

**RE: Submission Received: Contact Us**

First Selectman &lt;selectman@colchesterct.gov&gt;

Tue 11/22/2022 9:56 AM

To: Irene Watson &amp; Norman Dupuis &lt;irene\_norm@yahoo.com&gt;

Irene &amp; Norm,

Thank you for the kind words. I believe that solution is the happy medium that gets us a senior center and avoids a tax increase. I just hope we can get everyone on board.

Sincerely,

Andreas

**From:** Irene Watson & Norman Dupuis via Colchester CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>**Sent:** Monday, November 21, 2022 8:16 PM**To:** Franchesca Brown <fbrown@colchesterct.gov>; First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>**Subject:** Submission Received: Contact Us

Submitted on Monday, November 21, 2022 - 8:16pm

Submitted values are:

Subject: First Selectman's Office

Message Details:

Hi Andreas,

My husband and I were at the Monday night meeting (11/21/22) in regard to the overage on the senior center bid. We heard your solution for making up the extra money and thought it was a good three-prong approach on your part and want to let you know we support your plan.

--Irene Watson &amp; Norman Dupuis

==Please provide the following information:==

Name: Irene Watson &amp; Norman Dupuis

Email: [irene\\_norm@yahoo.com](mailto:irene_norm@yahoo.com)

Phone: 860-303-9823

Address: 147 Standish Road, Colchester, CT

Organization: homeowner and taxpayer

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.colchesterct.gov/node/16/submission/11971>

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**Fw: Colchester Senior Center Special Meeting**

Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>

Tue 11/22/2022 1:00 PM

To: dubreuil@gmail.com <dubreuil@gmail.com>

Cc: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Art Shilosky <artshilosky@yahoo.com>; Andrea Migliaccio <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

 2 attachments (9 MB)

Strategic Plan Final 2017-2022.pdf; NL 12 2022.pdf;

Michael:

Thank you for attending last night's meeting and your input.

As Patty Watts has responded to items A, C & D, I will respond to question B.

The bid is a firm fixed price for the services that are provided in the plans and specifications. But, as in any construction project, there always exist the possibility of cost increases, as well as cost decreases.

As an example; the plans and specifications call out a particular parking lot fixture. When the contractor goes to order the fixture, he is told by the supplier that that particular light fixture has been discontinued by the manufacturer. At that point, the Contractor would look into a substitute light fixture that meets the specifications and submits to the Architect and Building Committee for approval. The substitute fixture could be a higher or lower price, which would result in a change order for more money, or less which would go to the overall construction price.

That is one possibility, there could be others as the construction happens. In our budget, as is normal practice in construction projects, we have carried a contingency line item to cover these possible overruns or problems that may creep up. These types of changes to the project are generally small and do not impact the overall final cost greatly, and keep the project within the construction budget.

I have been involved in the construction industry for over 40 years, and no one can absolutely guarantee no cost overruns. We can stay within budget because we have a contingency built into the budget, but to say the final cost will be exactly what the contract was signed for is very difficult to commit to.

Please contact me if you have any other questions.

Thank you.

Tony Tarnowski, LEED A.P.  
Chairman  
Senior Center Building Committee

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**From:** Anthony Tarnowski <tar51214@att.net>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 12:15 PM

**To:** Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Fw: Colchester Senior Center Special Meeting

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Patty Watts <seniorcitizens@colchesterct.gov>  
**To:** First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Tony Tarnowski <tar51214@att.net>  
**Cc:** Michael Dubreuil <dubreuil@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 at 10:56:15 AM EST  
**Subject:** Re: Colchester Senior Center Special Meeting

Mr. Dubreuil,

Thank you for your questions and your interest in the senior center project. Below, please find my responses to the questions that I feel knowledgeable to answer:

A. The building was specifically designed to meet the programmatic needs of the senior center, and the architects advised on what that equated to in square footage based upon how many people attend those specific activities. I am attaching the Strategic Plan 2017-2022, which guided the project and shows a comparative analysis of other centers which were visited as part of our preparation for the Strategic Planning process. In my professional opinion, as someone who has worked in a variety of senior-specific settings and senior centers for the past 15 years of my career, the building is not oversized. Every space will be well-used and will allow us to expand the program offering beyond the limitations of our current building. The architects were advising building a larger center (approximately 18,000 sq. feet) and the SCBC scaled it back to the current project size, which the citizens supported and passed at the November 16, 2021 referendum.

