



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

AMENDED

Board of Finance Minutes
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2016
Colchester Town Hall @ 7PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rob Tarlov, Rob Esteve, Thomas Kane and Andreas Bisbikos

MEMBERS ABSENT: James McNair

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman A Shilosky, Public Works Director J Paggioli, CFO Maggie Cosgrove, Registrar Giles, BOS J Jones, BOE B Bernier, FD Chief Cox, D Lee, J Walsh, Tax Collector M Wyatt, A Migliaccio, Clerk T. Dean, and other citizens.

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2016 JAN 23 AM 9:11
TOWN CLERK

1. **Call to Order**
Chairman R Tarlov called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. **Additions to the Agenda - none**
3. **Approve Minutes: January 6- Regular Meeting**
R Esteve moved to approve the Regular Board of Finance meeting minutes of January 20, 2016, seconded by T Kane. One abstention by T Kane. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED
4. **Citizen's Comments – none**
5. **Correspondence – none**
6. **Vacant Board Position – discussion and possible action to appoint**
Board voted 2 to 1, with one abstention, in favor of appointing Andrea Migliaccio to the Board of Finance.
7. **Fire Department**
 - a. **Ambulance Services – cost of operation**
 - b. **Review of the Ambulance Incentive Program**
 - c. **Strategic Plan - progress**
Chief Cox stated that 2015 was the highest call volume that we have had. Chief Cox went through a presentation of services for Fire and EMS with related costs (attached). R Esteve asked for clarification on re-tone calls. Chief Cox stated that due to losing members that were on the schedule, some calls needed to re-tone for paid staff. R Tarlov asked about Fire Rescue. Chief Cox explained that this is due to motor vehicle accidents which would send out heavy rescue truck, engine, and an ambulance. Ambulance portion gets paid on transport only. R Tarlov asked for clarification on 'not working fire'. Chief Cox stated that a 'not working fire' is anything that is not a structure fire such as a cooking fire, brush fire, etc. R Tarlov asked if the town were to go to a private ambulance service if it would go to a working fire and also if training would be reduced. Chief Cox stated that it would be dependent on the type of contract, private vs contracted, and that training would not be reduced due to still needing an EMS on the engine. Discussion ensued on pros and cons of current structure of fire dept. vs contracting out ambulance service. Chief Cox also noted that the strategic plan they are working on looks at the current structure and looking at similar towns with the same structure for benchmarking. T Kane agrees can't get rid of first responders but do we still need ambulance until something else gets there on a call? Chief Cox answered yes. Deputy Chief D Lee asked the Board to look at revenue generated vs cost, and see what the net cost is to town. He feels it's a good deal. He expressed that it doesn't seem to satisfy the Board. Stated that tax payers pay taxes for a certain level of service and he's not sure what the intent of the Board is but the damage that could be caused is irreversible. R Tarlov stated that the Board is making sure the tax payers are getting value, and it's the Board's duty to the taxpayers to ensure tax dollars are well spent. The research is establishing that and part of the dialogue makes it transparent.
8. **Department Reports**
 - a. **Finance Department**
 - i. **Monthly Reports** CFO M Cosgrove went over December reports for the Revenue side; explained the drop in tax collection line is simply a timing difference. The pilot related to state hit the books. ECS adjustment was a small hit.

Ahead on Fire Dept., Building Permits, and Road Inspection Fees. On the Expense side; Depends on snow accumulation over the next months, so far it's fine since no snow. FEMA reimbursement finally approved for snow for last FY.

ii. Quarterly Health Insurance Report

Health Insurance still running in good shape. Few Claims due to stop/loss, it runs on FY vs calendar year. Board of Ed increased \$80,000 and Town increased \$171,000 due to the tail end of claims for last year hitting this year.

b. Tax Collector

2,700 supplemental bills went out 12/21 with 6 weeks to pay. Second installment due on 2/1. Working on enforcement issues with collection agency. First week in Feb delinquent statements for real-estate going out, with the demand going out March, then April the intent to lien will go out.

