



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

**Board of Finance Minutes
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 15, 2017
Colchester Town Hall @ 7pm**

RECEIVED
TOWN OF COLCHESTER
2017 FEB 16 PM 1:07

MEMBERS PRESENT: Thomas Kane, Andreas Bisbikos, Andrea Migliaccio, Stefani Lowe and Chairman Rob Tarlov via teleconference

MEMBERS ABSENT: Roberta Lepore

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman A Shilosky, BOE B Bernier, BOS D Mizla, CFO M Cosgrove, TC M Wyatt, Registrar D Mrowka, T Peters, M Hayes and Clerk T. Dean

1. Call to Order

T Kane called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

2. Additions to the Agenda

T Kane asked to add agenda item #10.c. Liaison Assignments.

A Bisbikos moved to add agenda item #10.c, seconded by A Migliaccio. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes: February 1 – Special Meeting

A Migliaccio moved to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2017 Special Meeting, seconded by S Lowe. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

4. 2015-2016 Audit – Review and Discussion

Scott Bassett from RSI stated that his firm is engaged to conduct audits for the town with two main deliverables; Opinion on financial statement, and opinion on Federal and State programs. He then took the Board through the audit books and briefly reviewed and answered any questions.

5. Citizens Comments - none

6. Correspondence – Carl Swanback (attached)

7. First Selectman

- a. Transfer Requests - none
- b. First Selectman Report - none

8. Department Reports

a. Finance Department

M Cosgrove stated she is busy with the budget and the debt issuance for the school project. Tax collection rate is tracking on pace with last year at 98.81%. Behind in the delinquent rate, but should be in the ballpark of the budgeted amount. Municipal revenue sharing amount has been received into the account. Second half just came in. ECS grand has been reduced. Ambulance fees are on target. Ahead on the building permits. On the expenditure side the Board should have received the memo on the Police Dept. overtime. Currently projected over on expenditures for this.

b. Tax Collector

M Wyatt stated the town made an offer for the vacant Assistant Tax Collector position, who started on February 7th. Updated the Board on the monthly stats. A Migliaccio asked if the current delinquent rate is viewed as high. M Wyatt answered that it trends about the same as last year.

9. Liaisons

a. Reports

A Migliaccio reported on the Board of Education – at the last meeting they stayed off budget topic. There will

be a special meeting next Wed. on fine tuning the numbers.

R Tarlov reported on Board of Selectmen – discussed the Old Bacon Academy tax refund and approved. Also had a brief discussion on the Charter Revision Commission questions regarding the department descriptions.

10. New Business

a. Discussion and Possible Action – Old Bacon Academy Taxes

T Kane stated the current lease requires the town to reimburse taxes that they paid. A Shilosky stated that it's the reimbursement of property taxes for a portion of Old Bacon Academy leased to the Town for the Old Bacon Academy location that is in accordance with Article 8 of the lease agreement between Bacon Academy Board of Trustees and the Town.

A Migliaccio moved to transfer \$2,234 from Contingency to Property Tax First Selectman's account, seconded by A Bisbikos. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

b. 2017 Budget Discussion

i. Revaluation – R Tarlov stated he spoke with the Assessor. The Grand List is down 1.1%. The average for residential homes are down 5.5%. R Tarlov explained the potential impact on how this affects homeowners.

ii. State Budget Proposals Impacting Town – State Rep. Melissa Ziobron will be at the March 1st meeting to give an idea of where the process will be for more concrete decisions. Discussion between Board members and CFO regarding the budget process and what the plan should be with not knowing the state funding numbers. CFO suggested that the Town move forward on the budget in expenditure side but not on revenue side. Stated she does not think rushing to an early May referendum makes sense, since it all depends on how the state process moves. Board decided to move forward with 2/28, 3/1, 3/2, and 3/6 meetings.

c. Discussion and Possible Action – Liaison Assignments

Board members discussed which commission meetings they would be liaisons to.

11. Old Business - none

12. Citizens Comments

D Mizla asked on mandates to the town and education, as well as what the funding rate is for the resident trooper.

13. Adjournment

A Migliaccio moved to adjourn at 7:57pm seconded by S Lowe. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk

Attachments:
Correspondence (1)

From: Carl E. Swanback <cswanback@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2017 8:44 AM
To: Robert Tarlov
Cc: Tricia Dean; Robert Tarlov
Subject: Re: Please read into the minute for Feb 1, 2017

That is a shame. I was planning on attending. I did post it to Facebook so the community is aware of it. Fyi, the idea about using it to fully fund band, sports and clubs to end the barbaric act of holding those kids and parents hostage is gaining favor.

From: Robert Tarlov
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2017 4:36 AM
To: Carl E. Swanback
Cc: Tricia Dean
Subject: Re: Please read into the minute for Feb 1, 2017

Carl,

The discussion on this item was recorded and began at 7:05.

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

From: Robert Tarlov
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2017 4:21 AM
To: Carl E. Swanback
Cc: Tricia Dean
Subject: Re: Please read into the minute for Feb 1, 2017

Carl, as this was sent to me at 6:19pm the night of the meeting, I did not open until this morning. As I work during the day, I generally do not have time to access my Town e-mail the day of the meeting.

It will be sent to other Board members with their agenda packages and become part of the minutes of the February 15 meeting.

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

From: Carl E. Swanback <cswanback@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2017 6:19 PM
To: Robert Tarlov
Subject: Please read into the minute for Feb 1, 2017

Memo for the records...please read into the minutes

Many residents in town live paycheck to paycheck. Take the following scenario as an example: For the first time in a long time you have enough to make your mortgage payment 2 weeks early. As you sit down to write the check the phone rings and it is your daughter and she needs to borrow \$500 to register for her marketing class and promises to pay you back before the mortgage is due. You say yes and week later she pays you back the money as planned. Do you A) pay the mortgage shorting them \$500 and spend it on something else; or b) do you replenish the mortgage payment in full?

How about this one: Your boss shorts your pay check by \$50 telling you he doesn't have the money because the Norwich account hasn't made their payment. After they make the payment your boss tells you he still can't pay you the money because he spent it on the weight equipment for the company gym.

Are you ok with this?

Would Mr. Mathieu be ok with us doing this with the raise he just received?

Simple math tells us that if the tax payer pays to educate a student from another town at a rate of \$14,716 and the money is not used to replenish the cost then the Superintendent has effectively circumvented the budget vote and can no longer claim he is bringing these students in without cost to the tax payer. If that is the case then we need to reevaluate the cost of bringing in these students to the town and any cost should be made up from the salary of the Superintendent; you just cannot claim no cost when there is a cost. Our students are required to show us their work on how they got to their answer and I think we need to do the same with every part of the budget starting with this one.

I have been looking to close this slush fund since I discovered it 2 years ago and bringing to the chairs attention. That was the same year our Director of Pupil services was telling parent there wasn't enough money to give them the service they wanted or needed. Problem is the sending town did reimburse the town for that Spec Ed student. But instead of refunding the cost, Mr. Mathieu along with the BOE voted to use the money to buy new counter tops for the Consumer Science Center and weight equipment for the gym. Not replenishing the line item in this case clearly not only took money off the table for the towns children but actually did harm. This should not even be a discussion. What I would suggest is one option and only one option to full reimbursement:

I would vote to allowing a portion of this money to fully fund sports, band and clubs in the budget, where by removing the shameful practice of bullying parents into budget submission!

Respectfully,

Carl E. Swanback