

# Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

**Town Budget Workshop followed by  
Regular Meeting of Board of Finance  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 1, 2017  
Colchester Town Hall @ 7pm**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Rob Tarlov, Thomas Kane, Andreas Bisbikos, Andrea Migliaccio, Roberta Lepore and Stefani Lowe

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** none

**OTHERS PRESENT:** First Selectman A Shilosky, BOS D Mizla, CFO M Cosgrove, BOE R Goldstein, R Besaw and M Voiland, Superintendent J Mathieu, PW Director J Paggioli TC M Wyatt, Registrar D Mrowka, T Peters, M Hayes, N Groeger, N Stabach, D Bouchard, J Maine, K & D Geziak, four citizens and Clerk T. Dean

R Tarlov made a statement regarding the conversation at the 2/28/2017 Budget Presentation meeting. He took responsibility for not controlling the situation. Stated he shares A Bisbikos frustration regarding the timing of receiving information in a timely manner at times. This sometimes can lead to losing one's sanity and say things that shouldn't have been said. He acknowledged that comments were aggressive and he should have stopped them. Stated that the newly revised bylaws held citizens accountable for their behavior at meetings, and the same should have applied to the Board. R Tarlov expressed apologies to First Selectman Shilosky, BOE Chair R Goldstein, school administrators and BOF members, BOS members, and citizens for not managing better control. R Tarlov stated there was some confusion as to the date the original FOI complaint was given to the Town and Board of Education by A Bisbikos. R Tarlov stated the Town received the FOI on 1/26 and responded with the information in a few days. The FOI to the BOE was sent on 1/26 and as of 2/21 was still not received, and that is when A Bisbikos issued an FOI complaint. R Tarlov stated in the BOE defense they didn't have the request earlier. R Tarlov also stated that the chart attributed to him in the BOE presentation came out of a Board of Finance meeting discussion on topics they believed needed to be communicated to the voter. This was one of several forwarded to BOE Chairman Goldstein.

## **Budget Workshop**

### **State Budget Update – State Representative Melissa Ziobron and State Representative Linda Orange**

M Ziobron is a ranking member of the appropriations committee. Both gave information on the State Budget process and there was a question/answer session. (attached: Colchester Demographic Statistics handed out by M Ziobron)

**Town Budget** – Town Budget was discussed among the board. A list of expenditure increases was given to the Board by A Shilosky (attached). Public discussions, Board discussions and Citizens comments took place.

## **Regular Meeting**

### **1. Call to Order**

R Tarlov called the meeting to order at 9:29p.m.

### **2. Additions to the Agenda - none**

### **3. Approval of Minutes: February 15**

A Migliaccio moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2017 Regular Meeting, seconded by S Lowe. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

### **4. Citizens Comments - none**

### **5. Correspondence – three correspondence received (attached)**

### **6. First Selectman**

#### **a. Transfer Requests**

RECEIVED  
COLCHESTER, CT  
2017 MAR -3 PM 2:02  
TOWN OF COLCHESTER  
CLERK T. DEAN

R Tarlov stated that this is the first time the Board saw this request for a salary increase. Advised that, in the future, anything that will impact current and future budget should be brought to the attention of the Board of

Finance. R Tarlov went over the attached memo to get a better understanding of what was being requested to transfer. J Paggioli stated that this is for the funding of assistant to Director in the Public Works Dept. job reclassification.

T Kane moved to transfer \$3,260 from regular payroll 13201 into regular payroll 13200, and \$495 from FiCA & Retirement 13201 to FICA & Retirement 13200, seconded by A Bisbikos. Unanimously approved.  
MOTION CARRIED.

**b. First Selectman Report**

A Shilosky responded to the question posed at the last BOF workshop regarding the interest in the library extending hours for meetings only. A Shilosky stated that due to the custodian working 6am-2pm, there would be no staff available after the hours the library closes. There would be a need to hire staff to stay after hours to monitor the building while meetings would be in session after closing. A Shilosky stated that Town Hall has meeting rooms available until 10pm and a request can be made to hold a meeting there space permitting. Lebanon Ave property, waiting on one more signature from the seller side. Town CFO has started processing bond paperwork for the school.

