



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

**Board of Finance
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2019 @ 7PM
Town Hall, Room 1**

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TOWN OF COLCHESTER
2019 APR 22 AM 11:14

Members Present: R. Tarlov, R. Esteve, M. Egan (phone in), A. Migliaccio, A. Bisbikos

Absent: N. Negron

Others Present: First Selectman A. Shilosky, CFO M. Cosgrove, BOE B Bernier, BOS D. Mizla, R. Coyle, BOE M. Bylone, Chief Cox, J. Walsh, C. Jaskiewicz, M Hayes, PW J Paggioli, and Clerk, K. Cavanaugh

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Meeting was called to order at 7:00 by R. Tarlov.
2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None
3. **C3 PRESENTATION** – C. Praisner provided an update on the current activity, focusing on families and presented a slide show titled “Strong Family / Heathy Children” R. Tarlov asked about changes due to the drop in revenue. C. Praisner stated programing is the area that will take a cut. M. Egan asked what the benefits are with investing early. C. Praisner stated generally with every dollar invested the return is between \$7-\$17 depending on the research study and population that is being addressed. The early investing is more about prevention instead of remediation, trying to avoid problems in the first place. A. Bisbikos asked if other towns that are looked upon when trying to emulate their ideas? C. Praisner stated in the past they have met with other groups for discussions, however Colchester is seen as one of the model communities.
4. **SOCIAL SERVICES** – Valerie Geato spoke historically of the requested position being part time and has not been full time for quite a few years. The scope of the job and duties were discussed. A. Migliaccio asked if once the data was input into the system would that would be auto fill for the following years to save time. V. Geato stated the information would need to be inputted and updated on an annual basis as the review is for the previous 4 weeks. A. Bisbikos said in terms of creating a full time position, at the last meeting, there was some question on the qualifications and asked what qualifications would be needed from the individual. V. Geato responded Bachelor’s degree, Social worker experience. R Tarlov asked if other members of the department, with Master’s Degree in Social Work could share the workload of Social Services in periods of heavy work load.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** April 3, Regular Meeting – A. Migliaccio motioned to approve the April 3rd, Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by R. Esteve. Motion Carried. 5/0/0. April 8th Workshop – R. Esteve motioned to approve the April 8th Workshop Meeting Minutes, seconded by M. Egan. A. Migliaccio and A. Bisbikos abstained. All other members voted in favor. Motion Carried. 3/0/2. April 10th Workshop – A. Bisbikos motioned to approve the April 10th Workshop Meeting Minutes, seconded by R. Esteve. Motion Carried. 5/0/0.
6. **CITIZENS COMMENTS** – None
7. **CORRESPONDENCE** – None
8. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS** –
 - a. Tax Collector- M. Wyatt was not present at the meeting, however asked for the Board members to review the suspense items, as action will need to be taken at the next meeting.
 - b. Finance- M. Cosgrove referred to a line item on the March 2019 revenue / expenditure report, the snow removal expense had increased from the prior month.
9. **FIRST SELECTMAN**
 - a. Transfer requests – None
 - b. First Selectman’s report – None
10. **OLD BUSINESS** –
 - a. OpenColcheseter

- i. Budget Trends Report – Discussion and Possible Action – A. Migliaccio motioned to recommend to the Policy Committee that the Budget Trend report be added to the public site, seconded by R. Esteve. Motion Carried. 5/0/0
- ii. Instructional Video – Discussion and Possible Action – R. Esteve motioned to recommend to add the Instructional Video to the Public Site, seconded by A. Bisbikos. Motion Carried. 5/0/0
- iii. Proposed Budget – Discussion and Possible Action – M Cosgrove said she had reviewed the Opengov response and that it was not as simple as they described and the report would not be included in the current reports to be able to compare to the past, and likely stand by itself as a single bar.
- iv. OpenGov Reporting and Analysis Module – Discussion and possible Action- A. Bisbikos said he was in favor of the module, as the more data that can be had is better. R. Tarlov said he feels this is a good communication tool to have. The members of the Board recommend this item be left in the budget.

11. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Citizens Discussion, Questions and Comments regarding the Budget – Rosemary Coyle commented on V. Geatos report and wanted to add that the focus needs to be on the position that is needed and not the services coming over from the Senior Center, and their truly is a need to bring that position to full time.
- b. 2019-2020 Budget – Discussion –
Social Services Full Time Position - A. Migliaccio feels the need to support the full time position. A. Bisbikos feels when there is constant calls of crisis and people in need it is something that needs attention, however has concern from the workload coming from the Senior Center and how that is going to be addressed. R. Esteve feels Social Services and the Senior Center are understaffed given the workload at hand and supports the addition of the full time position. M. Egan said looking at the needs of the people in the community and the services that are required, a more stable and qualified person would be better fit as a full time position. R. Tarlov expressed concern with the overall actual costs for the position as future costs of health claims is not included.
Public Works 2 FT Grounds Maintenance Position- R. Tarlov expressed again the concern with actual overall costs for the positions given the added exposure of health insurance. He said with all the other department requests, we are talking about adding up 5 positions and as we are self-funded, that is a significant additional financial exposure. A. Migliaccio feels the fields are in need of more attention, however starting with allowing 1 position at this time would help fill the need. A. Bisbikos said for a while now there has been a concern for the looks and safety of the fields, and would also like to begin with the 1 position and perhaps revisit next year. R. Esteve also supported the addition of 1 position. M. Egan doesn't doubt that 2 full time positions are needed, but with this budget would support 1.
ParaMed Program – A. Bisbikos understands the concerns regarding the costs over the years, but feels it is owed to the Fire Department and the voters to vote on the paramedic program. M. Egan expressed concern with putting it to the voters this year is the un-clarity of seeing the financial impact of the program and that will only come after the voters weigh in. R. Tarlov said he is not against the ParaMed Program, not sure enough information is had to say yes or no and especially concerned that no research was done on outside alternatives. As a BOF member he feels he has a responsibility to those who elected him to have all the numbers for current and future years and we should have looked at all the outside options, and be sure this is the best option. He feels it should be up to the voters to decided, however when presented to the voter at the Public Hearing this large item deserves more mention than the single line shown in the first presentation. This year's budget has only a little more than ½ the annual cost and a future expansion is planned in year 2 or 3 and all this needs to be covered in better detail than at the first Public Hearing. The concern is the large tax increase this year and the ParaMed programing is being buried in the increase. R. Esteve agrees the public interest is there, at this point there is an obligation to send it to the town for vote, however needs to be done with full disclosure about the full implementation of what the cost structure is going to be and also going back to the town

to show what else can be cut from the budget to offset this increase. M. Egan said having to cut that much from the budget in order to move this program forward is going to be very difficult and he does not recall the Fire Department saying that this new service should be replacing and reducing other current services being offered. A Bisbikos suggested using Unassigned Fund Balance buy some capital items so they can be removed from the budget. R Tarlov stated that there are no capital purchases in the budget, just annual funding our long term capital plan for future purchases. By removing those we are hiding the true cost of the program, the money needs to be put in the plan through future budgets and that next year the Paramedic Program costs will double and we would have that increase plus this year's cost reflected in next year's budget increase. A. Bisbikos asked A. Shilosky if he was comfortable with this being in the budget and can the town afford the paramedic program as is and is he comfortable moving this to the voter. A. Shilosky stated he was not totally comfortable. He said because you do not use fund balance to balance a budget. He said we are going out to bond and last time we used fund balance for the budget, our rating was reduced and that would cost us a lot of money in a higher interest rate needing to be paid. He believes in the ParaMed program and feels the public deserves it, however is not sure the town can afford it. He feels comfortable with moving this vote forward to the taxpayers as they have the right to make that decision. M. Egan said if this is presented to the voters, we cannot be doing things that are going to hide the eventual cost associated with the program.

- c. Citizens Discussion, Questions and Comments regarding the Budget- R. Coyle feels it needs to be articulated to the public how much revenue has been lost. C. Maynard said the Chief over the past several budget years has provided estimations on both income and managed the expenses within the budget, so for the commission to not have faith with the process is insulting. He said he understands this is an impact to the taxpayers, they also understand this has an impact on the care that the taxpayers receive. J. Walsh stated of the questions that have been submitted have been answered, however the numbers the commission is looking for do not exist. They are able to provide historical information. A Bacon Academy student spoke to the commission of the time they volunteer to the Fire Department to provide care for emergency services and this saddens him to feel the lack of support of the Paramedic program. D. Marvin stated the R. Tarlov said he has an obligation to make sure the finances work, I have a responsibility to make sure we are providing the best service. She also stated there were things that R. Tarlov did not know about American Ambulance. A Fire Department employee said that by using an outside company, we would have just a Paramedic and not have a Firefighter/Paramedic and lose the opportunity to have every shift covered by a full time firefighter.
- d. 2019-2020 Budget – discussion and possible action on the Town Budget- R. Esteve feels that 200-300k needs to be pulled from the budget. A. Bisbikos feels it should go to the voter, and feels that unless the budget is reduced significantly, the paramedic program isn't getting a fair shake as the voter is just going to see the bottom line. M. Egan feels it is the responsibility of the Fire Department to sell this to the public. A. Migliaccio feels that if this budget is sent out for public vote it will be shut down, but it should go to the public. R. Esteve asked Mr. Shilosky for his input on where he might be able to find some alternative cuts from the proposed budget. R. Tarlov suggested the members review the budget to see if any more cuts can be made and send them to A. Shilosky prior to the next meeting for review.

12. **LIAISONS' REPORTS** – A. Migliaccio provided a liaison report from the BOE meeting.

13. **CITIZENS COMMENTS** – None

14. **ADJOURNMENT** R. Esteve motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:19pm, seconded by A. Migliaccio. All members present voted in favor. Motion Carried. 5/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Kamey Cavanaugh, clerk

Tax Collector's Report for the Month of - **MARCH 2019**

Collection Rate: 98.22%

Current Taxes Collected: \$184,214.58

Interest on Current Taxes Collected: \$12,162.55

Delinquent Taxes Collected: \$32,088.36

Interest on Delinquent Taxes Collected: \$19,048.83

Lexis Nexis Summary:

Accounts Active: _____

Money Collected: \$9,888.12

Notes:

- On track to make end of year goals
- Looking at scheduling the Tax Sale 3rd Friday in July 2019. Sent 26 properties to the attorney and right now we are down to 15. We are closely working with the attorney – we will have everything on our departments' website very shortly.