

Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 3rd, 2022, 7 PM Meeting
Room 1, Town Hall

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT

2022 MAR -9 PM 3:25

Boyle Freeman

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Correspondence: none
4. Citizens Comments: Monica Egan criticized the current administration and how the previous meeting minutes were captured. C. Mazzola spoke to the increasing problem of dog defecation on behalf of himself and others in his neighborhood and would like an ordinance to be adopted to prevent this from occurring. C. Herboldt also spoke to the dog defecation issue and would also like action to be taken to mitigate this issue as well. J. Cox inquired about including a "loop" system for those that have hearing aids and cochlear implants as well as captioning in the newly proposed hybrid meeting room setup. D. Gaby spoke to the dog defecation not only in her own neighborhood but at her place of work in town too. Mike Egan expressed his concern for not including additions and deletions on the agenda and his voiced support of reinstating them. P. Bureau expressed dissatisfaction with limited in-person BOS members and spoke in favor of several initiatives/actions carried out by the current administration.
5. Consent Agenda: Approve Minutes of the 2/17/22 Board of Selectmen Meeting: R.C. moved to remove the minutes from the Consent Agenda and renumber to #5 and make Tax Collector Refunds #5A. Seconded by D. Turner. Motion carries 5 -0. R. Coyle moved to correct the minutes to remove "but because minority representation will not be in place" including A. Bisbikos correction with a name correction as well. Seconded by D. Bates. Motion carried 5 - 0.

5A. Tax Collector's Refunds: R. Coyle motioned to move the block of Tax Collector's Refunds. Seconded by D. Turner. Motion carried 5 - 0.
6. Employee Handbook- Juneteenth Holiday Addition. R. Coyle moved to add Juneteenth on page 19 of the Employee Handbook and Personal Policies as #16 under Holidays. A. Bisbikos pointed out this will be good for all non-union employees. Seconded by D. Bates. Motion carries 5 -0.
7. MOU Between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Police Union- Juneteenth Holiday Addition: S. Ramsby, Director of Human Resources spoke that a review took place of all the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) on the town side with varying holiday observations. Each CBA will need a MOU to append to recognize it within that CBA. Other than the Police Department being addressed at the meeting, administrators and the library are the remaining groups that will be addressed. A. Bisbikos will reach out to those groups by the next meeting to get a similar MOU in place. J. LaChapelle motioned to agree to let A. Bisbikos sign the MOU with the Police Union to make Juneteenth a holiday for them. Seconded by R. Coyle. Motioned carried 5 -0.

8. ARPA

- A. ARPA Ad Hoc Committee Recommended Motions: February 28, ARPA meeting resulted in a couple of motions regarding ARPA and the business applications. Discussion with the board members ensued about the specifics of this motion. First suggested motion: R. Coyle motioned to review and approve business applications up to \$25,000 for one location owner with a deadline of April 30th. After April 30th, any additional applications for that location and owner would be considered for anything above and beyond to \$25,000 per location regardless of the number of that location (property holding company, business or separate tax. Seconded by D. Bates. Motion carried 5 -0. Second suggested motion: made by the ARPA Committee. Discussion with the board members ensued regarding the specifics on this motion. After an application has been approved by the Board of Selectmen, the approved applicant must sign a certification statement before funds are disbursed. This certification statement is an acknowledgement that the applicant will use the funds for the stated ARPA request, or if needs change, for business expenses that ensures the longevity of their business. R. Coyle motioned to approve this second ARPA motion. Seconded by D. Turner. Motion carried 5 – 0.
- B. Hybrid Meeting Room Equipment Demonstration: Tim Bycholski provided a detailed, informational presentation on what components and features this hybrid equipment will provide and spoke to the set up within the Town Hall conference rooms.
- C. Possible Action on the Hybrid Meeting Room Equipment: The Board of Selectmen engaged in discussion regarding competitive vendor bids, cost (service warranty, time and materials), components of the system, functionality and the three-month lead time because of supply-chain issues. Before this proposal is agreed upon some board members asked for a demonstration to be performed. It was agreed that the next board meeting on March 17th, would be Zoom only and the hybrid equipment will be demonstrated at that time.

9. Staffing Updates

- A. Current Status: Rachel Fuller's last day, is March 4th. A. Bisbikos thanked her for her dedication and work in helping to get the Administration off the ground. There is a new replacement for Department Clerk, Franchesca Brown, who has been fantastic. Sue Urbowicz moved up to the Employee Benefits AP Manager position and there is a new vacancy Payroll AP Assistant. Katrina Kirby is the Library Programming Assistant who is starting March 7.
10. Possible action on the C-TIP Application for ARK Station, LLC: Matt Bordeaux, Town Planner and Bruce Goldstein, Chairman of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) spoke to the recommendation made at the last meeting by the EDC to the board regarding a possible tax abatement under the C-TIP program. ARK Distillery, LLC is proposing to occupy an existing building at 200 Lebanon Avenue. ARK Distillery would like to provide not only a distillery, an associated cafe but also a meeting space. Long-term goal will be to start infusing liquors and ultimately distill their own product. Application noted an investment of upwards of \$300K worth of building and ground improvements. Tax incentive process was explained and how the applicant's acceptance for this was determined. Discussion continued regarding the tax abatement protocol. A. Bisbikos will reach out to the Town Clerk about putting out a legal notice within a

timely fashion. D. Bates moved that the proposed motion by the Board of Selectmen is hereby moved to accept the recommendations of the Economic Development Commission to grant property C-TIP tax abatement to ARK Station, LLC proposed in the amount of 100% in year one, 100% in year two, 100% in year three of the increase in real estate property tax for the proposed improvements to the existing building at 200 Lebanon Avenue granting of the property tax incentive is contingent on the issuance of the certification of completion of the building remodel as described in the application dated January 12, 2022 expires February 3 by the town of Colchester. The tax relief will be applied to the first full year after the certificate of occupancy is intended that the tax abatement can be assigned or assumed by any future related entity of the application for the use as described. The recommended C-TIP should be brought before the legislative body of the town and the town meeting on March 17th at 6:30 p.m. Town Hall. Seconded by R. Coyle Motion carries 5-0.

11. Lions' Club grant approval for the Norton Park Committee: D. Turner motioned that the BOS authorize A. Bisbikos to submit an application on behalf of Norton Park to the Lion's Club and sign it. Seconded by R. Coyle. Motion carried 5-0.
12. UCONN Wildlife Management Plan - Sablitz Property Open Space: R. Coyle moved that the Colchester BOS moves to authorize UCONN Wildlife major students to develop a wildlife management plan for the Middletown Road Open Space property known as the Assessor's Map 4W-09 Lot 013-000. A provided, free of charge, benefit to the town will be to identify where existing habitats are located so as not to disturb any when trails are eventually created. Seconded by D. Turner. Motion carried 5 – 0.
13. Removal of Dog Litter Ordinance: A. Bisbikos stated that a number of residents approached him to investigate the possibility of instituting an ordinance to address a current problem with owners not picking up their dog's feces when walking them in areas throughout the town. Glastonbury was initially researched, and it was discovered that instituting an ordinance like this, remedied the issue they encountered. The Resident State Trooper agreed to create a "ticket book" if this were to become an ordinance with receivables going directly to the town of Colchester or whatever is ultimately is agreed upon. A. Bisbikos read the existing ordinance that Glastonbury currently has in place. Questions ensued on how policing this would be enforced. A recommendation was made to contact the CT Council of Municipalities (CCM) for guidance. A. Bisbikos will reach out to CCM to discover what towns have similar ordinances, the enforcement of them and then share that with the Board of Selectmen. Continued discussion entailed further information gathering and simultaneously presenting a straw poll to the public for feedback.
14. First Selectman's Report BOS
 - a) The ARPA committee restarted its meetings on Monday, February 28th. As a reminder, there is \$1M in ARPA funds specifically earmarked for our local businesses. A business may receive up to \$25K in federal funds.
 - b) RecPlex Basketball Court Update: Our basketball courts will be one of the first projects to be worked as soon as the asphalt plants open back up with the warm weather. We expect that the basketball courts will be complete by the end of April.

- c) The Colchester Senior Center has reached a new milestone. We are now one member away from 1500 total members!! Thank you, Patty, for all your hard work.
- d) The Colchester Business Association will be hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony for The Colchester Urgent Care Center on Saturday, March 19th for 2 pm at their 179 Linwood Ave location. We hope you all can make it.
- e) Public Works did a great job handling the latest snowstorm. This crew has been fantastic all winter.
- f) The 2021 Grand List is up 22% from the previous year. Real Property is up 22.5%, motor vehicle is up 25.7%, and personal property is up 16.2%. Our current mill rate is 33.05. A combination of an increase in the Grand List, an increase in revenue, and fiscally conservative budgets will provide us the perfect storm to achieve a historic reduction in the current mill rate.

15. Liaison Reports: J. LaChapelle BOE had a meeting and removed the mask mandate and made them optional. D.Bates- Economic Development Commission met and they discussed the ARK Distillery. D. Turner: Youth First Coalition sent three applications to ARPA. They are looking for funding for a Youth Center, counseling services, and part-time case manager. The marketing committee created a new website they are getting ready to go live with and working on promoting services through different forms of media, the data committee has surveys coming out the last two weeks of March for youth in the community and their school committee has been focusing on mental health and had a suicide prevention training last month and they are proposing putting up signs around town with positive messages. A. Bisbikos will be getting quotes for the Youth Center to either instruct a new one or to refurbish the existing building. R. Coyle: Chatham Health was able to replenish all PPE supplies that they exhausted from the state warehouse during the Covid pandemic at no cost. They continue with health education with vaccine outreach and testing for Covid as well as diabetic health programs. The 2023 budget was passed and Colchester's increase is .83% or about \$1,700 for the year. Following FDA grants received: \$7,500 for staff and training; \$284,730 over three years for a capacity grant; \$166,277 over three years; \$23,785 for a membership grant. Majority of grant funds received used to cover costs of programs and the temporary staff needed to facilitate the grant application process. Attended ARPA, but a lot was covered during the BOS meeting. A. Bisbikos: Board of Finance had a forum where citizens spoke on their view for the budget season. Their budget survey will be posted to the website soon. The Affordable Housing town meeting was well done and multiple ideas were discussed. The deadline for the town to submit its plan to the state is June 1, 2022.

16. Adjourn: D. Turner motioned to adjourn at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by R. Coyle.

Submitted by Marli Rudko