

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

7:00PM

**Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room & Virtual
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Members Present: Steven M. Everett, First Selectman; Judy Ortiz, Deputy First Selectman; Lisa Napolitano, Selectman (arrived at 7:03pm); Selectman; William O'Brien, Selectman.

Members Present Remotely: Christopher Lent, Selectman.

Also Present: Mark B. Walter, Town Administrator.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. **RULES OF CONDUCT FOR HYBRID VIRTUAL MEETING:** S. Everett read the rules of conduct for a hybrid virtual meeting.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was already recited at the Town Meeting held at 6:45 PM.
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Agenda as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 4.0. L. Napolitano had not arrived yet.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 4.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for June 4, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes for June 4, 2024. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.1 with J. Ortiz abstaining.
 - 4.2 **BOS Special Meeting Minutes for June 7, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Minutes for June 7, 2024. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
5. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Ann Dunnack, 103 Lake Rd. said that there is an Eagle Scout that would like to build a boardwalk over a marshy area on the way to the disc golf tees at Rec Park. She said he needs to get it done quickly, and he would like the town to pay for the material which will cost approximately \$3,000. M. Walter said that the Eagle Scout has decided not to take on this project and Tom McGrath will be taking over the project with the help of the disc golf volunteers. He said that there are funds in the Conservation and Agriculture budget to cover the cost of the project.
6. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 6.1 **Tax and Business Incentive Program Ordinance.** W. O'Brien said that at the May 7th Board of Selectmen's meeting the consensus was to have the tax abatement uniform for all projects regardless of value. He said that the Economic Development Committee made the recommended changes and those are reflected in the updated proposed ordinance presented to the BOS. M. Walter said that there was a question that the Town Attorney wanted the BOS to discuss regarding

deleting the following from the proposed ordinance, “Projects with the value of improvements to be constructed greater than \$25,000 but less than \$500,000, the abatement will be based 50% of the difference between the before and after improvements assessment.” M. Walter said that taking it out would go along with what we are trying to accomplish. W. O’Brien said he thinks it should be deleted. W. O’Brien MOVED to send the proposed ordinance regarding the Columbia Business Tax Incentive program to a Town Meeting. MOTION 4.0.1 with L. Napolitano Abstaining.

- 6.2 Update Horace Porter School HVAC Project.** C. Lent said the HVAC Building Committee received an update from Silver Petrucelli. Silver Petrucelli said that they are almost completed with the design and anticipate within the next couple of weeks it will be ready to be sent to the Commissioning Agent who will hopefully be under contract in the next week or so. He said the target is to get the bid for construction out the week of July 15th. This would allow contractors to review the bid and make an onsite walk through with bids due August 30th. He said that they are hoping to get this under contract by early fall. He said that the committee discussed the target completion date of September 1, 2025. C. Lent said to reach the target completion date one option the committee is recommending is to purchase the switch gear for electrical because it is a long-lead item that would take up to 35 weeks. We would break out this option from the proposal for the construction firm and the Town would procure directly. He said it gives the Town more control and on the plus side it is one less thing the contractor needs to worry about because it is already something we would supply. Part of this switch gear is installed outside and essentially it can be installed in the August time-frame. C. Lent said as soon as we get the Project Manager on contract, the Project Manager plans on building a schedule that we can track the project management.

L. Napolitano asked how much the switch gear would be. C. Lent said that the rough estimate is about \$175,000. He will have Silver Petrucelli confirm the price. C. Lent said that we will not have to cut a trench through the parking lot, which is less construction and less cost.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

- 7.1 TRC Proposal for Additional Watershed Investigation – Columbia Lake.** M. Walter said this will be put on hold.

8. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH: None.

9. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:

- 9.1 Savannah McInvale, Zoning Enforcement Officer.** M. Walter said that Savannah is a wetland agent in Massachusetts and is well-versed in field inspection, biology, wetland delineations. In addition, Savannah has experience working with boards and commission. S. Everett MOVED to APPOINT Savannah McInvale as the Zoning Enforcement Officer. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

- 9.2 Seasonal Public Work/Grounds Keepers: William Longo and James Longo.** S. Everett explained that he had a meeting with the DPW Director and DPW Foreman on the amount of time it is taking the DPW staff to mow and do groundskeeping. The DPW staff are spending most of their time mowing and are not able to spend the amount time needed for bridges, culverts, and swales. He said we have had a third position open at the Transfer Station that we have not used any funding for,

so we will be able to use those funds to cover the seasonal public works/grounds keepers. The Seasonal Public Work/Grounds Keepers will be working a total of 16 hours, two days a week.

10. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

10.1 UConn Support letter for permit to carry out limited archaeological excavations at the Hop River Mill Site. The support letter was provided for the BOS to review.

10.2 CRCOG Municipal Outreach Tours: M. Walter explained that CRCOG is conducting informal, in-person visits with member municipalities to learn more about the major projects, priorities, and challenges in each community. CRCOG's goal is to foster communication and encourage collaborative opportunities and partnerships. M. Walter said he has a meeting set up Thursday afternoon with the Town Planner to discuss ideas on what we might want to talk about. M. Walter said any board member who want to come when we have the scheduled meeting with CRCOG are welcome to attend.

M. Walter said that we have been working with CIRMA regarding the recommendation for additional insurance for the concert series. M. Walter will clarify the coverage and costs for all three concerts. W. O'Brien's recommendation is to get at least one million in coverage. M. Walter said he believes the cost would be around \$923 for all three concerts. He will confirm the cost and coverage.

M. Walter said he received an update from the Town Historian, Ingrid Wood, that she and Judy Ortiz attended the Juneteenth Celebration in Hebron. She said it was very well done. The Moors Indian School Open House was held on June 8th and was very well attended.

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

11.1 CT State Trooper – Troop K report for May 2024.

11.2 The Willimantic Chronicle Articles

- **Open house event at Moor's Charity Indian School.**
- **Columbia passes budget with 6.48% increase.**

12. BUDGET:

12.1 Transfers: S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the TRANSFERS Totaling \$41,754.00 as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

TRANSFER #	AMOUNT	FROM ACCOUNT #	DESCRIPTION	TO ACCOUNT #	DESCRIPTION
2024-019	333.00	10-4112-040	Heath Insurance	10-412-110	Postage
	531.00			10-4112-300	General Supplies
	1,770.00			10-4112-500	Professional/Tech
2024-020	497.00	10-4113-515	Contracted Services	10-4112-421	Town Historian
2024-021	63.00	10-4112-720	Professional Dues	10-4112-750	Conferences/Seminars
2024-022	1,432.00	10-4112-0303	Workers Compensation	10-4230-811	Mach/Equip < \$5,000
2024-023	153.00	10-4260-240	Fuel	10-4260-500	Professional/Tech
2024-024	1,120.00	10-4112-040	Health Insurance	10-4320-500	Professional/Tech
2024-025	303.00	10-4350-500	Professional/Tech	10-4350-600	Repairs/Maintenance
2024-026	10,240.00	10-4800-900	Contingency	10-4410-600	DPW Repairs/Maintenance
	2,588.00			10-4410-610	DPW Bldgs/Grounds Repairs/Maintenance
2024-027	20.00	104540-750	Conferences/Seminars	10-4540-720	Professional Dues
2024-028	10,000.00	10-4420-010	Salaries-Waste Disposal	10-4420-500	Professional/Tech
2024-029	2,500.00	10-4112-460	Commercial Insurance	10-4610-420	Grants & Subsidies
2024-030	159.00	10-4640-500	Professional/Tech	10-4640-110	Postage
2024-031	18.00	10-4670-240	Fuel	10-4670-140	Advertising
	455.00			10-4670-230	Electricity
2024-032	500.00	10-4540-500	Professional/Tech	10-4540-300	General Supplies
		10-4540-515	Contracted Services		
2024-033	9,072.00	10-4800-900	Contingency	Fund 27	Internal Service

12.2 Refunds: S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Refunds Totaling \$71.85 as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

13. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS: S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the PAYMENT of BILLS Totaling \$239,594.56 consisting of 2023/2024 Regular, Credit Card and Paychex as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

14. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
15. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** W. O'Brien said he is concerned about the eyesore at the property at the old bank and he is formally making a blight complaint.
16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statues Section 1-200(6)(A).** None.
17. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN at 7:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie