Cosgrove said that the transfer will be on the agenda for the Tuesday, March 11, 2014 Board of Education meeting. Then be brought to the Board of Finance.

9. CORRESPONDENCE – None

10. LIAISONS: REPORTS

Rob Esteve said that the Board of Education Budget Committee met the morning of Wednesday, March 5, 2014 and they discussed the challenges of the next year's budget.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. UTMC Contract

G. Schuster explained that this contract is with Unemployment Tax Management Corporation (UTMC) and this company provides services to the Town and Board of Education related to unemployment compensation claims. The new Service Agreement reflects a \$120 increase to both the Town and Board of Education for a total annual fee of \$1,000 each.

M. Cosgrove, CFO, explained to the Board that the proposed annual fee reflects a \$30 per quarter increase effective April 1, 2014. This contract will be in effect from April 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014. The contract period will be revised beginning July 1, 2014 to reflect the Town's fiscal year. Discussion followed regarding the Board's need to review these types of renewal of contracts in the future.

12. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Staffing Presentation – follow up

G. Schuster, First Selectman, told the Commission that the Town Hall Staffing presentation was given at the February 20, 2014 Board of Selectmen meeting. He said the Board directed him to investigate all options. The next step in this process is to meet with Department Heads to discuss this and get information regarding the different levels of qualifications and certifications needed by staff in each department. He said Nancy Bray, Town Clerk, will be helping with the research by contacting other towns about the staffing of their departments.

b. BOS Operations Committees – follow up

G. Schuster, First Selectman, told the Commission that the Board of Selectmen discussed this item at their February 20, 2014 meeting. He said that a motion was made to establish a bipartisan committee of the First Selectman and a member of the Board of Selectmen and two (2) members of the Board of Finance to enter into negotiations with the Bacon Academy Board of Trustees for the possible purchase of the Senior Center Building and associated property and make a recommendation to both Boards regarding said purchase prior to the end of the current fiscal year,

Chairman Tarlov asked for two volunteers to be on this committee. Art Shilosky volunteered and T. Kane said he would be willing but it depends on his availability. J. McNair said he would be an alternate.

c. Building Project – update

R. Tarlov said that they will meet the second (2nd) and fourth (4th) Thursday of the month. A. Shilosky agreed to be the liaison to the Building Committee as he was in the past.

R. Goldstein said that the Building Committee has received the Scope of work. G. Schuster said that the Committee is in the process of discussing the hiring of an architect.

13. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Selectman R. Coyle said as a retired teacher, that consideration of class size is extremely important.

M. Tomasi, Board of Education member, also a retired teacher concurred.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by J. McNair, seconded by A. Shilosky to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Gail N. Therian
Clerk