9. First Selectman

a. Report

Melissa Ziobron, State Rep., is working on a bill to change the Tax Exemption Ordinance for town leased property and equipment. Friends of Football, a fundraiser for Bacon Academy, working with a grant company to try and get a 1 million dollar grant to turf the football field at BA. Meeting with a developer who wants to put up housing in Colchester. Police Union Contract for last year is at counsel. Construction Manager contract for the WJJMS project is at counsel for review.

b. Transfer Requests - none

10. Liaison Reports

A Bisbikos reported on Sewer & Water Commission – Putting together the 2016-2017 budget at the next meeting.

R Esteve reported on Board of Education – Extensive discussion on Norwich Tuition program and potential revenue received. 2016-2017 budget presentation discussed, increase enrollment for Special Education vs last year which will increase the Special Education cost and affect the budget.

R Tarlov reported on Board of Education – BOE and Norwich approved the contract and the applications will open up to 15 students. The income per student will be approximately \$14,000.

Building Committee – Working on filing the report for renovation to new or repair. May get reimbursement on gym portion.

COA – elected new Chair J Stawicki. Working on Resource Guide. Senior Center strategy committee to provide a report to the town on research conducted.

11. New Business

a. Senior Center Task Force Recommendation – Discussion and possible action – A Shilosky stated they are waiting for a sales agreement.

b. Report of Budget Season Communications Subcommittee – committee wants to standardize peer towns when using comparisons. Will be based on per capita, grand list, population, and commercial grand list. Towns for comparison are Suffield, N Branford, Cromwell, Wolcott, Ledyard, Seymour, and East Hampton. When they compared mill rate to the BOE DRG towns Colchester was at the bottom for mill rate. Looked at four service areas; education, public safety, infrastructure and support. BOF will send out weekly e-blasts on Thursdays during the budget process. Will utilize Twitter and FB pages, once approved by the BOS. Letter to Editor going out each week. Also will conduct road shows to communicate the budget.

c. Updated Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Plan – review and discussion

i. Add funding plan for facility maintenance and repair timeline

ii. Heavy fire equipment

J Paggioli went over the list of identified items. Weening off of big ticket items by using leases to spread out payments

d. Board of Finance Web Page – Content – discussion and possible action

Mission statement to be put on current Board of Finance page on the web, with potential additional links.

e. Snow Removal Reserve Plan – discussion

Put a plan in place before there is a surplus or spent. CFO M Cosgrove stated it's required to do budget transfer to snow budget, and then to reserve fund. Need to follow Charter rules. Next step is to create a small policy with intent.

f. Budget Charts – review and discussion – defer to next meeting

12. Old Business

a. Review of Police Department Presentation – R Esteve stated it was one of the best presentations since previous years, it was understandable and compelling. The dept. is fully staffed and retention is much better, could be good time to entertain 24/7, however it comes down to affordability. A Bisbikos referred to a report created by Rob Tarlov explaining pay and services in other towns. Question is whether 24/7 is feasible. R Tarlov posed the question that last time PD presented 3rd shift they asked for 4 to 5 officers, this time it was 2, will that be enough.

- b. **Review format of Program Fund Reports** – A Shilosky and R Tarlov still working on this.
- c. **Recreation Field Subcommittee – update** – committee hasn't met yet.
- d. **Offseason Budget Communications Subcommittees – update** – T Kane stated the group published all the articles except one in regards to maintenance budget, still working on recommendation to change from CFO. BOE letter should be coming soon from J Mathieu for publication.
- e. **2015-2016 BOF Goals and Objective – review and update** – Completed Building Repair, Maintenance, and Replacement goal. Discussed ambulance review. Next month will focus on graph budget discussion, survey results, Board of Finance web page. Program fund will start working on next quarter.

13 Citizens Comments - none

14. Adjournment

A Bisbikos moved to adjourn at 9:16 p.m., seconded by R Esteve. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

ATTACHMENT: Town of Colchester Fire & EMS presentation

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk