



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Board of Finance Minutes
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 4, 2016
Colchester Town Hall @ 7PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rob Tarlov, James McNair, Rob Esteve, Andreas Bisbikos, and Andrea Migliaccio

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas Kane

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman Art Shilosky, CFO M Cosgrove, Registrar D Mrowka, Clerk T. Dean and civic class students

1. Call to Order

Chairman R Tarlov called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Additions to the Agenda - none

3. Approval of Minutes: April 20 – Regular Meeting

R Esteve moved to approve the Regular Board of Finance meeting minutes of April 20, 2016, seconded by A Bisbikos. Unanimously approved with one abstention by J McNair. MOTION CARRIED

4. Citizen's Comments - none

5. Correspondence

Three pieces of correspondence received via email were discussed, one was forwarded to other departments to discuss as it was not in the BOF purview.

6. Department Reports

- a. Finance – none
- b. Tax Collector – none

7. First Selectman

- a. Transfer Requests – none
- b. First Selectman's Report

Preliminary discussions with developers regarding 55+ homes and grocery store. Jack Chevy location still in remediation.

8. Liaison Reports

A Migliaccio reported on Commission on Aging – 14 passenger bus on order, delivery in the fall. YTD totals for transportation fees given.

R Esteve reported on Board of Education Budget meeting – BOE YTD budget 97.7% expended. Health insurance high in April, but overall balance looks good at 2.2 million.

9. Budget Discussion – Town Meeting moved budget to referendum for 5/10. After discussion, it was decided that the Board will have a special meeting scheduled for referendum night.

10. New Business - none

11. Old Business

a. Discussion on Citizens Comments Protocol for Colchester Boards

R Esteve discussed his proposed draft. R Tarlov addressed the position of citizens commenting in the room and suggested that comments be made at their seat while addressing the Board. R Tarlov reviewed current bylaws of the Board of Education regarding citizens comments as a reference. Discussion on decorum during citizen's comments, followed by how to communicate the policy once implemented. R Esteve will add to the draft that the speaker must state their name and town of residency. A revised draft will be brought to the next meeting. Ultimately will be Board of Selectman responsibility to create the policy. Draft attached. TABLED UNTIL NEXT MEETING.

RECEIVED
TOWN OF COLCHESTER, CT
2016 MAY -6 AM 9:35

b. Recreation Field Subcommittee

J McNair stated the objective of the subcommittee is to have an approved draft of recommendation to go to the Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, and the Parks & Recreation Commission. A Bisbikos stated the group will create the draft and review it at the next meeting.

c. Senior Center Study Committee

A Shilosky stated that he conducted a presentation last Monday at the Senior Center. The group will also do presentations at civic groups and other over 55+ communities. All documentation is ready to go, the next steps will be for Board's approval, Town Meeting, then to Referendum. Discussed next steps if referendum for the Senior Center passes.

12. Citizens Comments

D Mrowka noted she was speaking as a registrar of voter – asked for a two week lead time from Town Meeting to Referendum in the future.

13. Adjournment

J McNair moved to adjourn at 7:40pm, seconded by A Bisbikos. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Attachment: Correspondence (3)

Citizens Comments Protocol Draft

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk

From: Paul & Jen <pjmattos@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2016 3:19 PM
To: Robert Tarlov
Subject: Caring Community Taxation

Hello Rob,

Hope this email finds you well. I just read an article posted on the Facebook group "Connecting Colchester" that says the Caring Community is no longer tax exempt and therefore would be subject to real estate taxes. The article also indicates that there are several of these homes in Colchester for the developmentally disabled. Are tax revenues for these home included in the budget? If they are not, is there a way for the community to come together and request that they be excluded? If we have managed to get by without these real estate taxes in the past, is there a way to ensure that we don't tax such a fragile group in the future?

Sorry for coming out of left field with this, just figured you would be the one to know.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jen Mattos

From: Robert Tarlov
Sent: Wednesday, May 4, 2016 4:20 AM
To: Paul & Jen
Cc: Art Shilosky
Subject: Re: Caring Community Taxation

Hi Jen,

I learned of this from the same post as you.

A quick check with Art after I saw the article shows there is a lot more than the article reported.