B. I will defer to Tony Tarnowski SCBC Chair, as this is his area of expertise and not mine.

C. There will be designated parking spots at the senior center for the Senior Buses, as there are at our current center. All Senior Center vehicles are parked overnight at the Town garage, behind a locked gate for safety reasons.

D. As of today, we have 1,636 registered members. This represents a growth rate of 194.2446% since I began in 2013, when there were 556 active members. Like everywhere in our State, demographics are shifting, and a historically high level of Town citizens are seniors (ages 55 and over). On a daily basis, we serve an average of 115 unique individuals through our programs and services. We served 50 meals at the Thanksgiving Luncheon (the program you referenced with Willie Nininger), and we had to turn people who were interested away due to lack of available space. There were additional attendees that day for other programs/services, as the Thanksgiving program was one of 6 programs held that day—to mention the additional people who didn't come into the building but still received services, people who rode our buses, received medical transport or Meals on Wheels deliveries for homebound residents, or called in for themselves or loved ones to inquire about aging resources, to give a few examples. It is important to note that we did not have adequate parking available the day of our Thanksgiving program, forcing members and staff to park off-site—this is even more difficult now that overflow parking is no longer available at the former Citizens Bank property. Parking at Town Hall and walking the distance poses an obvious challenge for many senior center members. Our current facilities are woefully inadequate in many ways, in function, physical spaces, parking limitations and the building's deteriorating condition.

I am attaching a CSC newsletter to give you an idea of the scope of services that we provide to citizens 55 and over through the Colchester Senior Center. If you have any other questions, I invite you to please

reach out.

Best,  
Patty

*Patricia A. Watts  
Director of Senior Services  
Municipal Agent for the Elderly  
Town of Colchester  
95 Norwich Ave.  
Colchester, CT 06415  
phone-860-537-3911  
fax-860-537-5574*

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**From:** First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 9:48 AM  
**To:** Tony Tarnowski <tar51214@att.net>; Patty Watts <seniorcitizens@colchesterct.gov>  
**Cc:** Michael Dubreuil <dubreuil@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** FW: Colchester Senior Center Special Meeting

Hi Tony & Patty,

Please answer Michael's questions and provide me the responses so I can share with the Boards.

Sincerely,

Andreas

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Michael Dubreuil <dubreuil@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 5:14 AM  
**To:** First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Colchester Senior Center Special Meeting

Good Morning Mr. Bisbikos,

I attended the November 21st Special Meeting for the Senior Center and had the following two questions for the building committee:

A.) Is there any data to support the size of the senior center building? For example, a comparison of other town populations and the square footage of their senior centers.

B.) Is the construction bid a firm fixed price contract with no possibility of cost growth?

I do have minor concerns I didn't share:

C.) If there's a senior center bus, there doesn't appear to be a parking spot for it in the plans.

D.) How many individuals use the existing senior center? Please provide the average daily numbers and the maximum. (For example, on the senior center Facebook page the recent Willie Nininger event was called "one of our most well-attended programs of the year"; there looked to be about 35 people there from the photographs.)

Thank you,  
Michael Dubreuil  
180 Woodbine Rd

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**RE: Legal Opinion for the Senior Center Project**

Rybacki, Glenn G. &lt;GRybacki@pullcom.com&gt;

Tue 11/22/2022 7:27 PM

To: First Selectman &lt;selectman@colchesterct.gov&gt;; MRitter@goodwin.com &lt;MRitter@goodwin.com&gt;

Cc: Deborah Bates &lt;dBates@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Denise Turner &lt;dturner@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Jason LaChapelle &lt;jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Rosemary Coyle &lt;rcoyle@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Andrea Migliaccio &lt;BOFChair@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Art Shilosky &lt;aShilosky@colchesterct.gov&gt;; John Thomas &lt;jthomas@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Mike Egan &lt;megan@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Mike Hayes &lt;mhayes@colchesterct.gov&gt;; Tim Vaillancourt &lt;tVaillancourt@ColchesterCT.gov&gt;; Tony Tarnowski &lt;tar51214@att.net&gt;; Debbie Kratochvil &lt;dkratochvil@colchesterct.gov&gt;

Andreas and All:

My apologies for misunderstanding the questions asked.

First, let me summarize what has been authorized. What controls the scope of the project and what the appropriation may be expended on is contained in the Resolution that was passed. The Town is not restricted to the ballot question. The ballot question is a short statement meant to simplify the referendum ballot and what the voters actually approve (or disapprove) is the Resolution. The scope of the project is contained in the first section of the Resolution as follows:

- a. That the Town of Colchester appropriate NINE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$9,500,000) for costs related to the Senior Center Building Project, including the design and construction of a new Senior Center on Lebanon Avenue between Louis Lane and Mill Street, substantially as described in the Conceptual Design prepared by Silver Petrucelli Architects and presented January 21, 2021. The building committee established for the project shall be authorized to determine the scope and particulars of the project and to reduce or modify the project, and the entire appropriation may be expended on the project as so modified or reduced. The appropriation may be spent for design and construction costs, testing and permitting costs, equipment, furnishings and fixtures, materials, land and easement acquisition, site improvements, utilities, engineering fees, project management costs and fees, legal fees, net interest on borrowings and other financing costs, and other expenses related to the project or its financing.

As this provision details, the scope of the Project in this case is not just the design and construction of the senior center, but also a broad list of expenses related to the senior center Project

Below are my responses to your specific questions:

1. Can the Board of Selectmen authorize additional financial funds to pay for the project outside the design and construction phase (ex. including FF&E & Bond Issuance Costs) based on the language to the referendum question?

The Town can always appropriate funds outside the Resolution to be expended on project costs such as FF&E and bond issuance costs. In this instance, the Resolution is not a prohibition on any additional appropriations for project costs.

2. Can the Town create a reserve account to utilize any additional funds as a last resort mechanism to address inflationary costs?

The Town could make use of a reserve fund such as that provided in Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 108. Subject to the statutes, the Town would set this up, fund it and appropriate from it (Matt would probably be best for this).

3. Is there anything in place that would prohibit the Town of Colchester from utilizing donated money? With no town policy in place, who has the authority to authorize that expenditure?

There is nothing that I am aware that would prohibit the Town from accepting donated funds. Matt should weigh in on authorizing its use, particularly for donations that are specified for a particular purpose.

4. Would the Undesignated Fund Balance appropriation and Capital Reserve appropriation register as one holistic appropriation or two separate appropriations when each appropriation will be utilized to address a different concern?

Appropriations generally have to identify the source of funds. I am not aware of any prohibition of identifying two or more sources of funding, so the Town could make either one or two appropriations. However, if the sources in a single authorization have different requirements for appropriation, all of those requirements would need to be satisfied. Matt may wish to weigh in on this.

5. Jason LaChapelle has a similar question: Per the meeting last night, I would like to hear our town attorney's legal opinion on what "Special Appropriation" in our charter actually means. Does "Special Appropriation" refer to the ENTIRE amount appropriated for a single use from town coffers (i.e: The Senior Center Building project) minus the amount from grants? Can that amount then be split into smaller pieces in order to avoid hitting the 2% and 3% thresholds in our charter? I believe this refers to Supplemental Appropriations as detailed in Charter Section 1111. It does not appear that the Charter contains any specific definition or prohibitions. As a general rule, an appropriation should be able to stand on its own and not be split up based on dollar amounts to avoid procedural thresholds. Matt may have more to add here.

