

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

7:00 PM

**Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room & Virtual
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Topic: Board of Selectmen

Time: Jan 20, 2026 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84681262791>

Meeting ID: 846 8126 2791

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,84681262791# US (New York)

Join instructions

https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/84681262791/invitations?signature=mT1BqEjV4_PVdM_XnUJTKACoJ6BeWw9txpVbkFsb-kDk

This is a hybrid public meeting. The public can attend in-person or electronically. The information provided in this agenda contains the link to access the meeting electronically.

The public may view the video recording of the meeting on YouTube at "[Town of Columbia, CT](#)" Please allow approximately 48 business hours after the meeting for the video to be published.

For public input before the meeting, please email your comments to PublicInput@columbiact.org prior to 24 hours before the meeting.

Each speaker has a maximum of two minutes upon recognition to address the Board of Selectmen.

CALL TO ORDER:

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

3.1 BOS Regular Meeting Minutes January 6, 2025.

4. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:

5. OLD BUSINESS:

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.1 Scheduling of Budget Presentations to the Board of Selectmen from Town Departments.

- 6.2 Approval of sale of Columbia Volunteer Fire Department Engine 205 to the Town of Hebron for \$25,000.
- 6.3 Approval of Revised Job Description for the Assistant Town Clerk.
7. **COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:**
8. **APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:**
 - 8.1 Appointment of Kristen Bacon to the Conservation and Agriculture Commission.
 - 8.2 Appointment of John Morin to the Traffic & Transportation Committee.
 - 8.3 Resignation of Justin Riendeau from the Traffic & Transportation Committee.
 - 8.4 Resignation of Tom Currier from the Planning & Zoning Commission.
 - 8.5 Appointment of Robert Powell to the Planning & Zoning Commission.
 - 8.6 Appointment of Nick Ferris as an Alternate to the Planning & Zoning Commission.
 - 8.7 Reappointment of Town Moderators:
 - Mark Desrosiers
 - Millie Ramsey
 - Mark Vining
9. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**
10. **CORRESPONDENCE:**
 - 10.1 The Willimantic Chronicle Articles
 - Columbia native stars in musical
11. **BUDGET:**
 - 11.1 **Transfers:**
 - 11.2 **Refunds:**
12. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:**
13. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:**
14. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**
15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A).**
16. **ADJOURNMENT:**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, January 6, 2026
Immediately Following the Town Meeting at 6:45 PM
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room & Virtual
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT

Members Present: Steven M. Everett, First Selectman; Judy Ortiz, Deputy First Selectman, William O'Brien, Rachel Riendeau.

Members Absent: Robert Hellstrom

Others Present: Mark Walter, Town Administrator; Ann Dunnack; Jeff Lewis, CVFD Fire Chief; Mike Lester, Fire Marshal; Frank Gifford; Nick Ferris; Beverly Ciurylo, Finance Director; Keith Herzig.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett Called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **BOS Regular Meeting Minutes December 16, 2025.** S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes for December 16, 2025. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 5.1 **Traffic & Transportation Committee – Board of Selectman to provide clarity on the committee’s mission statement.** The Columbia Board of Selectmen discussed the mission statement and responsibilities of the Traffic and Transportation Committee. They agreed to add language calling for the committee to consult with experts, including state CTDOT and UConn representatives, when addressing traffic concerns. The board also expressed concerns about the appeal process for speeding tickets, noting that the state statute allows for defenses beyond the five enumerated ones. They discussed the potential costs and implications of implementing speed cameras, with W. O'Brien warning that the town could face liability issues if they limit drivers to only five appeal defenses. The board agreed to have the Traffic and Transportation Committee research alternative solutions to traffic safety issues, including speed humps and textured road surfaces, before making any decisions on implementing new measures.

S. Everett MOVED to accept the new addition to the mission statement to include “traffic and transportation professionals” in the following sentence, “Working with residents, town officials, law enforcement, and traffic and transportation professionals, the Committee identifies issues, recommends solutions, and

advocates for measure that support safe driving, pedestrian rights, and neighborhood quality of life.”