**7. Liaisons**

**a. Reports**

S Lowe reported on Agriculture Commission – Assessor J Chaponis talked with the group to explain how farmland is taxed. There may be around 11 farms that would qualify for a building tax abatement. Doing a farm tour for the National Garden Club Association in July.

A Migliaccio reported on the Police Commission – finally met after a few missed meetings due to a quorum issue. There is currently a freeze on patrol overtime.

T Kane reported on Building Committee – discussed stamped concrete

A Bisbikos reported on Economic Development – not much to report

**8. New Business - none**

**9. Old Business - none**

**10. Citizens Comments - none**

**11. Adjournment**

A Migliaccio moved to adjourn at 9:48pm seconded by R Lepore. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,



Tricia Dean, Clerk

Attachments:  
Colchester Statistics  
Town expenditure Increase list  
Correspondence (3)  
Transfer

## Colchester

### DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Population	16,130	2017 Mill Rate	31
2016 Moody's Bond Rating	Aa3	2015 Equalized Mill Rate	22
Land Area (Sq. Miles)	48.98	2014 Net Grand List	1,201,873,865
Total General Fund Balance	5,724,206	2014 Equalized Net Grand List Per Capita	104,368
Total General Fund Expenditures	56,640,623	Tax Exempt Property as % of 2014 Grand List	7.90%
		Ratio of Debt (excl. Pensions) to ENGL (2013)	0.90%

Source: OPM Municipal Fiscal Indicators

### EDUCATION STATISTICS

Enrollment 2011-12	Enrollment 2012-13	Enrollment 2013-14	Enrollment 2014-15	Enrollment 2015-16	Enrollment Change 2011-16	FTE			
3,031	2,893	2,744	2,654	2,563	-15.44%	441			
Instructional Staff and Services	Instructional Supplies and Equipment	Improvement of Instruct. Media Svcs	Student Support Services	Admin. and Supprt Services	Plant Operation and Maint.	Transport.	Students Tuitioned Out	Other	Total Expenditures
\$22,337,829	\$712,307	\$824,879	\$3,108,239	\$4,512,440	\$4,215,815	\$2,685,566	\$2,377,942	\$459,684	\$41,234,701

Source: SDE EdSight

### ESTIMATED STATUTORY FORMULA AID

	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
PILOT: State-Owned Real Property	0	89,866	89,866
Mashantucket Pequot And Mohegan Fund	65,420	65,788	65,788
Town Aid Road Grant	349,300	349,300	349,300
Local Capital Improvement (LOCIP)	0	215,073	136,865
Adult Education	27,866	27,747	27,747
Education Cost Sharing	13,503,310	8,411,265	8,411,265
Special Education *	881,257	3,662,376	3,662,376
Grants for Municipal Projects	39,009	0	0
MRSF: Municipal Revenue Sharing Grant	330,363	475,551	475,551
<b>TOTAL STATUTORY FORMULA AID</b>	<b>15,196,525</b>	<b>13,296,966</b>	<b>13,218,758</b>
Reimbursement from Towns for Teachers' Retirement	0	-2,081,212	-2,148,852
<b>CUMULATIVE TOTAL</b>	<b>15,196,525</b>	<b>11,215,753</b>	<b>11,069,906</b>

\* For FY 2017, Special Education amount reflects the 5-year average of the Excess Cost Grant

**General Government:**

Boards & Commissions	OpenGov software	15,100	
Planning & Code Admin	PT Dept Clerk	16,793	<b>31,893</b>

**Public Safety:**

Police	Overtime increase	5,382	
Police	Laser speed enforcement	1,500	
Fire	Fire Marshal - increase to FT	32,542	
Fire	EMS Crew scheduling software	450	
Fire	Vehicle tracking system	1,910	
Fire	Replace 25 yr old overhead bay heaters	3,000	<b>44,784</b>

**Public Works:**

Highway	Road Improvements	50,000	
Fleet	Engine Diagnostic Tool software	800	
Fleet	Replace wash bay propane heater	7,500	<b>58,300</b>

**Community & Human Services:**

Youth & Social Services	Additional Youth Center Supervisor	2,196	
Youth & Social Services	Increase Substance Abuse Counselor	8,660	
Youth & Social Services	On-line Registration software	480	
Library	Increase books, magazines, periodicals	2,500	
Senior Services	TVCCA Nutrition Site Supervisor	17,540	<b>31,376</b>

**Operating Budget**

**166,353**

**Capital/Transfers:**

Facilities & Grounds	Sidewalk repairs - Town Hall	5,000	
Facilities & Grounds	Replacement of 3 AHUs - Town Hall	8,750	
Facilities & Grounds	Paper Mill Road Bridge	75,000	
Vehicles	Ambulance replacement - proposed lease	46,720	
Equipment	Radio Tower Equipment	8,500	

**Capital/Transfers Budget**

**143,970**

**Total**

**310,323**

**From:** Laura <lasoko2017@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2017 8:43 AM  
**To:** Robert Tarlov  
**Subject:** On the Education Budget

To the Board of Finance,

My name is Laura Sokoloski and I'm a senior at Bacon Academy. As you may guess, I'm writing to you about the proposed Education Budget. The Board of Education will soon be passing their revised budget proposal on to you, and I know that you've received enormous pressures for a 0% increase in the school budget. However, the cuts that would occur without some increase in the budget could cripple our schools.

There is so much more to Bacon Academy, for example, than strictly academics. Clubs are where we students find a community which shares our passions and where we are able to pursue diverse interests not found in the curriculum. Sports not only teach important lessons in teamwork and perseverance, they also are important sources of scholarships to college. Library hours before and after school not only afford extra research time, but also give these resources (including free printing) to students who lack a computer at home and rely on the library to finish their schoolwork. Our world language programs open students' eyes to diverse cultures and have sparked several of my friends to pursue careers or majors of French in particular. If these programs were cut, students would lose their areas of interest and resources which help them succeed. There was also talk at the February 8 Board of Education Meeting that many of the programs that would be removed would have to be added back the next year for Colchester to retain our high state rankings.

Our schools serve as an integral part of our community. Here in Colchester, we pride ourselves on the quality of the education in our schools, and when families consider moving to Colchester they cite our school system as one of their top reasons for eventually settling in town. Ranked highly in CMT's, AP exams, and other mastery tests, a Bacon Academy teacher qualified last year for a Milken Educator Award- often called the "Oscar of Teaching" and one of the top awards an educator can receive. As a result of the quality of the education we provide in Colchester, as you went over at your February 1 meeting, 10 Norwich students have chosen Bacon Academy as their high school and we will be adding 15 more Norwich students next year. These students add valuable revenue to our schools, however I was distressed on February 1 to note that most of the discussion centered on what we should do with this revenue and how we should divide it. To me, it seems imperative that we discuss whether the students will continue to choose our schools with the budget cuts looming if the proposal is not approved. Although I find it easy to believe students from other towns would want to attend Bacon as it is, it's harder

for me to visualize them attending a school with cramped classes, no French program, a gutted club system, scant sports, and overall strained resources.

However, you've heard these and many other opinions before. There is a growing movement in town in support of the school budget. Over 150 supporters attended the February 8 Board of Education Meeting. If you look in the River East you will see letters about the school budget and conversation is widespread. I suppose this is why I'm writing to you, as a student I know firsthand how we are already neglecting our schools. I walk through the halls of Bacon Academy 180 days a year, past buckets placed underneath leaks in the roof and stains in the carpet. In the library the computers sometimes stop working and we make do with textbooks falling apart from overuse. Yet because of our outstanding teachers we are able to ignore all that. I'm part of the Writing Center, Student Council, and Environmental Club. I take care of the school gardens and teach students at JJIS on Wednesdays. One of my close friends recently won a prestigious basketball scholarship to MIT, another who graduated last year threw herself into a full immersion study abroad opportunity in France, and it's unlikely she would have been accepted without French experience in Middle School. When I go on college interviews one of their first questions is always what I do outside of academics. They are looking for a well-rounded person, and at Bacon we are fortunate to provide the full high school experience with a variety of sports teams and clubs ranging from Robotics to the Different Drummer Drama Guild to GSA to Environmental Club. None of this is fluff, it is the diversity that give Bacon its uniqueness and spirit. The walls are always festooned with posters for a variety of activities, there's always something going on. And thanks to this diversity of interests and our ability to express them at Bacon, students last year were accepted into such prestigious schools as Columbia, Cornell, and Princeton. Good grades are no longer enough to be accepted into top ranking schools. Frankly, I'm glad I'm graduating Bacon this year because if the budget does not pass, Bacon will not only lose its spirit but also some of its competitive edge.

For this reason, I ask you to approve the Board of Education Budget for referendum as it is. Put bluntly, there is nothing more that could be cut without significantly changing the fundamental character and rigor of our schools. Please let the community decide on the budget. There has been a wave of support for the budget this year like no other. Students passing through our schools are the future, by passing the budget we invest in our future.

Sincerely,

Laura Sokoloski

**From:** Robert Tarlov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2017 11:33 AM  
**To:** Laura  
**Cc:** Ronald Goldstein  
**Subject:** Re: On the Education Budget

Hi Laura,

Thanks for sharing your views and the things you have experienced. I will pass your letter on to other members of the Board and it will be part of our 3/1 meeting minutes.

Important that people who are eligible to vote, go to town hall and do so. The lines, if any, for referendum voting are generally very short and move quickly. Over the last couple of years I have spent less than 2 minutes voting.

The previously scheduled referendum date in early May might be postponed until we have more clarity on the Governor's proposed \$4 million plus hit to education funding for our Town. Unfortunately the towns need to pass their budgets before the State budget passes their's, which makes it difficult in normal years to guess where the State will end up in their State Aid to the towns. So far, this is far from a normal year.

Important that people write to our State Representatives (Linda Orange and Melissa Ziobron) and State Senator (Art Linares) to urge them not to support the cut in Colchester's Education Cost Sharing (ECS) aid and the new town charge for the State Pension Fund.

Here is an article on this: <http://ctmirror.org/2017/02/08/see-how-your-town-fares-in-the-governors-proposed-budget/>



See how your town fares in the governor's proposed budget

ctmirror.org

Gov. Dinkins' proposed budget would mean that 145 municipalities stand to gain more than \$10 million each, but 145 municipalities would lose aid.

Again thanks for writing.

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

GOOD EVENING, MY NAME IS QUINN KOZAK, I AM A 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADER AT BACON ACADEMY. I HAVE BEEN ON THE FENCING TEAM FOR THE TWO YEARS I HAVE ATTENDED BACON ACADEMY. I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE SOME OF THE REASONS THAT MY TEAMMATES, PARENTS AND I FEEL THAT THE \$3535 LINE ITEM OF FENCING MUST NOT BE CUT FROM BACON ACADEMY BUDGET.

AS A MEMBER OF THE FENCING TEAM, AND PART OF THE EASTERN CONFERENCE, WE FENCE AGAINST STUDENTS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS, WE FENCE AT THEIR SCHOOL AND THEY FENCE AT OUR SCHOOL, WE SUPPORT THEM AND THEY SUPPORT US. IT IS A PLACE WHERE WE COME TOGETHER AS ATHLETES AND COMPETITORS. WE DEVELOP SKILLS, NOT JUST PHYSICAL SKILLS, OR ATHLETIC SKILLS, BUT SOCIAL SKILLS – CAMARADERIE, COLLABORATION, LEARNING TO JUGGLE COMMITMENTS, SKILLS THAT WILL BE WITH US LONG AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

COACH JOHNSON WORKS TIRELESSLY WITH OUR TEAM FOR A VERY SMALL STIPEND, COACH FENCED ALL FOUR YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE, COACH HAS WON CHAMPIONSHIPS, TROPHIES THAT ARE ON DISPLAY AT BACON ACADEMY, COACH UNDERSTANDS THE IMMENSELY EMPOWERING EXPERIENCE THAT FENCING GIVES TO EACH STUDENT WHO DESIRES TO PARTICIPATE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME, THERE ARE NO TRYOUTS OR CUTS IN FENCING AT BACON. SO STUDENTS WHO MAY NOT FALL INTO THE MAINSTREAM SPORTS ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO EMBRACE THE EXPERIENCE OF FENCING WHICH IS ONLY OFFERED AT 25 HIGH SCHOOLS IN CT, ANOTHER REASON FENCING AT BACON ACADEMY IS REALLY UNIQUE.

