



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Andreas Bisbikos, First Selectman

BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING January 12th, 2022 – via Zoom – 7:00 PM

Minutes

Meeting was recorded

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COLCHESTER, CT
2022 JAN 14 AM 9:51
Boyle, Susan
GAYLE FURMAN
TOWN CLERK

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

Also Present: First Selectman A. Bisbikos, CFO M. Cosgrove, Tax Collector Michelle Wyatt, Marguerite Gignac, Superintendent Jeff Burt, Jessica Morozowich, Alexander Oliphant.

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair A. Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting 12/15/2021: Motion by A. Shilosky to approve the minutes, 2nd by J. Thomas. **Vote was unanimous, motion carried 6-0.**
4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS – None
5. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - None
6. BOE UPDATES: JEFF BURT, SUPERINTENDENT - J. Burt gave a budget process update, they have started the preliminary budget discussion and will start finalizing/making decisions next week. Reviewed budget drivers that are influencing how they are making the budget, including; the technology plan that still has not completely been funded, capital improvement, capital reserve, bargaining units (2-3%), transportation increase, elementary increased enrollment, high school decreased enrollment, health insurance increase, heating increase and inflation on supplies. Need to move items that were funded by ARPA back into the town budget like; staffing, technology, capital, curriculum implementation, etc. Will be meeting with the ARPA Committee to present and find out what the adjustments will be. A. Migliaccio asked why there is a curriculum increase being requested for the budget. J. Burt answered that they do a complete curriculum cycle every 5 years that requires new materials (books, etc and updated resources. They focus on 1 core subject every year, then start over. Would like to begin the ECS conversation again in the summer/fall.
7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS
 - a. Tax Collector – December Reports. Collection rate of 65.97%. M. Wyatt said collection rate is a little lower than it was at this time last year due to the late budget adoption. Second bills have been sent out. February 1st is the last day to pay before they become delinquent. Anyone can call if they did not receive their bill and they can come in to print one out. There were significant printing issues this year. A letter of apology was sent by the printing company and we asked for a discount, but have not heard back yet.
 - b. Finance - CFO M. Cosgrove reminded the board that the finance department is short staffed right now. Two staff members are leaving by the end of the month. Jeff Burt presented a reorganization of the finance department on the Education side. A junior accountant temp is coming to help with posting work for the short term. A long term plan is pending
8. FIRST SELECTMAN REPORT - A. Bisbikos - Acknowledge and thank the first responders, fire department and police department for their help distributing the COVID kits and masks. BOS approved public works union contract. Colchester police secured body camera and taser equipment ahead of schedule. Sent out an RFP for the ARPA consultant position, already getting applications. BOS increased firefighter per diem pay to \$17.50. Last BOS meeting started discussion for the public safety committee. Signed all documents associated with the grant for Comstock Bridge for \$27,300. Career pathways with Goodwin College for manufacturing, spoke with J. Burt.

9. CORRESPONDENCE - A. Migliaccio added a line item for correspondence from Rosalie Johnson, brought up a good point, and will discuss further later in the meeting.
10. LIAISON REPORTS - M. Egan BOE meeting - Project O invited Colchester to participate in their grant funded program. The Agricultural Commission applied for a grant for Connecticut Kids, which is funded by ARPA. Part of the farm to school collaboration. Proposed finance department reorganization for education. Raptor program brought up as a part of the security funds. Can be downloaded onto a phone and increases communication for emergencies. A. Migliaccio - will this replace the school greeters? M. Egan - Not a replacement, but used to keep everyone informed for an emergency. Assists teachers and staff. Initial quote was \$13,500. J. Morozowich - To clarify, the initial cost is \$13,500. Anyone can download it at the schools, it can save time in an emergency, and works with crisis teams. A. Migliaccio Commission on Aging - There will be tax help from February 11th - April 1st. Evan Evans is doing free snow removal for seniors again.
11. OLD BUSINESS -
- a. SURVEY MONKEY REVIEW - A. Migliaccio - Need to enter the questions and answers into the computer program and will meet with J. Thomas and T. Vaillancourt to finalize.
 - b. BUDGET CALENDAR, POSSIBLE ACTION - A. Migliaccio - Created a budget calendar, this is the earliest referendum possible and would like to keep to this schedule if possible, but will push out if needed. One special meeting is needed in April to maintain the earliest referendum date. If by that point everyone is in agreement then we should be able to continue with the schedule, if not then we will push out. Motion to approve the Budget Calendar motioned by M. Egan. 2nd by M. Hayes. **Vote was unanimous, motion carried 6-0.**
 - c. BY-LAWS, POSSIBLE ACTION - A. Migliaccio - Wrote out the changes needed to the bylaws in an addendum. Will be attached to the original by-laws. Motion to approve the addendum motioned by M. Hayes. 2nd by T. Vaillancourt. **Vote was unanimous, motion carried 6-0.**
12. NEW BUSINESS -
- a. ASSESSOR STATEMENT - A. Migliaccio - Assessors website says everything very well. Will ask John Chaponis if he can write a short statement to put to the town.
 - b. ASSESSOR EXEMPTIONS - A. Migliaccio - The correspondence for Rosalie asked if we could consider doing car taxes in two payments per year, like we do for real estate. Can we do this? Also, there is a brochure that explains all the tax exemptions for the town. We should make sure this is distributed during the budget season so people know what exemptions they qualify for. M. Wyatt - We already do January and July installments so there wouldn't be more work. Should consider interest revenue and how that will change. M. Egan - Do we go through the BOS for this kind of change? A. Migliaccio - Yes, it would have to go to the BOS. A. Bisbikos - Draft something up to bring to the BOS by February, talk with Michelle to make sure it's something we can do.
13. BUDGET DISCUSSION – None
14. CITIZEN'S COMMENT - None
15. ADJOURNMENT - Motion to adjourn by M. Egan, 2nd by J. Thomas. **Vote was unanimous.** Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Submitted By,

Megan Trujillo, BOF Clerk