



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Andreas Bisbikos, First Selectman

BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING December 1, 2021 – Town Meeting Rm 1 – 6:30 PM Minutes

In-Person Meeting - Meeting was recorded

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2021 DEC -2 PM 1:25
Gayle F. Egan
TOWN CLERK

BOF Members Present: A. Migliaccio, A. Shilosky, J. Thomas, M. Hayes, T. Vaillancourt, M. Egan

Also Present: First Selectman A. Bisbikos, CFO M. Cosgrove, Marguerite Gignac -Board of Education Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair A. Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm
2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – addition of Pledge of Allegiance motioned by T. Vaillancourt, 2nd by J. Thomas. **Vote was unanimous, motion carried 6-0.**
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting 11/17/21: Motion by M. Egan to approve the minutes, 2nd by M. Hayes. **Vote was unanimous, motion carried 6-0.**
4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS – Krista Kardys voiced her concern with meeting in-person and not having the option of Zoom for this meeting and asked the board to consider hybrid because of the rise in (covid) cases. First Selectman A. Bisbikos said it is to the discretion of the Chair of the board. He also shared that he is meeting with IT (for technical support) on Monday/Tuesday of next week to discuss the options for hybrid meetings. Application for ARPA funding may be considered for additional costs of hybrid meetings. A. Miggiaccio commented that there is value in meeting face-to-face.
5. CORRESPONDENCE – None
6. DEPARTMENT REPORTS
 - a. Tax Collector – (none)
 - b. Finance
 - i. October – CFO M. Cosgrove asked if there are any questions she can answer for board members and stated it is too early in the fiscal year to show any significant impact. In future meetings, if there is something to bring attention to in the budget she will. State grants are not in by this time. CFO M. Cosgrove mentioned that revenue is down from last year and tax bill will go out middle of the month. The February report gives a good indication of how the revenue will be through the end of the year. M. Egan asked if the 1st tax bill would have the 2020/2021 mill rates. CFO M. Cosgrove explained that it does not but the 2nd tax bill will be adjusted to have the prorated new mill rate from the portion of the 1st tax bill. There is a waiver to apply for the difference not collected after the budget is adopted that will be decided by the Board of Selectman. The Board of Education partially gets reimbursed from the State to include the excess cost grant. The Board of Education gets a monthly budget report to review. Expenditures have two budgetary management tools: purchase orders to vendors and salary amounts. If a vacancy is filled mid-budget then the budget line amount is prorated. Union Contracts & settlements are a line item in the Human Resources Department budget. M. Cosgrove announced the Deputy CFO will be leaving her position next Friday. CFO M. Cosgrove will be retiring by the end of the budget year after 17 years of service to Colchester. One of the expenditures that stands out in the budget is the highway budget due to additional costs for tree work. Some of these costs are funded by the Professional Services Grant that is around \$39,000. A. Bisbikos said he will be meeting with Director of Public Works M. Prevetti to consider additional funding into the budget or to do a transfer with unassigned fund balances for tree work. Some Department budgets are under-budget where there are salary

vacancies. M. Egan voiced his concerns about the fire department over-budget because staff needs to be paid to cover shifts due to lack of per diem staff. CFO M. Cosgrove pointed out that line items within a Department Budget can be allocated differently as long as it does not exceed their budget.

7. FIRST SELECTMAN

- a. Transfers – None
- b. First Selectman's Report – First Selectman A. Bisbikos reported that Proclamation for Plotkin's Jewelers Day was set on November 22. The Plotkins have been in business for 70 years and have done a lot for the Colchester community. On November 24, Gobbles the Turkey was pardoned. The Town has officially entered into the Nation Opioid Settlement. The First Selectman signed the affordable housing grant. The First Selectman decreased his salary to \$80,000. Human Resources is reviewing policies and practicing pertaining to diversity. Fire Chief Interviews will be conducted at the next Board of Selectman meeting. There are two candidates. Holiday Homecoming is this Saturday at 4pm on the Colchester Town Green. The Colchester Choir and Orchestra will be performing at Bacon Academy on Saturday at 6pm.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Review By-Laws – Board members went through the by-laws for any necessary changes to be made. Section 1 whether or not the verbiage needed updating due to a hybrid model was discussed but no changes made. Section 4 will change the dates from the 1st and 3rd Wednesday meetings to the 2nd and 4th Wednesday meetings as well as omitting a specific time for meeting to be held leaving it to the discretion of the Chair. Section 5 was reviewed and all members agreed not to make changes, however, it was noted that citizens should only be addressing the board members and not another citizen. Discussion on Section 10 for the deadline for Town Meeting schedule for the following year was discussed and the Chair will follow-up to address with the Town Clerk. The Pledge of Allegiance will be added to each meeting.
- b. Budget Calendar – The budget process can be found on the Town website on the Board of Finance page. The First Selectman meets with all department heads and reports to the Board of Finance. A series of public forums will be held before Board of Finance meetings in January and February. The Board of Finance will be developing a calendar for the budget and will consider changing the dates earlier than in past years. CFO M. Cosgrove shared how the processes of the budget calendar should be a coordinated effort with the Board of Education; setting earlier dates for public forums would be beneficial. CFO M. Cosgrove suggests that the board review the Budget Document and then asks for clarification of any specifics in question. First Selectman A. Bisbikos noted that ARPA fund allocations will include targeting areas that have been neglected.
- c. Survey Monkey – The questions need to be reviewed. Chair A. Migliaccio needs two volunteers; J. Thomas and T. Vaillancourt. The draft of the survey will be due December 15th and completed January 12th.
- d. CCM Training – M. Egan is looking into training and will email new board members.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. BOF Clerk – Megan will be clerking future board of finance meetings.

10. BUDGET DISCUSSION

- a. Discussion priorities – Priorities for 2022 are the operational requirements for the town. There was a concern by M. Egan that ARPA funds would be taken from operational funds and result in a budget increase. There is an Infrastructure Bill that may bring in more funds for the town. M. Hayes suggested designated funds for the fire equipment. First Selectman A. Bisbikos reported that there is an increase in revenue from bloom energy. The board discussed an emphasis on designated funds and a capital plan. CFO M. Cosgrove clarified that some things in the budget can't be pre-funded and needs to be bonded.

11. LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS – A. Migliaccio: Commission of Aging & Parks and Recreation, M. Egan: Board of Education, T. Vaillancourt: ARPA, M. Hayes: Economic Development, J. Thomas: Youth 1st Coalition. The Senior Center Building Committee will be assigned a liaison once their meeting calendar is posted. A. Bisbikos stated that there is a Public Safety Commission in the works that would be a coalition of the Police and Fire Departments.

12. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – Krista Kardys agreed with the discussion on the three minute limit and to not allow personal attacks during citizen's comments. She felt that in-person only meetings and not providing Zoom option was impeding on free speech. Chair A. Migliaccio responded that there is an avenue for correspondence if the citizen is not present at the meeting and moving forward boards will be in-person as it has always been prior to covid. Hybrid is coming soon.

13. Motion to adjourn by A. Shilosky, 2nd by M. Hayes. ***Vote was unanimous.*** Meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Submitted By,

Rachel Fuller, Clerk