FENCING IN CT IS WHERE BACON STANDS OUT WITH YEARS OF CHAMPIONSHIPS AND TROPHIES, BACON ACADEMY FENCING HAS CONSISTENTLY PRODUCED TOP-TEN FINISHERS IN THE NOVICE AND VARSITY STATE TOURNAMENT, AND AT LEAST 5 ECC INDIVIDUAL TOP-THREE FINISHERS WHICH INCLUDE 3 ECC TEAM FIRST PLACE FINISHERS. THAT'S A PRETTY IMPRESSIVE RECORD IN THE SHORT HISTORY OF THIS BACON FENCING TEAM!

100% OF THE EQUIPMENT, CLOTHING AND PROTECTIVE GEAR IS PURCHASED THROUGH FUNDRAISING EFFORTS, WITH PAY TO PLAY FEES AND MAYBE MAKING EFFECTIVE REDUCTIONS IN SPORTS ACROSS THE BOARD AT BACON ACADEMY, NO SPORTS NEED TO BE LOST TO STUDENTS.....

SO, I AM TAKING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE MY VOICE HEARD, PLEASE DO NOT CUT FENCING AT BACON ACADEMY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.





STATEMENT REGARDING SUPT. OF SCHOOLS  
BOF MEETING 02/28/2017

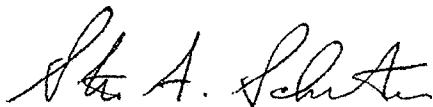
Good evening fellow citizens of the town of Colchester. My name is Steven Schuster and I am a 72 year resident of the Town of Colchester.

Tonight I will not be commenting on either the Selectman's or the Board of Education's budget as I feel that until the State of Connecticut finalizes their budget it would be a waste of time, however I will make some comments on the budget process and my concerns about our current Superintendent of School's actions.

Recently, the Superintendent of Schools and our First Selectman received FOI requests from a BOF member requesting a response to two questions to aid this member in his decision-making process regarding budget decisions. He promptly received the requested information from the First Selectman's office but received nothing from the Supt. of Schools, with the exception of a form letter stating that they have received the request and are working on it. Thank you Art Shilosky for your responsiveness and diligence. You are a true leader.

The reluctance of our Supt. of Schools to provide the requested information, especially a request from an elected official of the BOF, is totally unacceptable and should be classified as insubordination. Let me remind you that he is the same person that in 2015 had ignored requests from Special Education parents to provide the recommended services for their children. He is the same person that failed to properly supervise the Director of Special Education and she eventually was forced to take early retirement. He is the same person who wrote such a glowing letter of recommendation upon her departure that a neighboring town selected to hire her. He is the same person that gave our CFO, not that she didn't deserve it, a wage increase without consulting first with the Chairman of the BOE and First Selectman. You see, the BOS and BOE share her salary costs equally and all stakeholders should have been consulted prior to that decision.

Now the Supt. of Schools has delayed responding to a request from a BOF elected official for information needed to make a well-informed decision on budgetary issues. Is the BOE running our school system or have they just become rubber stamps of approval for our Superintendent of Schools?

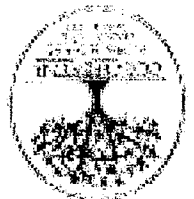


Steven A. Schuster

# Colchester Public Schools

127 Highway Avenue, Suite 202  
Colchester, CT 06415

Phone (860) 537-1204  
Fax (860) 537-1252



Jerry P. Warden  
Superintendent of Schools

June 23, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Kathleen Shaughnessy, the only Director of Special Services and Special Education for Colchester Public Schools since 1994. I have supervised Katie for the past three years as the Superintendent of Schools. Ms. Shaughnessy supervises four special programs and an alternative high school. Katie is also the case manager for approximately fifty out of district students.

