



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Bernie Dennler, First Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
December 7, 2023 7:00 pm
Via Zoom & Town Hall Meeting Room

MINUTES

Member Present: B. Dennler, First Selectman; D. Turner, R. Coyle, A. Shilosky; C. O'Donal

Members Absent: None

Other present: J. Leone, Public Works Director; S. Hoffman, Fire Chief; B. Bernier, Deputy Fire Chief; D. Sorrentino, Planning Director; Gayle Furman, Town Clerk; Kate Byroade, Library Director; Sean Gillespie, Treasurer

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2023 DEC - 8 PM 2:55
Gayle Furman
TOWN CLERK

- 1. Call to Order:** First Selectman Dennler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Correspondence**

Email received from Michael Dubreuil requesting that uploaded PDF documents be posted in their native format, not scans, so that PDF functionality can be utilized. No discussion.
- 4. Citizen's Comments**

M. Dubreuil spoke on the union Collective Bargaining Agreement, SCBA purchase and cracking of senior center concrete slab.
K. Paquette said congratulations to Board members and looking forward to next 2 years.
- 5. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**

None.
- 6. Election of Vice Chair**

FS Dennler opened the floor for nominations for BOS Vice Chairman and nominates A. Shilosky, second by D. Turner. Roll call vote: C. O'Donal, D. Turner, R. Coyle and FS Dennler vote in favor. Abstention by A. Shilosky. Motion carried. A. Shilosky is Vice Chairman.
- 7. 2024 Meeting Calendar**

After some discussion, motion by R. Coyle to accept the 2024 BOS meeting schedule as presented, second by A. Shilosky. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.
- 8. Consent Agenda**

Motion by R. Coyle to remove the meeting minutes from consent agenda and move to item 8.1 because only R. Coyle and D. Turner can vote on them. Second by D. Turner. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried. There was discussion on consent agenda Item D. H. J. Smith is an HDC alternate so her term will be corrected.

Motion by R. Coyle to approve consent agenda. Second by D. Turner. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

Minutes: R. Coyle notes two corrections: #10A regular meeting paused at 7:49 pm, #13 Dr. Hewes left the Board of Ed and is now with the state. Motion by R. Coyle to approve the minutes as corrected, second by D. Turner. Vote via roll call: Abstentions by A. Shilosky, C. O'Donal and FS Dennler. R. Coyle and D. Turner voted in favor. Motion carried, minutes approved.

9. Collective bargaining agreement

FS Dennler explained the new union contract for Public Works employees. It was approved by the former First Selectman but is now before the entire BOS for approval. Public Works Director J. Leone explained the need for higher rates of pay to retain employees as Colchester is low compared to area towns. Motion by D. Turner to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Colchester and the Municipal Employees Union "Independent" (MEUI) Local 506, SEIU, AFL-CIO, CLC representing Transfer Station, Grounds, Highway, Fleet & Facility Maintenance and Water Department Employees July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2028, second by R. Coyle. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

10. Fire Dept. Tax Exemption Ordinance

Deputy Chief B. Bernier and Chief S. Hoffman explained tax exemption ordinance for firefighters. Motion by R. Coyle to approve the Ordinance, second by A. Shilosky. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

11. Fire Dept. SCBA Proposal

Deputy Chief B. Bernier and Chief S. Hoffman explained the need for new air packs to replace those purchased in 2019. There are more apparatus seats than they have air packs for, there are interoperability issues with mutual aid departments, maintenance problems, tank leaks, etc. Questions from members: A. Shilosky was there for the 2019 purchase and feels it is the BOS duty to protect safety of our citizens. R. Coyle questioned life span and interoperability. C. O'Donal asked about branding because this is a change in manufacturer. To address a citizen comment from earlier, Chief Hoffman did look into grants and noted that the Volunteer FD is putting \$150K towards purchase. FS Dennler sees this as a must do for our firefighters. There will be 3-4% price increase after 12/31/23. Total is \$466,359 w/ \$150,000 coming from the volunteer FD, \$74,000 from the capital improvement plan. \$242,359 will come from the undesignated fund balance. Motion by D. Turner to recommend to BOF that they approve \$242,359 from undesignated fund balance for this purchase, seconded by R. Coyle. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

12. Library Grant Resolution

Kate Byroade, Library Director explained the grant award to the Board.

Motion by R. Coyle: resolved, that Bernie Dennler, the duly elected First Selectman is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this organization a certain contract with the Connecticut State Library, State of Connecticut, for fiber to the Library-Internet Connection grant to pay for equipment and installation of the equipment for the Library's Internet connection and networks. Seconded by D. Turner. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

13. Ad-Hoc Committee

FS Dennler is interested in establishing 2 working committees (1) recreation needs and coordination committee to assess assets, deficiencies and improve coordination between town and schools, and (2) a facilities planning committee to consider fate of the youth center, what to do with the old senior center building once the new one is complete, police expansion, relocation of recreation and public works for police expansion, etc. R. Coyle sees the need, recommends including a BOF member. D. Turner, A. Shilosky and C. O'Donal agree. Members agree to have a deeper discussion at next meeting.

14. Liaison Appointments

R. Coyle is currently liaison to Open Space Advisory Committee, Agriculture Commission, Senior Center Building Committee, Fire Department, Commission on Aging, Chatham Health District

D. Turner is currently liaison to Historic District Commission, Conservation Commission, CORE Commission, Youth Services, Board of Assessment Appeals

Boards/Commissions needing a BOS Liaison include Board of Education, Norton Park Committee, Economic Development Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission, and others.

R. Coyle and D. Turner have many already. FS Dennler will compile vacancies and send out a list for A. Shilosky and C. O'Donal to review.

15. Liaison Reports

R. Coyle reports that Chatham Health District is moving to cloud based collections and is fully staffed; Senior Center Building Committee allocated \$1.5M to budget lines that had \$0; Ag board collected pumpkins for livestock and is working on Christmas tree collection for goats.

D. Turner had no report.

16. First Selectman's Report

FS Dennler gave his First Selectman's Report, providing information on the financial audits, budget status, town staffing, Lebanon Avenue streetscape project and business spotlights.

Back to citizens comments.

17. Citizen's Comments

G. Transue spoke about having trouble hearing members on Zoom who weren't speaking into mics.

R. Silberman congratulated the new Board of Selectmen.

18. Executive Session

Motion by C. O'Donal for the Board of Selectman to enter Executive Session and invite Planning Director D. Sorrentino to discuss litigation regarding Jordan Lane and Niantic Bay Group, LLC, second by R.Coyle. Vote via roll call was unanimous, motion carried.

The Board stopped the meeting recording and entered into Executive Session at 8:13 PM.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:50 PM. No decisions were made while the board was in Executive Session.

19. Adjournment

Motion by R. Coyle to adjourn, seconded by A. Shilosky. Vote was unanimous, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: S. Churchill/D. Sorrentino