As Art and I had a limited amount of time to discuss, there were a lot of details I was unable to learn. As the Assessor's activities are under the BOS, Art would be the best source of up to date information about this.

Rob

Rob Tarlov, Chairman, Board of Finance
860-608-429

From: Carl Swanback <cswanback@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2016 12:07 PM
To: Robert Tarlov
Subject: RE: Voter Feedback, Graphs

The graph is relevant when comparing towns. As you are well aware one could make the same argument above every single comparison to other towns that the BOF uses to push the budget. Since you are aware of this, failing to present all sides of the equation to the public is in fact taking a position and moving to block others from sharing that info boarders on the line of corruption based on the definition put forth by Yankee Institute.

Ask yourself this question, do your comparisons against other towns seek to create common ground for comparison by eliminating or equalizing factors that greatly impact a schools expenses: total number of sports offered, total number of students playing those sport, classes offered, average class size, square footage of town, square footage of building and per student allocation of square footage, average teacher salary, average teaching expense, number administration cost per student, per building, average tenure of teaching staff, total mileage covered in transporting children to the schools.... Yes, as you very well know getting to a real answer would require all of this be taken into account and yet the BOF limits its data only to that which supports its agenda.

On another note: What are the legal required time lines from when you send the budget to a vote, the public notice and the actual vote?

From: Robert Tarlov
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2016 6:13 PM
To: Carl Swanback
Subject: Re: Voter Feedback, Graphs

Which of the BOF produced schools' graphs are you referring to?

I would check with the Town Clerk on your timing questions. I present the proposed dates to her to determine if they meet the requirements.

Rob Tarlov, Chairman, Board of Finance
860-608-4293

P.S. You mentioned Tom Kane in your previous e-mails, what did he do, or any other BOF member do, to get citizens in favor of increasing the budget to the public forum?

From: Carl Swanback <cswanback@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2016 8:25 AM
To: Robert Tarlov; Currey, Melody
Subject: Ken Jackson

Rob,

I am writing as a very concerned citizen. It was brought to my attention that we doing away with Ken Jackson position. As we move forward in building a school we do not need this is the worst time to get rid of a person who is very knowledgeable in school construction. He is also the only person who has spoken up about the lack of funding for school maintenance. As you know, since 2006 our per pupil to administration has increased some 28%. If we re cutting, this is the place to cut. Without Mr. Jackson school maintenance oversight will result in more money being diverted away from taking care of our school; maybe that is the plan? Either way, not having a person to oversee school maintenance is a gross neglect of maintaining the tax payers capital asset and raises some serious questions about intent and allegiance.

I am asking you to restore the position immediately! I am asking the state to make it conditional in receiving a school construction loan!

Sincerely,

Carl E. Swanback

From: Robert Tarlov
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2016 9:04 AM
To: Carl Swanback; Currey, Melody
Cc: Ronald Goldstein; Art Shilosky
Subject: Re: Ken Jackson

Carl,

Ken Jackson's position is not being eliminated.

The position being eliminated by BOE is a different position which has been a jointly funded position, (50% BOE, and 50% Town). In the proposed budgets, the BOE is eliminating the funding for their portion of that position, and the Town is maintaining their portion to fund a Town only, part time position.

No changes are being made in the position held by Ken Jackson.

Rob Tarlov, Chairman, Board of Finance

Revised 5/3/16 Draft language to use as Citizen Comments Protocol for Colchester Boards for comments / discussion:

While meetings are open to the public they are not public hearings. Should the agenda contain Citizens Comments, the public shall have the right to address the Board provided proper protocol and meeting decorum are followed.

Individuals may speak only after being recognized by the board's chair and for no more than three minutes. The board's chair has discretion to change the speaking time allotment which shall be announced at the beginning of citizen's comments.

Only one person may speak at a time from his/her seat in the room and only to the Board members. Engaging in dialog with board members or other citizens present is not permissible.

Speakers must identify themselves by name and town of residence for the meeting minutes.

An individual is generally limited to speaking one time. An individual may ask to speak again once all others wishing to speak have had an opportunity. Permission to speak more than once will be allowed at the discretion of the board's chair.

Failure to follow protocol or meeting decorum will result in a warning followed by a request to leave the meeting if the warning is not heeded.

Additional comments from 5/3:

Citizens should speak from where they are seated.