

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Tuesday, July 16, 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; Selectman; William O'Brien, Selectman; 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 recited.
3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
  - 4.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for June 18, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes for June 18, 2024. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
5. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Fred Weh, 45 Cards Mill Road said he has been a resident for 18 years and expressed his concern about out of state vehicle's using the Transfer Station. He noted that the vehicles did have Transfer Station stickers affixed to the windshield. He feels that the Transfer Station is for Columbia residents vehicles only. He would like the town to control out of state vehicles from using the Transfer Station. He suggested to charge a fee and put up a sign stating, "no out of state vehicles allowed." S. Everett said we would certainly look into it and thanked Mr. Weh for his comments.
6. **OLD BUSINESS:**
  - 6.1 **Update Horace Porter School HVAC Project.** C. Lent said we are in the process of executing the contract with the Commissioning Agent, Sustainable Engineering Solutions (SES). He said the Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee had a very productive meeting last week and Ernest Lawas from (SES) and Jim Russo, Project Manager attended the meeting. The bid spec package has been updated and is available for everyone to review. SES now has access to those documents and will provide final comments to Silver Petrucelli & Associates by August 9<sup>th</sup>. The HVAC Building Committee will not meet again until August 19<sup>th</sup> and the final comments will be reviewed and discussed. The goal is to get the bid out by Labor Day weekend. There is a lead time of 35 weeks for the electrical switch. The bid completion date is scheduled for July 31<sup>st</sup> because the Commissioning Agent will need more time to perform various functioning testing

and to verify that the specs and requirements of the air conditioning and heating units comply with state regulations. The State deadline is December 2025. C. Lent said that at the point where we can submit the bid, the Project Manager, Jim Russo, can walk through the schedule with the BOS. S. Everett said he wants a schedule in print for the HVAC project to be presented to the BOS.

**7. NEW BUSINESS:**

**7.1 To set a Town Meeting for the Tax and Business Incentive Program Ordinance.**

**7.2 To Set a Town Meeting for the Transfer of Funds from the General Fund to fund the Electrical Upgrade and Other Potential Costs for the Horace Porter School HVAC Project. M. Walter said that the Municipal Bonding agent.**

S. Everett made the following Motion:

The duly qualified electors and voters of the Town of Columbia, Connecticut and any other persons entitled to vote upon any of the matters contained in this warning are hereby notified to meet in the Adella G. Urban Conference Room, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT on Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. for the following purpose:

**CLAUSE 1:** To appropriate and transfer \$499,000.00 from the Town of Columbia General Fund to the HWP HVAC Improvements Capital Account (COA #20-6206-015) to fund the Electrical Upgrade and Other Potential Costs for the Horace Porter School HVAC Project.

**CLAUSE 2:** To consider the adoption of a proposed ordinance entitled “Tax and Business Incentive Program Ordinance.”

**CLAUSE 3:** To approve, if Clause 2 is adopted, that in lieu of publishing the full text of the Town Ordinance, as required by Section 3.5 of the Town Charter, a summary notice be published instead, as permitted by said Section 3.5 and Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-157(b); and that said notice read substantially as follows: “Tax and Business Incentive Program Ordinance.” This summary is prepared for the benefit of the public solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation. This summary does not represent the intent of the legislative body of the Town of Columbia for any purpose. A complete copy of the “Tax and Business Incentive Program Ordinance” is available at the offices of the Columbia Town Clerk and Town Administrator and is also available at [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org).”

MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**7.3 TRC Proposal for Additional Watershed Investigation – Columbia Lake. M. Roickle, 34 Erdoni Rd, representing the Lake Management Advisory Commission (LMAC) presented TRC’s proposal for additional watershed investigation. TRC’s scope of work will allow the network of drains contributing to the storm drainage outfalls into Columbia Lake to be assessed. Based on TRC’s previous testing at**

these outlet pipes, the storm drain system is significantly impacted by E. coli bacteria and excessive levels of phosphorus.