I hope this helps, but please do not hesitate to contact me if there should be any additional questions or concerns.

Regards,  
Glenn

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**Glenn G. Rybacki, Esq**

**Pullman & Comley LLC**

T 860 424 4391 • [grybacki@pullcom.com](mailto:grybacki@pullcom.com)

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**From:** First Selectman <[selectman@colchesterct.gov](mailto:selectman@colchesterct.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 10:41 AM

**To:** MRitter@goodwin.com; Rybacki, Glenn G. <[GRybacki@pullcom.com](mailto:GRybacki@pullcom.com)>

**Cc:** Deborah Bates <[dBates@colchesterct.gov](mailto:dBates@colchesterct.gov)>; Denise Turner <[dturner@colchesterct.gov](mailto:dturner@colchesterct.gov)>; Jason LaChapelle <[jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov](mailto:jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov)>; Rosemary Coyle <[rcoyle@colchesterct.gov](mailto:rcoyle@colchesterct.gov)>; Andrea Migliaccio <[BOFChair@colchesterct.gov](mailto:BOFChair@colchesterct.gov)>; Art Shilosky <[aShilosky@colchesterct.gov](mailto:aShilosky@colchesterct.gov)>; John Thomas <[jthomas@colchesterct.gov](mailto:jthomas@colchesterct.gov)>; Mike Egan <[megan@colchesterct.gov](mailto:megan@colchesterct.gov)>; Mike Hayes <[mhayes@colchesterct.gov](mailto:mhayes@colchesterct.gov)>; Tim Vaillancourt <[tVaillancourt@ColchesterCT.gov](mailto:tVaillancourt@ColchesterCT.gov)>; Tony Tarnowski <[tar51214@att.net](mailto:tar51214@att.net)>; Debbie Kratochvil <[dkratochvil@colchesterct.gov](mailto:dkratochvil@colchesterct.gov)>

**Subject:** Legal Opinion for the Senior Center Project

Hi Matt & Glenn,

Last night the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance had a spirited conversation regarding the inflationary construction costs of the Senior Center and the possible options that the Town has. The

project is about 900K to 1M over due to inflationary costs.

We are seeking legal opinions from both attorneys on the following questions:

1. Can the Board of Selectmen authorize additional financial funds to pay for the project outside the design and construction phase (ex. including FF&E & Bond Issuance Costs) based on the language to the referendum question?
2. Can the Town create a reserve account to utilize any additional funds as a last resort mechanism to address inflationary costs?

"SHALL THE TOWN OF COLCHESTER APPROPRIATE AND AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO EXPEND A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$9,500,000 FOR COSTS RELATED TO THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SENIOR CENTER AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE PORTION OF THE APPROPRIATION NOT DEFRAID FROM GRANTS?"

There are specific regulations and guidelines that the Town has in place due to the Town Charter & Town Policies. A proposal I laid out yesterday was to utilize \$575K from an Endowment from Stephen Bendas Estate, \$250K from Undesignated Fund Balance, and \$95K from Capital Reserve.

3. Is there anything in place that would prohibit the Town of Colchester from utilizing donated money? With no town policy in place, who has the authority to authorize that expenditure?
4. Would the Undesignated Fund Balance appropriation and Capital Reserve appropriation register as one holistic appropriation or two separate appropriations when each appropriation will be utilized to address a different concern?
5. Jason LaChapelle has a similar question: Per the meeting last night, I would like to hear our town attorney's legal opinion on what "Special Appropriation" in our charter actually means. Does "Special Appropriation" refer to the ENTIRE amount appropriated for a single use from town coffers (i.e: The Senior Center Building project) minus the amount from grants? Can that amount then be split into smaller pieces in order to avoid hitting the 2% and 3% thresholds in our charter?

