



# Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

**Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
April 3, 2019 @ 7PM  
Town Hall, Room 1**

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TOWN OF COLCHESTER  
APR 15 2019 11:20 AM

**Members Present:** R. Tarlov, N. Negron, R. Esteve, M. Egan, A. Migliaccio, A. Bisbikos

**Others Present:** First Selectman A. Shilosky, CFO M. Cosgrove, BOS D. Mizla, R. Coyle, BOE M. Bylone, Chief Cox, J. Walsh, C. Jaskiewicz, and Clerk, J. Campbell

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Meeting was called to order at 7:01 by R. Tarlov.
2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None
3. **OPENGOV PRESENTATION** – Accountability and Productivity Module – Meredith Behm with Opengov presented.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** March 20, Regular Meeting – R. Esteve motioned to approve the March 20<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by A. Bisbikos. A. Migliaccio abstained. All other members present voted in favor. Motion Carried. 5/0/1
5. **CITIZENS COMMENTS** – None
6. **CORRESPONDENCE** – None
7. **ALS PARAMEDIC PROGRAM** – Discussion – In the current proposed budget, included are amounts for roughly half a year plus some onetime costs included in the capital, insurance and fire operations budgets. The department has applied for a SAFER grant. This will help to ease the budget impact of the staffing for the paramedic program over the first 3 years. FF/Paramedic, one promotion and one new will be hired in Jan. while a supervisor/paramedic would be hired on 10/1/2019. Collective bargaining will need to take place to discuss hours, rate of pay, etc. The SAFER grant was applied for by Chief Cox on 3/22. First round of awards will be given in September. Of the past 15 grants (not SAFER grants) the department has applied for, they have received 6, but SAFER grants are the most competitive. Total implementation will take 2-3 years. R Tarlov stated, that for the budget workshop, he wants to see cost projections for the first 3 years of the program, including STEP increases. Once fully implemented, 4 paramedic positions will have been implemented and a fly car will have been purchased. R Tarlov said he recognizes that fast response for heart attack victims is critical and he is a member of the group most affected by this, and asked if this has a need that is greater than other Town needs or if this is the best solution. He asked the Chief if this was more important than the other needs in the FD Department's Strategic Plan, such as vehicle and equipment replacement. The Chief said they were all needed. Because it was highlighted in the presentation, Chief Cox was asked about the number of cardiac arrest calls. According to EMS Charts, the software the department uses, 2018 had 24 cardiac arrest calls, 2017 had 14 and 2016 has 19. The paramedic supervisor has been planned for as a Monday – Friday 9-5 and the FF/Paramedics have been planned as 3/16hr days for budget purposes, this is subject to collective bargaining. 1 paramedic and 1 EMT are required on all shifts. R Tarlov said we owe it to the taxpayer to be sure there are no other ways to do this cheaper or better. He asked Chief Cox if they had researched the costs and benefits of other ways to provide these services. He said, other than the meeting you (R. Tarlov) and Art had, no, as he feels handling the Paramedic needs in house are more cost effective and controllable than hiring an outside party. M Egan asked what happens if a paramedic is fighting a fire and an ALS call comes in. Mutual aid will cover if our paramedic is working on another call. A. Shilosky has heard from Lebanon who is interested in our program and would like to talk once the program is up and running. The facilities' plan that has already been approved and Narcotics will be monitored. Chief Cox has presented to Northwood's and CBA and will be presenting to Colchester Commons. He feels the presentation was well received. He said he let them know that there would be a cost, but that overtime we're going to recover it. R Tarlov asked to him clarify, and he said he meant we would get part of it back. He said evaluation of the program should occur every year. R. Tarlov pointed out that other than the HAS

contributions, we are not factoring in the cost of health insurance. M Cosgrove stated that is because we don't know if a new employee will need coverage and if so that cost could range from \$0 to \$125,000 per family member. She said we never adjust the current year's budget when added or subtracting employees. R Tarlov stated that he understands this, but it will affect the cost of the program in future years, and we should not be assuming that this cost is \$0 in assessing the cost of a new program. He asked to receive the average cost per employee of our current annual health insurance funding. M. Eagan asked if in the future, we would be able to evaluate the cost of the paramedic program. M Cosgrove said that would be difficult to do as we do not track many supplies and other costs for the Fire/EMS services separately.

8. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Month

- a. Tax Collector
- b. Finance

9. **FIRST SELECTMAN**

- a. Transfer requests – None
- b. First Selectman's report – A. Shilosky met with the owners of Lincoln Lake. They are working to clear the property, fix the bridge and their potential goals are to build a resort.

10. **OLD BUSINESS** –

- a. Opengov.com – Discussion and Possible Action – R. Tarlov and A. Shilosky stated that a presentation will be scheduled for the department heads to review the Reporting module. In addition to the Financial Transparency module recently implemented, the Report software, with a separate cost is part of our contract. There are questions on to the access of "administrators" who log in. Will we be able to restrict the internal users' ability to edit the reports of others? A. Bisbikos stated that this program has worked in other towns and there has to be a way to work with access issue # and we should invest in the program. This will hold everyone accountable and everyone will be on the same page. M. Egan stated that the information is easy to understand, provides valuable information, and with the significant investment with the fire/EMT program, that with this software, we would be able to show what we are getting. R. Esteve stated that there is data that the Fire Dept. is mandated to report through State and Federal reporting software. It's just a matter of formatting it to Opengov. R. Tarlov will arrange for the Opengov Financial Transparency tutorial video to be played at the May 14<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing.

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. By-Law Changes – Discussion and Possible Action – By-law changes are a result of the Charter Revision. See attached by laws. A. Bisbikos motioned to approve the by-law changes, seconded by N. Negron. All members voted in favor. Motion Carried 6/0
- b. 2019-2020 Budget – Discussion – R. Tarlov asked board members to forward any questions they have directly to the BOE and BOS so that they may address them at the Workshop presentations next week.

12. **LIAISONS' REPORTS** – No Reports

13. **CITIZENS COMMENTS** – T. Rudko stated that the Town should continue with Opengov and the reports we just.

The public should be able to view this and a tool that we should be using to message the public. He feels that the ALS presentation was a little of a bait & switch. We were told that the revenue would cover the cost and that the Town would be able to back out if the program wasn't working. He also we should be mindful of increasing taxes to spend this kind of money when 205 homes are being foreclosed on.

14. **ADJOURNMENT** A. Migliaccio motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:21pm, seconded by N. Negron. All members present voted in favor. Motion Carried. 6/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanie Campbell, clerk

**Attachments:** ALS Spreadsheet | By-Laws