

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT

2020 APR -3 PM 3: 30

Gayle Furman
GAYLE FURMAN
TOWN CLERK

Town of Colchester
Board of Finance Meeting Minutes
AGENDA – April 1, 2020 – Virtual Meeting – 7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING of the BOARD OF FINANCE
(All items on this agenda are subject to possible action.)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rob Tarlov, Michael Hayes, Mike Egan, Andreas Bisbikos, and Andrea Migliaccio, Bernie Dennler

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: First Selectman Mary Bylone, Tax Collector Michelle Wyatt, Town Clerk Gayle Furman, Selectmen

***All members and citizens were present via Zoom webinar

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Tarlov called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.
2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 04, 2020:** M. Hayes motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 4, 2020, seconded by A. Bisbikos. All members voted in favor with A. Migliaccio abstaining.
MOTION CARRIED.
4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None
5. **BOF VACANCY - Discussion and Possible Action:** M. Egan motioned to appoint B. Dennler to fill the vacancy on the Board of Finance, seconded by M. Hayes. Vote was unanimous. **MOTION CARRIED.** G. Furman swore B. Dennler is as a member.
6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None
7. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**
 - a. **Tax Collector:** M. Wyatt gave her report for March and highlighted changes and concerns due to Executive Orders put in place by the Governor as a result of the Coronavirus.
 - b. **Finance Department:** M. Cosgrove was not in attendance. She had previously submitted her reports to the members.
8. **FIRST SELECTMAN**
 - a. **Transfer requests:** None
 - b. **First Selectman's report:**
 - i. **General:** A contract was signed with Novus to provide daily IT services and address some special needs. The Halls Hill Road project is at the beginning stage. Bloom Energy project began Monday. There has been an increase in building and construction permits. The fire truck was returned to Clinton with many thanks.
 - ii. **COVID-19 Update:** She is holding Facebook Lives every day to update citizens. There are currently 3 reported cases in Colchester. There are several Town employees that are quarantined due to exposure. Meetings are held daily with S. Shoemaker as well as

frequent meetings with SECCOG, CCM, and the Governor. Employees that can work at home are for social distancing purposes but must provide details on how their work time at home is being spent. There is currently plenty of work for everyone to do. The fire department was having trouble covering ambulance shifts with volunteers due to fear of exposure of the coronavirus. To assure there is adequate coverage paid employees are staffing the hours where needed. Rosemary Coyle will become acting First Selectman if First Selectman Bylone were to become sick. We are in need of PPE for our emergency personnel.

9. OLD BUSINESS: None

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2020-2021 Budget: Members discussed with First Selectman Bylone the budget process. She plans to publish budget documents by April 14th. The proposed dates for presenting the budgets are BOE on April 15th and Town budget on April 16th with workshops held April 22nd and 23rd. June 16th is a proposed referendum date but it remains uncertain if a referendum will be able to be held based on the Governor's Executive Order. First Selectman Bylone said she will be discussing the process and the options further with fellow selectmen at their meeting, but she envisions a process that contains Board of Finance workshops with the BOE and herself and where changes will be made by BOF and then presented to the BOS to approve. M Bylone was asked if BOS could change the budget before approving and she said in her opinion the BOS could not increase it but supposed they could decrease it. She said she couldn't speak for the other Selectmen. The board discussed what other towns are doing in light of the Executive Orders, but no consistency. R. Tarlov stated that he felt that 7I laid out the minimum requirements for the budget process. R. Tarlov also stated that 7I did not give the Board of Selectmen the authority to approve the budget, but stated that they shall authorize the Budget Making Authority to approve the budget and set the mill rate and he said, that is the Board of Finance. M. Bylone disagreed. A. Bisbikos read a letter from Brian Smith, State Representative and former member of the Board Finance, who said that in Colchester the Board of Finance is the budget-making authority. M. Egan stated we should stick as close to the existing process as possible, start it soon, and defer the decision on a referendum and on who is the Budget Making Authority till a later time. M. Hayes said we should let the public know the schedule as soon as possible. All agreed we should start the process, follow the past process, and determine the final step later.

11. LIAISONS' REPORTS: Amy Domeika was asked to give a report on the BOE as A. Migliaccio had not been able to make the meeting. Distance learning has started. An Executive Order came from Governor Lamont ordering town's to continue to pay their staff. Cafeteria workers are preparing food for those needing free and reduced lunches, The hiring of an Assistant Principal at CES is moving forward. Teachers and paras will be having a teacher parade on April 2nd. M. Egan reported that the Senior Center Building Committee has not met but the architect is working on the contract.

12. CITIZENS COMMENTS: None

13. ADJOURNMENT: A. Bisbikos motioned to adjourn, seconded by M. Hayes. Vote was unanimous.
MOTION CARRIED. Chairman Tarlov motioned to adjourn at 8:36 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dawn LePage, Clerk

Attachment:
Brian Smith email

From: Rep. Smith, Brian <Brian.Smith@cga.ct.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 12:55 PM
To: Andreas Bisbikos <abisbikos@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Budget Process

Dear Mr. Bisbikos,

Thank you for your message and inquiry about this important topic. I believe that item 13 of Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 71 (3/21/20), establishes that, during the current Health crisis, the Board of Selectmen, and not the Town Meeting, shall be the entity to authorize the budget-making authority (i.e., the Board of Finance) to adopt the budget. I do not believe it to be an option, particularly in light of the necessity to avoid gatherings of people in groups of any size over five.

It may be that further guidance will be forthcoming as I understand there have been one or more questions on this and related areas that have been posed, but at this time I would advise complying with the language contained in Executive Order No. 71.

Regards,

Brian Smith

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

----- Original message -----

From: Andreas Bisbikos <abisbikos@colchesterct.gov>
Date: 4/1/20 11:43 AM (GMT-05:00)
To: "Rep. Smith, Brian" <Brian.Smith@cga.ct.gov>
Subject: Budget Process

Hi Mr. Smith

There is a lot of confusion regarding the Governor's Executive Order on the Budget Process and the notion that the Board of Selectmen, not the voters will decide the fate of the town budget. Does the Executive Order mandate that the Board of Selectmen and not the voters, will ultimately determine the budget? Or is it an option? Any clarification would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Andreas Bisbikos
Colchester Board of Finance