- 5.2 Recommendation from Columbia Volunteer Fire Department to move forward with approval to bid, fund, and install a 30,000-gallon cistern at 167 Route 66.** Mike Lester, Columbia Fire Marshal provided an overview of the purpose of the 30,000-gallon cistern. He explained that the minimum gallon cistern that ISO recognizes for insurance purposes is 30,000. The Fire Department currently uses local ponds to fill the cistern as needed and the ponds fill up with vegetation and muck as well as the water levels are down, making it difficult to pull the water from the ponds. He said that the capacity of the tankers is 3,000 gallons and each time the tankers need to refill would take 10 to 15 minutes. Jeff Lewis, CVFD Fire Chief said the Fire Department funded the engineering design and the test pits have been done. The cistern will be placed on the west side of the apron and the property owned by Ms. Griffin. There will be a total of 3, 10,000-gallon tanks tied in a series. M. Lester said that the cost would approximately be \$125,000. M. Walter said the recommendation would be to go out to bid. S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE going out to bid with the intent to bring the 30,000-gallon cistern project to a Town Meeting for funding approval. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
- 5.3 Approval revisions to Financial Policies.** S. Everett explained that the financial policies were drafted to protect the town and to demonstrate that the town is financially sufficient for the purposed of bonding. The town’s municipal financial advisor that manages the bonding went through the financial policies and recommended making a couple of changes. The board discussed the changes that were indicated in the document that was approved by FiPAC. S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Revisions to the Financial Policies set before the Board of Selectmen. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
- 6. NEW BUSINESS:**
- 6.1 Discussion on Dedication of the Annual Report.** S. Everett asked the board to think about who they might like to dedicate the Annual Report to and to get back to the Town Administrator.
- 7. COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:** None.
- 8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:** None.
- 9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**
- 9.1 Building and Land Use Department Refund Policy.** M. Walter provided the refund policy for permit fees. He said we wanted a written policy and wanted the board to be aware of that policy. The Building Official is empowered by state statutes to create the policy.
- 9.2 FY 25/26 Budget Process.** M. Walter provided the budget schedule and department heads will be meeting with him to discuss their budgets next week.
- 9.3 CTCMA Panel on HB 8002, An Act Concerning Housing Growth.** M. Walter explained that House Bill 8002 was a revision to House Bill 5002 that was vetoed. The Bill was brought together with the Connecticut Association of Council of Governments, the Connecticut Conferences of Municipalities, CCM, Connecticut Council of Small Towns, and they all advocated, through the COGS through the

governor, and through the Senate and the House to come up with something that was more manageable.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

10.1 The Willimantic Chronicle Articles

- **Columbia FD reminds residents to be vigilant about ash disposal.**
- **Columbia to hold public hearing on automobile dealership building.**
- **Notice of Columbia Democratic Caucus.**
- **Willimantic woman dies in Columbia crash.**

10.2 BOE 24-25 Final Transfers. The Board of Education is currently returning \$392,533.10 to the Town of Columbia's General Fund.

11. BUDGET:

11.1 Transfers: None.

11.2 Refunds: S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Refunds as Presented, Totaling \$980.14. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.

12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS: S. Everett MOVED to APPROVE the Payment of Bills Totaling \$661,873.58, Consisting of 2025-2026 Emergency, 2025-2026 Regular, Saxton B. Little Library Payment number 3 of 4, Credit Card, and Paychex. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.

13. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: None.

14. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: None.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A). No Executive Session.

16. ADJOURNMENT: S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:21 PM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

323 Jonathan Trumbull Highway, Columbia, CT 06237

Phone: (860) 228-0110 Fax: (860) 228-1952

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION: ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

This is responsible clerical and administrative work involving the recording and administration of land, vital statistics and election documents for the Town Clerk's office.