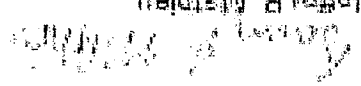
In the twenty plus years I have worked with Ms. Shaughnessy, she has always been an advocate for both special education and regular education students. Ms. Shaughnessy has consistently demonstrated strong moral fiber and excellent judgment. She will not settle for the sake of getting the things to go what is best for the student involved. In some cases, this involves making the hard decision, the unpopular one, but she will stand behind her educationally sound decision.

Ms. Shaughnessy has been instrumental in the development of many programs, including the WEAFC accredited preschool program, which expands each year to six sessions and is a state-recognized program of excellence. Katie frequently directs other school districts to visit Colchester when they have questions about curriculum or starting a new program.

Katie is an active member of our School Board and program and committee chair of Colchester Cares (CC), a group of school personnel, community members and organizations that come to the table even in tough times to help students and families address barriers impeding student success. Katie was also one of the leaders to create an alternative education high school program located off campus. This program has three certified staff members serving 15-21 students a year.

Ms. Shaughnessy has a wealth of knowledge in the area of special education law and program compliance. While Ms. Shaughnessy has chosen to leave the job that much to offer your district or organization and would make a wonderful addition. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

  
Jerry P. Warden  
Superintendent

Feb 16/17

Town of Colchester  
General Fund  
Budget Transfer/Additional Appropriation

Department: Public Works

Reason for Request: Funding of assistant to Director job reclassification, See attached Memo.

Reason for Available Funds: Long Term Workers Compensation Issue has left available un-expended funds.

From:	Account Number	Account Name	Amount
	13201-40101	Regular Payroll	3,260
	13201-41230	FICA & Retirement	495


To:	Account Number	Account Name	Amount
	13200-40101	Regular Payroll	<del>3,620</del> 3260
	13200-41230	FICA & Retirement	495

Feb 10, 2017  
Date Requested

  
Department Director or Supervisor - Signature

Print Name James Paggioli

2/13/17  
Date Reviewed

  
Chief Financial Officer

2-13-17  
Date Approved

  
First Selectman


2-16-17  
Date Approved

  
Board of Selectmen Clerk

Date Approved

Board of Finance Clerk

**Town of Colchester Interoffice Memorandum**

**To:** Art Shilosky, First Selectman  
**From:** James Paggioli, L.S., Director of Public Works   
**CC:**  
**Date:** 2-10-2017  
**Re:** Transfer Request – Funds to Support Position of Assistant to the Director DPW

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In conjunction with the creation of the position of Assistant to the Director (DPW) and the subsequent settlement of the retroactive time for compensation of the position extending from July 1, 2016, the following transfer is required. The position is funded 50% by the Public Works (General Fund Budget), 25 % from the Water Annual Operating Budget, and 25% from the Sewer Annual Operating Budget. The existing funded Administrative Assistant position is compensated at \$22.25 per hour. The Assistant to the Director (DPW) position is compensated at \$25.37 per hour; the same rate as the existing Assistant to the Director (Fire/ EMS) and Assistant to the Director (Police). The differential is \$3.12 per hour. There are no overtime considerations. For regular wage considerations at 8 hours a day x 261 working days = \$6,514.56.

The Public Works (General Fund) portion = \$3,257.28 Regular Wages , \$249.18 FICA and \$ 244.30 Retirement  
There is adequate available funding within the DPW – Highway (Same line items) due to a Workers Compensation issue.

The Water portion = \$1,628.64 Regular Wages, \$124.59 FICA and \$122.15 Retirement and the Sewer portion are identical.  
There is adequate available funding within the Contingency Water and other Line Items within the Sewer Operating budget in order to transfer and fund these amounts. The transfer approval for these portions will occur at the March 2017 Sewer and Water Commission meetings.