TRC proposed three tasks totaling \$14,700, includes the following tasks:

- 1) Task 1 is to provide additional bacteria assessment. TRC will sample the storm drains previously found to be impacted by high bacteria levels. These include 2 Erdoni Road and Woodland Terrace storm drains 2 & 8.
- 2) Task 2 will identify phosphorous load inputs to the lake. The task is to identify disproportionately high sources of phosphorous loading within the Utley Stream drainage. Storm drain system discharging at 2 Erdoni Rd.
- 3) Task 3 will review the concept of placing a bottom water intake pipe in Columbia Lake to siphon out phosphorus laden water from the deeper waters of the lake. TRC will prove LMAC with an evaluation of the potential benefits, associated costs for construction and operation, along with recommendations.

M. Roickle said on the behalf of LMAC the motion is to please invest in these three tasks.

C. Lent asked if we had budgeted last year for supplemental testing for stormwater. M. Walter said, yes, we added supplemental stormwater testing in the budget last year.

Discussion ensued about testing and time-frames.

S. Everett said he is inclined to go along with the testing, but at some point we have to say it's the nature of a lake. He said there are trees around the lake that grow old and die and fall into the lake, leaves fall into the lake year after year, the swamp that feeds the lake has a lot of decay in it and that is carried down to the lake. He said he understands what LMAC is asking but is concerned that the cost of testing will increase year after year.

S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE and Authorize \$14,700 from Contingency for Additional Watershed Investigation for Columbia Lake provided by TRC Companies. MOTION CARRIED 4.1 with L. Napolitano Opposed.

**7.4 Approval of the Tour des Trees bike ride on September 24, 2024.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the September 24, 2024 Tour des Trees bike ride that will pass through Columbia on Route 6. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**7.5 Approval of Memorial Bench Installation for Russell and Marjorie Inzinga near the Veteran's Memorial on the Town Green.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the request to place a bench near the Veteran's Memorial on the Town Green in memory of Russell and Majorie Inzinga. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**7.6 Sale of State-owned Land parcel in Columbia off Route 6 due to Woodward Rd Realignment.** M. Walter said the property is in a residential area and should not be town-owned. He said the Town Planner did not feel that there was any potential use to the town. S. Everett MOVED to provide notification to the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation that the Town of Columbia is Not Interested in the sale of state land in Columbia, File No. 030-093-005A. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**7.7 Town Beach Access and Boat Horsepower Guidelines.** S. Everett said there have been concerns and issues with oversized motorboats on the lake. Mike Scalise 14 Lakewood West, Columbia and Lake Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) read the following LMAC motion:

Remind the BOS of the Town Ordinance Article III Safety Regulations on Columbia Lake Section 190-12 C that, No person shall operate on the waters of Columbia Lake, a boat with an outboard engine whose horsepower exceeds 80, or a boat with an inboard engine whose horsepower exceeds 150. As admitted by the owner the Chaparral watercraft registered as CT 4662 BN possesses a 200 HP engine on the lake which exceeds the 150 HP limit. The actual manufacturers horsepower rating remains the governing rule for this ordinance since 1995. The BOS must alert the owner that the 200 HP Chaparral CT 4662 BN must be removed from Columbia Lake immediately. If the watercraft stays on the lake a fine of \$50.00 per day should be assessed each day the vessel remains on Columbia Lake.

S. Everett asked if the owner brings in a letter from a mechanic that states a governor, restricting plate, or something else has been put on the boat is it LMAC's opinion that there are more than one or two boats on the lake like the Chaparral that will want an exception from the town. M. Scalise said that the boat indicated in the motion is the only boat he is aware of that has asked for an exception, however, there are others that are over the horsepower as well.

S. Everett said he will open the discussion to the Board, but he is all set to follow the ordinance/motion that the actual manufacturers horsepower rating remains the governing rule for this ordinance, and he doesn't care what paperwork states otherwise. He said he puts respect in LMAC's decision.

L. Napolitano said you can't do it for one and not for everyone.

C. Lent asked if a boat was modified would it be an option to have the owner do their own dyno test and show a justification date of the change in horsepower.

Bob Powell, 6 Sunnyslopes Rd. and a member of LMAC said this has been discussed extensively at LMAC and a modification can be taken off.