Responsible for recording, indexing, and fee collection for all land records, maps, minutes, agendas, notices, elections, vital statistics, licensing, and other municipal records in accordance with office procedures and processing and archival retention. Helps manage office operations while performing various administrative and statutory duties. The work requires that the employee has considerable knowledge, skill and ability in every phase of the records management responsibilities of the Town Clerk's office.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED:

Works under the general supervision of the Town Clerk.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

- Receives, collects fees, records, scans, indexes and proofs all legal land records including maps, deeds, liens, etc. using software programs
- Registers voters, issues absentee voter ballots and maintains voting records.
- Issues a variety of certificates, licenses and permits including birth, death, marriage, dog, hunting, fishing, and burial.
- Enters and/or creates a variety of materials including correspondence, forms, reports and data into a computer according to explicit procedures.
- Maintains a wide variety of files and record books.
- Operates a variety of standard and specialized office machines.
- Provides information on Town records and recording procedures to attorneys, real estate agents and the public, and resolves problems and complaints and also provides information regarding the functions and operations of the office.
- Administers oaths to newly elected or appointed officials.
- Provides quality customer service to all users of the Town Clerk's office who require assistance by mail, phone, email, fax, and in person
- Serves as Town Clerk in the absence of the Town Clerk.
- Performs related work as required.

JOB DESCRIPTION: ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Considerable knowledge of records management and office procedures and practices.
- Ability to accurately follow written and oral instructions
- Ability to work efficiently and effectively with minimal supervision
- Considerable attention to detail
- Ability to focus in a moderately busy office with frequent interruptions from the general public and town hall staff
- Knowledge and proficiency in Excel and Word and the ability to learn new computer programs.
- Ability to interpret State laws, Town Charter & Ordinances
- Ability to perform work in office setting with the duties of the job requiring close vision, sitting for extended periods, standing, walking, lifting and/or moving up to 30 pounds
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with superiors, associates, attorneys, real estate agents and the general public

QUALIFICATIONS:

- High school diploma or the equivalent and at least two (2) years of experience in an office environment. Preferred experience in related municipal departments or any equivalent combination of experience and training which provide a demonstrated potential for performing the duties of the position.
- Must be a registered Notary Public in the State of Connecticut or willing to become one.
- Willing to take the necessary classes set by the CT Town Clerk Association.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

None.



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

323 Jonathan Trumbull Highway, Columbia, CT 06237
(860) 228-0110 FAX: (860) 228-1952

BOARD OF SELECTMAN

Steven M. Everett
First Selectman

Judy Ortiz, Selectman
William O'Brien, Selectman
Lisa Napolitano, Selectman
Christopher Lent, Selectman

Office: 860-228-0110

Email: townadministrator@columbiact.org

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

Dear Columbia Resident:

Involvement on our boards and commissions is important to the vitality and success of local government. All of us should consider contributing our own talents to our community. It takes more than living in a community to be part of it. Our town needs volunteers to face the challenges of the future while maintaining the quality of life that we all enjoy. Please take time to share your services with others.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Walter
Town Administrator

Name: Kristen Bawn

Address: 24 Johnson Rd

Town, State, Zip: Columbia CT 06237

Phone (home): 860-228-4698 (work or cell): 860-771-1527 Email: vanquilmorningfarm@hotmail.com
primary #

First Choice: Conservation Agriculture Commission Second Choice: _____

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Board of Selectmen | 10. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission |
| 2. Board of Assessment Appeals | 11. Open Space Committee |
| 3. Board of Education | 12. Planning and Zoning Commission |
| 4. Commission on Aging | 13. Recreation Commission |
| 5. Conservation and Agriculture Commission | 14. Szegda Farm Management Committee |
| 6. Economic Development Commission | 15. Youth Services Committee |
| 7. Environmental Advisory Committee | 16. Zoning Board of Appeals |
| 8. Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) | |
| 9. Lake Management Advisory Committee | |

If you have any questions, or require further information, please contact the Town Administration Office, 860-228-0110. Return your completed form to the Administration Office, 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT. 06237.



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BOARD OF SELECTMAN

Steven M. Everett
First Selectman

Judy Ortiz, Selectman
William O'Brien, Selectman
Lisa Napolitano, Selectman
Christopher Lent, Selectman

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To be considered for appointment or re-appointment you must fill out this form completely.

1. Registered Voter? Yes or No: Yes Affiliation republican

2. If No, are you a property owner in Columbia? Please list property address:

3. How many years a resident of Columbia? 14 years

4. Is this a new appointment? yes

5. If you have served before, how many years and on what commission did you serve?
na

6. Skills & Abilities you would bring to local government:
20 years as a sheep farmer

15 years as a 4H'ie 20 years as a Scout (BSA) leader

Public School teacher in Columbia, co-president of Local Teachers Union

** You may attach additional information or resume if you desire **

Please Sign: [Signature]

Date: 1/9/20



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Sincerely,

Mark B. Walter
Town Administrator

Name: John Morin

Address: 33 Cherry Valley Road

Town, State, Zip: _____

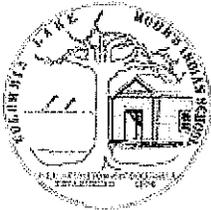
Phone (home): _____ (work or cell): 860 209-0563 Email: jmorin10@snet.net

First Choice: Traffic and safety Committee Second Choice: _____

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Board of Selectmen | 10. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission |
| 2. Board of Assessment Appeals | 11. Open Space Committee |
| 3. Board of Education | 12. Planning and Zoning Commission |
| 4. Commission on Aging - Inactive | 13. Recreation Commission |
| 5. Conservation and Agriculture Commission | 14. Szegda Farm Management Committee |
| 6. Economic Development Commission | 15. Youth Services Committee - Inactive |
| 7. Environmental Advisory Committee - Inactive | 16. Zoning Board of Appeals |
| 8. Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) | 17. Hop River Preserve Management Committee |
| 9. Lake Management Advisory Committee | |

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Equal Opportunity Employer



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BOARD OF SELECTMAN

Steven M. Everett
First Selectman

Judy Ortiz, Selectman
William O'Brien, Selectman
Robert Hellstrom, Selectman
Rachel Riendeau, Selectman

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To be considered for appointment or re-appointment you must fill out this form completely.

1. Registered Voter? Yes or No: Yes Affiliation Republican
2. If No, are you a property owner in Columbia? Please list property address:

3. How many years a resident of Columbia? 4 years
4. Is this a new appointment? Yes
5. If you have served before, how many years and on what commission did you serve?

6. Skills & Abilities you would bring to local government:
Positive feedback with ability to listen to others feedback. I have been on safety committees in the workplace as safety is a co

** You may attach additional information or resume if you desire **

Please Sign: *John M. ...*

Date: 06 January 2026

Francis T Currier
15 Columbia Landing
Columbia, CT 06237
Tom.currier47@gmail.com
(860) 208-0324
January 8, 2026

Mark Walters/BOS
323 Rte. 87
Columbia, CT 06237

Dear Sir:

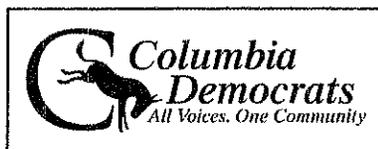
I would like to resign from the Planning & Zoning commission as of 1/20/26. I have been a member of this commission since 2009. I have enjoyed learning about the multiple issues that have been presented. All members take this role seriously and we have made some hard decisions that affect all of Columbia. I am sure that this will continue.

Thank you for allowing me to serve on this important commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis T. Currier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Francis" being the most prominent part.

Francis T. Currier



To: Mark Walters, Town Administrator

From: Susan Spiggle, Columbia Democratic Town Committee Chair

Date: January 12, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Spiggle', is written over the 'From' line and extends slightly into the 'Date' line.

RE: Recommendations for P&Z Vacancies

Following the Columbia Democratic Town Committee caucus on January 8, the CDTC noted to recommend to the Board of Selectmen:

1. Robert R. Powell be appointed to the vacant Democratic position formerly held by Tom Currier on the Planning and Zoning Commission
2. Nicholas A. Ferris be appointed to the vacant Democratic alternate position on the Planning and Zoning Commission

Columbia native stars in musical

NICOLE ZAPPONE
@THECHRONICLECT

COLUMBIA — A woman formerly from Columbia will take the lead role in the Tony Award-winning “Suffs, The Musical.”