Sincerely,

Andreas Bisbikos  
First Selectman

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**RE: Feedback from last night's meeting**

First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>

Wed 11/23/2022 10:11 AM

To: Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>; Judy Amann <ljamann22@gmail.com>

Cc: Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Art Shilosky <artshilosky@yahoo.com>; Andrea Migliaccio <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

Hi Judy,

In respect to the logos, the contest was held, and we are waiting on the next steps regarding the Senior Center before selecting a winner. No money was spent on designing a logo.

Sincerely,

Andreas

**From:** Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 11:31 AM

**To:** Judy Amann <ljamann22@gmail.com>

**Cc:** First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Art Shilosky <artshilosky@yahoo.com>; Andrea Migliaccio <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Re: Feedback from last night's meeting

Judy:

Thank you for your input regarding the new Senior Center. The Committee could certainly look at a redesign which may happen.

As far as the logo goes, that was done outside of the Building Committee charge. The issue was brought up at a Building Committee meeting and we noted that our charge was to build the Senior Center, not get involved with logos. We could make provisions in the building to display the logo, but we would not be involved with the logo.

I have copied First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos on this reply and he can either answer you directly or have whomever is in charge of the logo get that answer back to you.

Thank you.

Tony Tarnowski, LEED A.P.

Chairman

Senior Center Building Committee

**From:** Judy Amann <ljamann22@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 10:15 AM

**To:** Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Feedback from last night's meeting

Hi,

I joined the hybrid meeting last evening at 7:00 pm, so unfortunately I missed most of the presentation given by the building committee chairman.



I just wanted to provide my feedback regarding the design of the proposed senior center. I voted NO for center, not because I don't think we need a new center, but for the reason that I thought (and still think) the design is way over the top. Why do we need to build an architectural showpiece, especially during these challenging times with supply chain and inflation issues? It's not what the building looks like from the outside, but what goes on in the inside that matters. My opinion is that you step back, take a long look at the proposed design and ask yourselves "do we really need these design features like curved windows, whatever that cupola thing is (?), etc and can we come up with a more utilitarian design that will serve our seniors and meet the proposed budget? ".

Also, I have one other question, there was an email that came a while ago from the Senior Center Director asking for feedback regarding logo designs for the new center. I provided my feedback, which was based on my background in marketing and advertising. The logos presented were not acceptable in my opinion. I then saw something from the First Selectman about a logo contest open to the public. My question is, were taxpayer monies used to hire a design firm to develop logo designs that were not used? If so, how much were they paid?

Thank you to your dedication and hard work on this project.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Judy Amann

176 Prospect Hill Road

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**Re: Senior Center**

Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>

Tue 11/22/2022 11:46 AM

To: John Barnowski <jrbapl66@comcast.net>

Cc: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Art Shilosky <artshilosky@yahoo.com>; Andrea Migliaccio <BOFChair@colchesterct.gov>; Art Shilosky <aShilosky@colchesterct.gov>

John:

Thank you for your input. I read through the article that you included the link to and it seems it confirms what we said last night that the inflation in the construction industry has been at an all-time high the past two years and it looks like they project it to continue into 2023 with a cool down possibly in 2024. Most of the projections are showing inflation in the 12-16 percent range. That is a national average. In the northeast, those numbers are a bit low because if you factor in the higher wages construction workers in the northeast get, those numbers jump up to the 18 to 20 percent range.

I have copied members of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance on this reply.

Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Tony Tarnowski, LEED A.P.  
Chairman  
Senior Center Building Committee

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**From:** John Barnowski <jrbapl66@comcast.net>

**Sent:** Monday, November 21, 2022 8:56 PM

**To:** Senior Center Building Committee <seniorcenterbuildingcommittee@colchesterct.gov>

**Subject:** Senior Center

Thank for all your hard work! After listening to the joint meeting this evening, I was curious about the prospects for inflation and found this:

<https://www.cbre.com/insights/books/2022-us-construction-cost-trends/06-implications-for-construction-costs>

I would like to see the project move forward right away, with the proposed solutions.

John Barnowski

PS: it's a shame that every disagreement seems to devolve to threats of litigation!

Sent from my iPhone

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