TOWN OF COLUMBIA
FINANCIAL PLANNING AND ALLOCATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
Wednesday, November 19, 2025
7:00pm
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room & Virtual
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. 06237

Members Present: Kelley Peck, Chairman (arrived at 7:05 pm); Judi Jordan, Vice Chairman; Stephen Cooke, Richard Szegda, James Chakulski, Mike Carroll, Art Rowbotham.

Also Present: Mark Walter, Town Administrator; Beverly Ciurylo, Finance Director.

1. **RULES OF CONDUCT FOR HYBRID VIRTUAL MEETING:** M. Walter read the rules of conduct for a hybrid virtual meeting.

2. **CALL TO ORDER:** J. Jordan called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
   - **5.1** **FiPAC Regular Meeting Minutes for 8/20/25.** J. Jordan noted that under 7.4, it should be corrected to read straight-line depreciation. R. Szegda MOVED to Approve the Minutes as Amended. A. Rowbotham Seconded, 5.0.1 with J. Chakulski abstaining.

6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

   - **7.1** **Update on 24/25 Year End Report.** B. Ciurylo provided an update on the 24-25 year-end report, noting that the audit was completed last week with only one issue: a discrepancy in the town meeting approval of a transfer amount that needs to be corrected. She mentioned that the surplus came to over $1.3 million, with two General Fund transfers to Capital at about $762,000, and the fund balance as of June 30th was stable at 17%.
   - **7.2** **Update on the Financial Policies.** B. Ciurylo also discussed the upcoming meeting in December to review and potentially amend financial policies, including changing the fund balance from a range to a minimum of positive 15%. B. Ciurylo discussed the formalization of policies and set a target to finalize them by the January meeting.
   - **7.3** **Update on the HVAC project and the road/culvert projects.** B. Ciurylo noted that $3.8 million has been spent so far, with plans to request additional HVAC grant funding in January to cover the remaining costs. B. Ciurylo explained that the project's increased cost from $6 million to $9 million is being funded by the town and bonding and clarified that the grant will cover up to $3.1 million.

M. Walter explained that the project team decided to proceed with the accepted bid rather than delay the project further, despite concerns from the community and administration about the price increase. He noted that the contractor's costs exceeded the available grant funding. The discussion also touched on challenges with the project timeline, contractor delays due to incomplete designs, and the need for revised schedules and estimates.

Culverts: M. Walter noted that we were able to get a state bridge grant for Pine Street and a federal grant for Thompson Hill. The grant for Pine Street is a 50-50 grant. The estimate is $1.6 million and Columbia would be responsible for $814,000. Thompson Hill is estimated at $1.4 million and is a Trip Grant for rural road improvement and is 20/80, of which Columbia is responsible for $259,000. M. Walter said his recommendation to go out to bid before we go for a bond authorization.

M. Walter explained that the engineer is behind on giving us solid numbers on Double Day Rd. He said right now the numbers are fluctuating between 3 and 5 million. He said we are trying to recategorize Double Day Road from a minor connector and make it into a regular connector road by traffic counts and reapplying through the state DOT and this could qualify for a LoCIP grant.

M. Walter explained that we have applied for a rural tribal assistant pilot program national grant for Edgerton Rd. and Macht Rd to pay for the engineering estimated at $280,000.

M. Walter said that the Assessor provided an update and she is looking at quite an elevation in house value based on the market. He said we are about to do a statistical revaluation, which is not the major revaluation where they go to every home, but statistically, you run all the houses through modeling.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 **FiPAC Schedule for 2025/2026.** A. Rowbotham MOVED to Approve the FiPAC Schedule for 2026 Schedule. R. Szegda SECONDED the MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7.0.

8.2 **Preliminary discussion on the 25-26 budget process.** B. Ciurylo said that the Board of Selectmen will be setting up the budget meetings and asking departments to present their budgets and FiPAC may prefer to attend those budget meetings if they wish.

8.3 **Tri-Board meeting in December.** The Tri-Board meeting is December 17th.

9. TRANSFERS: B. Ciurylo said the Trooper needs to upgrade the radar equipment. R. Szegda MOVED to Approve $2,811 for the Transfer. S. Cooke Seconded the MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 7.0.

10. NEXT MEETINGS: The next meeting is the Tri-Board meeting 12/17/25 and FiPAC meeting to follow.

11. ADJOURNMENT: A. Rowbotham MOVED to ADJOURN at 7:43 PM. R. Szegda SECONDED the MOTION. The MOTION Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer LaVoie