Maya Keleher will portray suffragist Alice Paul as the production tours the country. The musical will be playing at the Bushnell Theater in Hartford in late January.

The all-female cast

explores the long story of the Women’s Suffrage movement.

For over 70 years, women had to wait for the right to vote, which was granted by the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920.

Alice Stokes Paul founded the National Women’s Party, which led a militant, radical campaign to complete the work begun in 1848 by activists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

In 1913, Paul organized

the Women’s Suffrage Procession and the Silent Sentinels pickets, which endured arrests, imprisonment and a hunger strike to draw attention to the cause.

Keleher will lead the cast with singing and dancing. The show will also bring energy to the crowd as performers experience both victories and failures.

The grand finale of the production “Keep Marching” will share the message of persistence and

[See COLUMBIA ON PAGE 4](#)



Contributed Photo

Maya Keleher will portray suffragist Alice Paul as the production tours the country.

4 | Thursday, January 8, 2026

Columbia native stars in ‘Suffs’ musical

Continued from Page 1

hope for women’s rights over the past 100 years.

Maya Keleher is the daughter of Sarah Keleher, who grew up in Columbia, attended Horace Porter School and Lyman Memorial High School and graduated from E.O. Smith High School. She also graduated from Boston Conservatory.

As a child, Keleher was active in the Arts and Motion and the Windham Theatre Guild. During her time at the Burton Leavitt Theatre in Willimantic, she starred as Cinderella, played the Wicked Witch in The Wizard of Oz and was in The Fantastics, All Shook Up and other productions.

Keleher, who is 32, lives in New Jersey with her husband, Alex, and their English springer spaniel.

The award-winning book, “Suffs,” along with the musical score with lyrics, was written by playwright Shania Taub. The musical also won Tonys for Best Book of a musical and Best Original Score. The musical is directed by Leigh Silverman, choreographed by Mayte Natalio, and supervised by Andrea Grody.

The show will tour the country for a year.

The musical will be on stage in Hartford from January 27 through February 1.

To learn more about the Women’s Suffrage Movement, there will be a free history program on Thursday, January 22, at 6 p.m. at the Willimantic Public Library. Historian Bev York will discuss the movement and share stories and quotes from six suffragist leaders.

Beckish Senior Center closed due to water issues

The Chronicle (USA) · 7 Jan 2026 · NICOLE ZAPPONE

COLUMBIA — The Beckish Senior Center is closed this week due to a lack of hot water.

Bernadette Derring, director of Senior Services and Transportation, said staff is working to address a temporary facility issue that closed the center on Monday.

While the center is closed, services continue where possible, and alternative arrangements have been made for senior meals. Derring said the community response has been overwhelmingly positive.

“After investigating, it was determined that the circulating pump had fully failed and requires complete replacement due to normal wear and tear related to age,” Derring said.

The Town of Columbia is working with its supplier and vendors to secure the replacement as soon as possible and intends to reopen the Senior Center by the end of the week.

While the Senior Center is closed, Columbia’s Congregational Church has offered space for senior lunches on Wednesday and Friday at noon. The church is located at 325 CT-87. Staff will call all seniors who have signed up for lunch to inform them of the temporary location.

Darcy Battye, director of the Lebanon Senior Center, has offered assistance if needed.

“This situation truly reflects how our community comes together to support one another during times of need,” Derring said. “While being closed is not ideal – especially when seniors rely on the structure, services, and support of the Senior Center – we are all working diligently to resolve the issue as quickly as possible and return to normal operations.”

Replacement parts have ordered.

“Given the high levels of flu, COVID and RSV currently circulating, and without the ability to adequately sanitize, the town and Health Department determined that closing the center was in the best interest of our seniors,” Derring said. “The health and safety of our senior community is always our top priority.”