S. Everett said that we could tell the owner of the boat to have a test and bring in the paperwork, but he does not have confidence that they won't make adjustments back to the original horsepower.

S. Everett MOVED to Accept the Recommendation of LMAC's guidelines and Demand the Boat be Removed. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

M. Walter said that it has been brought to our attention that there is a lot of activity at the Town beach after hours.

Noreen Farrington, 3 Nuhfer Rd. said that when the lifeguards go home there are a lot of people using the lake and she is concerned about safety. She said there is a risk factor of someone drowning. She suggested that one possible solution is to close the park at dusk, much like the State parks do. She said we could have lifeguards on duty until 8:30 pm and then lock the gates.

Bob Powell, 6 Sunnyslopes Rd. said that in the past at the end of the Marine Patrol's shift they would lock the gate to the parking lot and then in the morning Public Works would open the gate.

Discussion ensued about lake access after-hours.

S. Everett said that we will discuss this some more and tabled the discussion.

**8. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH: None.**

**9. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:**

- 9.1 **Appointment of Peter Dunnack, Facilities Manager.** S. Everett MOVED to Hire Peter Dunnack as Facilities Manager. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
- 9.2 **Resignation of Leah Osborn from the Columbia Board of Education.**
- 9.3 **Resignation of Katie Wilt, Community Social Services Coordinator.**

**10. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

- 10.1 **Cyber Incident Reporting.** M. Walter said that we are constantly training staff with cyber security. There are new guidelines to partner with the state to report a cyber incident. We are creating through the Safety Committee and Emergency Management on what to do if we are involved in a cyber incident. M. Walter said that he participated in a simulated course through CIRMA and Novus Insight that included the steps the town would need to take in case of a cyber incident.
- 10.2 **Rec Park incident.** M. Walter briefly reviewed the incident at Rec Park that involved two individuals who came out of the woods with machetes and came running at a young couple with their son that were also at the park. The two individuals were apprehended by the State Police.
- 10.3 **Tarp in lake.** M. Walter explained that there was a report that a resident had put a 50x20 tarp in the lake by their dock to reduce weeds. The Inland Wetlands Agent has been contacted and will meet with the owner.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- 11.1 **CT State Trooper – Troop K report for June 2024.**
- 11.2 **Thank you letter to the Recreation Director, Jake Plitt.**
- 11.3 **The Willimantic Chronicle Articles**
  - **Columbia hosting recruitment event for EMS, firefighters.**
  - **New director looking forward to concerts.**

- Columbia prepping for July 4<sup>th</sup> parade.
- Rose Marrotte Art Show taking place in Columbia.

**12. BUDGET:**

**12.1 Transfers:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Transfers Totaling \$39,223.00 as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

| TRANSFER # | AMOUNT   | FROM ACCOUNT # | DESCRIPTION               | TO ACCOUNT # | DESCRIPTION                 |
|------------|----------|----------------|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 2024-035   | 200.00   | 10-4112-550    | Misc Service/Chgs         | 10-4112-020  | Payroll Taxes               |
|            | 50.00    | 10-4112-600    | Rep/Maintenance - Admin   | 10-4112-300  | General Supplies            |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4112-500  | Professional/Tech           |
| 2024-036   | 1,574.00 | 10-4130-016    | Salaries-Election Workers | 10-4130-010  | Salaries- Election          |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4130-110  | Postage                     |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4130-520  | General Supplies            |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4130-300  | Printing                    |
| 2024-037   | 1,155.00 | 10-4133-010    | Salaries- Tax Collector   | 10-4133-500  | Professional/Tech           |
| 2024-038   | 35.00    | 10-4230-110    | Postage                   | 10-4230-010  | Salaries-Social Worker      |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4230-300  | General Supplies            |
| 2024-039   | 121.00   | 10-4250-240    | Fuel                      | 10-4250-120  | Telephone                   |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4250-500  | Professional/Tech           |
| 2024-040   | 47.00    | 10-4260-240    | Fuel                      | 10-4260-300  | General Supplies            |
| 2024-041   | 638.00   | 10-4112-040    | Health Insurance          | 10-4320-500  | Professional/Tech           |
| 2024-042   | 167.00   | 10-4330-515    | Contracted Services       | 10-4330-300  | General Supplies            |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4330-770  | Transportation              |
| 2024-043   | 138.00   | 10-4350-500    | Professional/Tech         | 10-4350-520  | Printing                    |
| 2024-044   | 4,144.00 | 10-4410-011    | Salaries-DPW OT           | 10-4410-600  | Repairs/Maintenance DPW     |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4410-610  | Repairs/Maintenance Grounds |
|            |          |                |                           | 10-4410-710  | Professional Development    |
| TRANSFER # | AMOUNT   | FROM ACCOUNT   | DESCRIPTION               | TO ACCOUNT # | DESCRIPTION                 |
| 2024-045   | 2,881.00 | 10-4420-010    | Salaries-Waste Disposal   | 10-4420-500  | Professional/Tech           |
| 2024-046   | 345.00   | 10-4510-720    | Professional Dues         | 10-4510-010  | Salaries-Planning & Zoning  |
|            |          | 10-4800-900    | Contingency               | 10-4510-500  | Professional/Tech           |

