

Town Of Columbia Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 13,2025

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Town Board was called to order at 6:30 p.m.. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by an invocation.

Roll Call:

Present:

- Learned, Cotton Reed, Fagan, Seamon

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion made by Cotton to approve the minutes from the February meeting with the following corrections:

- Inclusion of mention that the Justice Court audit was presented and is to be resumed at the next board meeting.
- Correction of formatting related to the placement of the invocation under the Pledge of Allegiance section.

Seconded by Reed.

Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report:

The financial report for the period ending February was reviewed. The Board discussed an increase in winter-related expenses due to extended weather impacts. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Cotton, seconded by Reed, and approved unanimously.

Department Reports:

Supervisor's Report:

A motion to approve the Supervisor's Report was made by Cotton, seconded by Reed, and carried unanimously.

Town Clerk Report:

The Clerk indicated plans to trial expanded office hours during the summer to accommodate increased building permit activity.

Clerk's Report Approval:

Motion made by Reed to accept the Clerk's report.

Seconded by Cotton.

Motion passed.

Justice Court:

Discussion was held regarding the pending State audit. No action was required at this time.

Highway Department:

- Discussion on winter expenses and increased overtime.
- Approval of purchase of a 2025 Ford F-350 Pickup Truck (Single Cab, 8-ft bed) at a cost of \$49,796.55.
 - Motion made by Reed, seconded by Cotton, and passed by roll call vote.
- Approval of extended two-year warranty for Volvo L90H Loader for \$4,333.00.
 - Motion made by Cotton, seconded by Reed, and approved by roll call vote.
- General discussion of future equipment needs and condition of current fleet.

Codes Enforcement Officer Report:

- Reported early permit inquiries and plans to update permit forms and contact information on the town website.
- Proposal made to review and update building permit fee schedule. Board agreed to compare with neighboring towns.

Tax Collector:

- Audit of 2023 tax collection complete. A cover sheet for sign-off will be prepared for the next meeting.
- Reported improved collections in January 2024 and fewer second notice mailings compared to the prior year.
- Noted deposit law requiring tax payments to be deposited within 24 hours regardless of amount.
- Presented training opportunities, including the June Tax Collector Conference in Lake George, which was discussed for potential funding.

Planning Board:

Chairman Ron Bazon reported ongoing work on the Comprehensive Plan. The draft has been reviewed by the town attorney and will be discussed at the next Planning Board meeting. Two public hearings will be required before adoption.

Old/New Business:

Councilman Reed presented a new AI-powered website assistant "Stella" to improve resident access to town information. A 30-day trial is being implemented, with plans to evaluate usage and effectiveness. Further testing during peak permit season was recommended.

Correspondence:

Two items of correspondence were received and reviewed. No immediate board action required.

Privilege of the Floor:

Comments were made acknowledging the hard work of the Highway Department through a challenging winter.

Adjournment:

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Winchester

Town Clerk