



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Andreas Bisbikos, First Selectman

Board of Selectmen

Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 7:00 PM – via ZOOM

Members Present: First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos, Selectmen: Deborah Bates, Rosemary Coyle, Jason LaChapelle and Denise Turner

Attendees: Tim Bycholski- Red Thread; Maggie Cosgrove, CFO; Matt. Bordeaux, Town Planner

1. **Call to Order:** First Selectman, Andreas Bisbikos called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Correspondence:** None
4. **Citizens' Comments:** G. Transue is dismayed that Zoom is not the standard protocol for Board of Selectmen meetings. Would like a vote by the Board to make this standard going forward until the hybrid equipment is in place. M. Dubreuil supports the Red Thread proposal (hybrid meeting setup). Opinion on the "cart" component is at that price of 11K, two additional ones should be included (Senior Center and Library). Supports continuing Board of Selectmen meetings in person as well as Zoom, making the hybrid proposal a must-have. J. Cox in favor of Zoom and hybrid meeting setup and thinks the ARPA funds requested should reflect the 10-year cost of the use of it. A. Bisbikos stated that the maintenance cost will be addressed during the meeting.

5. Consent Agenda

- A. Approve Minutes of the 3/3/22 Board of Selectmen Meeting: R. Coyle motioned to remove minutes off and renumber to #5 and renumber #5B as 5A, Tax Collector's Refunds. Seconded by D. Turner. Motion carried 5 – 0. R. Coyle had moved to postpone action on the minutes until next meeting when the following can be completed: Listing of which members are present, absent and any additional attendees. Seconded by D. Turner. *Motion carried 5 – 0.* R. Coyle asked to have the minutes of February 3rd and 17th, put back on the next agenda for the same missing components. Seconded by J. LaChapelle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

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By: Denise Turner

B. Tax Collector's Refunds: D. Bates motioned to move forward. Seconded by J. LaChapelle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

6. MOU Between the Town of Colchester and the Town Administrators Union – Juneteenth Holiday

Addition: D. Turner motioned to accept the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Colchester and the Town Administrators Union concerning the addition of the holiday Juneteenth. Seconded by R. Coyle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

7. MOU Between the Town of Colchester and the Cragin Library Employees Union – Juneteenth

Holiday Addition: Town of Colchester and Cragin: D. Turner motioned to accept the MOU between the Town of Colchester and the Cragin Library Employees Union concerning the addition of the holiday Juneteenth. Seconded by R. Coyle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

8. MOU Between the Town of Colchester and the Town Administrators Union – Jay Gigliotti: D.

Turner motioned to accept the MOU between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Administrators Union concerning the temporary increase in the hourly rate of pay for the Wetlands officer position currently filled by James Gigliotti. The increase will be by \$10.00/hr. to a total of \$44.99 retroactive to 2/18/2022 and ending when the Zoning Enforcement Officer position is filled or June 30, 2022, whichever comes first. Seconded by D. Bates. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

9. ARPA

A. Hybrid Meeting Room Equipment Demonstration: Tim Bycholski shared his screen and provided video and pictures of a current customer's installation. The functionality and overview of what the camera, microphones and audio quality will provide was demonstrated. The Board of Selectmen asked various questions regarding the functionality of this setup. Zoom application as well as other applications such as other Google Teams or Webex, even off of external devices such as a laptop can still be utilized with this setup. The "cart" component with the "rally bar" was also addressed and the functionality of this component as well. The Board of Selectmen asked many questions regarding clarification on the functionality, the "cart", and the security aspects of it. Discussion covered the post-warranty with the different levels, i.e., Basic and Gold packages. Pre-purchase of maintenance will allow for the benefit of a 20% discount on either plan. The first year of maintenance is free regardless of plan chosen. It was discussed that a closer look needs to be given on the total cost of what this set up would cost and how it will be budgeted for going forward. M. Cosgrove, CFO, commented

on maintenance agreement discussion. Covered was the ARPA timeframe guidelines and the suggestion of exploring setting aside the money in our own reserves as opposed to signing up for a maintenance agreement. T. Bycholski will get pricing for the Basic and Gold plans and provide to the Board of Selectmen for review. The ARPA Committee has reviewed this and is in favor, but the official voting process should be followed as part of proper protocol.

B. Possible Action on the Hybrid Meeting Room Equipment: J. LaChapelle motioned to have A. Bisbikos sign the contract for no more than \$74,885.30. Seconded by R. Coyle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

C. Attestation Agreement: A. Bisbikos discussed more on the management of contract accountability. This was read aloud, and all members of the Board of Selectmen agreed on the final wording of this. The paragraph of #2 was chosen over “#2a”. Discussion was held on further wording, the deadline of the fund availability, the process our town is employing as part of the business approval process and secondary business approvals. D. Turner motioned to accept the proposed Attestation Agreement with the suggested corrections. Seconded by R. Coyle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.* A. Bisbikos recommended to put the Attestation Letter sample up on the ARPA page to make businesses aware of it.

10. Staffing Updates

Current Status: Final day on March 18, 2022, for the Health & Safety Officer, Walter Cox who was the former Fire Chief. A. Bisbikos thanked him for his service and wished him the best on his retirement. Applicants for the positions of Director of Public Works and Payroll Assistant were received. Any subsequent updates will be provided by A. Bisbikos for any outstanding positions. M. Cosgrove spoke to the Town Finance Director position, which would be specifically for the town only and provided information on the restructuring of the Finance Department. This job posting will be shared to various sources within the next few days. Ultimately there will be two Finance Directors, one on the town side and the other for the Board of Education. Comparisons to other Town Districts were highlighted based on our town size and the benefit a larger staff would provide. Discussion ensued by the Board of Selectmen for clarification on the most recent job description and split-fund positions. R. Coyle motioned to accept the job description of the Finance Department, Town Finance Director. Seconded by D. Bates. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

11. Selection of New Logo for Colchester Senior Center: There are four designs that P. Watts presented to various groups, which included the COA, Sr. Ctr, and SCBC. Of all four, #3 received the most votes. Discussion involved choosing a finalist and then asking the community to engage in the decision-making process. Also explored was the prospect of engaging with BA art students, the community at large and any senior artists for logo submissions. P. Watts spoke to her goals of rebranding the Senior Center logo. A. Bisbikos and P. Watts will draft parameters, guidelines, and a timeline for the community participation.

12. Regulating Cannabis in response to Public Act 21-1: M. Bordeaux gave overview on ACT 21- and zoning regulations for various license types. Matt would like the Board of Selectmen support to have The Planning & Zoning Commission move forward with a thoughtful and appropriate regulation process for those license types/establishments throughout town. Also addressed the Board of Selectmen's authority for the determination of appropriate areas of usage as it pertains to public spaces, schools, for example. Overview of licensing process was covered in relation to local zoning approval. R. Coyle made a motion that the Board of Selectmen charge the P&Z Commission to move forward on a thoughtful development and adoption of regulations for each potential establishment allowed by the law. Seconded by J. LaChapelle. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

13. Design Services – Police Department Renovations: Police Department Renovations: Discussion was covered on the need to start an ongoing discussion regarding the expansion of the Police Department space and to get an idea of what an improvement project might cost working with a design professional. Consideration of appropriate ARPA funds might be explored as well as the possibility of utilizing the natural gas pipeline coming into town. This will be step one as part of an evolving conversation. R. Coyle moved to authorize the First Selectman to sign all necessary documents related to the fee proposal dated February 17, 2022, re: expansion of existing Police Department from Stephen Jager Associates, LLC for conceptual floor plans for the proposed renovation and expansion of the Police Department. Fees, not to exceed \$3,200, for this service will be provided by the Public Works Department's Professional Services budget. Seconded by D. Bates. *Motion carried 5 – 0.*

14. Removal of Dog Litter Ordinance Update: A. Bisbikos provided an update. A poll was put out on Facebook and the community responded with 69% in favor, about 23% were not, and around 8% were not sure. There were 357 respondents to this poll. CCM was contacted and A. Bisbikos is waiting to hear back from them regarding effectively enforcing an ordinance such as this. Discussion ensued around the

enforceability and not putting on the books an ordinance that turns out to not be effectively enforced. As more information is received, A. Bisbikos will update the Board of Selectmen.

15. Citizens' Comments: C. Russi – Spoke to the fact that there is a lot of lead and asbestos in the Senior Center Building. Supports community involvement for the new Senior Center logo. Expressed her opinions on the various logos being presented, the limited choices and its uses. R. Silberman commented on bi-partisan interaction on the board this evening. Not sure how the dog litter ordinance would be successfully enforced. Supports the Zoom platform until hybrid meeting set up is available and supports setting money aside in a town fund for maintenance costs for that hybrid setup. L. Pasternak agrees with involving the community for the Senior Center Building logo. K. Yu is a small business owner and is curious what are the next steps for business owners now that ARPA has passed the Attestation Letter. A. Bisbikos spoke to different options to have that addressed, probably a special meeting to be held. M. Dubreuil enjoyed the bi-partisan meeting and unanimous approval of the hybrid meeting room. Spoke to support of using the Open Budget software. A. Bisbikos stated that it is in his budget and will have to go through the budget process.

16. First Selectman's Report

1. Before our meeting, the C-Tip application for ARK Distillery was approved. Congratulations to ARK Distillery and thank you for choosing Colchester!!
2. On Monday, March 7th, the Recreation Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Selectman approve naming R-4 in honor of Norm Kaplan. According to the Town policy, we need a petition signed by 3% (347) of the registered voters in the Town of Colchester. Once the Town Clerk has verified the signatures, the recommendation will be sent to the Board of Selectman's for a vote to send the proposal to a Town meeting for approval by the townspeople. On a personal note, Norm Kaplan was an excellent all-around guy, and I was fortunate enough to have him as my youth soccer coach. Collaborating with him on the Park & Rec Commission via the Board of Finance was always a pleasure. I strongly endorse this proposal to honor Norm. If a citizen is interested in obtaining a petition for signatures, please contact me or Tiffany Quinn, our Park & Rec Director.
3. The 2022 Colchester Budget Survey results are available! Please go online to see the results. I am also currently working on the budget, which will be presented to the public on April 5th.
4. The ARPA committee is still accepting small business applications. 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. Deadlines for local businesses are April 30th. The Board of Selectmen will begin the process of approving applications very soon.
5. ARPA Initiative Update 1: RFPs (Requests for Purchase) for our Recreational Playgrounds and our Field Irrigation will be going out to bid this Friday. I expect to bring the Playgrounds, the Field Irrigation, the Tennis Courts, the Pickleball Courts, and the Strategic Planner requests to the Board of Selectmen in April for approval.

6. ARPA Initiative Update 2: I am consulting with UHY on the Community Gift Card Proposal. The intent is to provide each household the opportunity to claim a \$100 Gift Card. With historic inflation and rising gas prices, this will be an opportunity to directly help our citizens. With the geofencing technology that the cards will have, purchases will be limited to Colchester – allowing our local businesses to benefit as well.
7. 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 100 Linwood Ave location. We hope you all can make it.

17. Liaison Reports: J. LaChapelle – BOE met, budget has been increased by an additional \$125K. D. Bates – no updates. D. Turner – Conversation Commission had one pending application for improvements in the Old Amston Road area for which it was approved. One request for work within the conservation easement at 584 Lebanon Avenue, which was tabled for further discussion with the applicant. S&W/BA subcommittee elected Steve Coyle as Chairman and Tom Dessureault as Vice Chairman. A meeting scheduled was agreed upon and they will meet the second and fourth Thursdays of each month until the issue is resolved. Pam Minella from the water department was there. Discussion eliminated all potential causes except for the meter. They will be requesting further information from the meter company before bringing to the Board of Selectmen for a possible solution. CORE met firmed up schedule for 2022. They drafted a core mission statement, as well as bylaws and possible yearly event participation. R. Coyle – Senior Center Building Committee met and approved an invoice for \$6,800, which is 30% of the design development. CSG, Project Manager will be assuming responsibility for all the budget reports. The architects, Silver Petrucelli & Assoc., talked about the wetlands mapping and test pits and that the project is on schedule. Design groups passed a change order for additional \$5,400 for additional work on test pits. Commission on Aging, the Chair encouraged members to complete the Youth First Coalition survey. Discussion on May 15, Wellness Fair to be held at WJJMS from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Themes for the booths were shared and information on breakout sessions. Senior Center membership is now at 1,515 members. ARPA met and approved 15 business applications that are ready to come to the Board of Selectman for approval which totals \$375K. As of yesterday, business applications received totals \$891K. Discussed the Attestation Agreement. Open Space met and discussed two lot subdivision on Bigelow Road. Due to overall size, amount of undesirable ledge and steep slopes, recommendation was fee in lieu of open space to meet the requirement. Open Space passed that unanimously. A. Bisbikos – Board of Finance reviewed Survey Monkey results, preliminary discussions of proposals by Superintendent and the First Selectman's budget as well. Mentioned Public Safety Committee coming up next week and will suggest to the group there be citizen involvement.

18. Adjourn: D. Turner made a motion to adjourn at 10:16 p.m. Seconded by D. Bates.