|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
|-----------------|----------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
|                 | 6,420.00 |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-047</b> | 44.00    | 10-4520-130 | Legal Notices            | 10-4520-010 | Salaries-Inland/Wetlands |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-048</b> | 165.00   | 10-4530-011 | Salaries-Facilities OT   | 10-4530-010 | Salaries-Facilities      |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-049</b> | 5,200.00 | 10-4530-515 | Contracted Services      | 10-4530-500 | Professional/Tech        |
|                 | 4,000.00 | 10-4530-811 | Mach/Equip < \$5,000     |             |                          |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-050</b> | 6,009.00 | 10-4530-300 | General Supplies         | 10-4530-500 | Professional/Tech        |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-051</b> | 184.00   | 10-4540-500 | Professional/Tech        | 10-4540-300 | General Supplies         |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-052</b> | 900.00   | 10-4570-515 | Contracted Services      | 10-4570-010 | Salaries-Land Use        |
|                 | 625.00   | 10-4570-710 | Professional Improvement |             |                          |
|                 | 1,000.00 | 10-4510-750 | Conferences/Seminars     |             |                          |
|                 | 1,055.00 | 10-4520-500 | Professional/Tech        |             |                          |
|                 | 65.00    | 10-4570-515 | Contracted Services      | 10-4570-300 | General Supplies         |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-053</b> | 500.00   | 10-4630-110 | Postage                  | 10-4630-500 | Professional/Tech        |
|                 | 400.00   | 10-4630-300 | General Supplies         |             |                          |
|                 | 500.00   | 10-4630-520 | Printing                 |             |                          |
|                 | 181.00   | 10-4350-300 | General Supplies         |             |                          |
|                 |          |             |                          |             |                          |
| <b>2024-054</b> | 480.00   | 10-4670-240 | Fuel                     | 10-4670-230 | Electricity              |
|                 |          |             |                          | 10-4670-570 | Conferences/Seminars     |

**12.2 Refunds:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Refunds Totaling \$166.26 as Presented. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

**13. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Payment of Bills Totaling \$318,497.99 consisting of 2023-2024 Emergency, 2024-2025 Emergency, 2023-2024 Regular, 2024-2025 Regular, Credit Card and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

14. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** Ann Dunnack, 103 Lake Rd, said she is concerned about the incident at Rec Park and that the perpetrators said they were collecting crawfish, which means that more than likely were on Joshua's Trust property. M. Walter said that we have not been informed by the State Police, but once we have a something from the State Police we will notify Joshua's Trust.
15. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** C. Lent asked about the Electric Vehicle Chargers use. B. Ciurylo said that we probably have made about \$100 in the past 3 or 4 months.
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).** S. Everett MOVED to Enter Into Executive Session at 8:26 PM and invited Mark Walter, Town Administrator to attend. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. Executive Session ended at 8:46 PM with no Action Taken.
  - 16.1 **Legal:** No Action Taken.
17. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:46 PM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie