

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**7:15 PM, Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**Minutes & Motions**

**Attendance:** Members Chairman Robert Munroe, Morris Silverstein, Robert Gallé, Robert Flowers, Emily Bradley, Robert DePietro, and Matthew Maulucci were present. Also present were Administrative Officer Joyce Stille, Finance Director Jill Collins, First Selectman Robert Morra, and members of the public.

**1. Call to Order:** Chairman Munroe called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

**2. Public Participation:** Evelyn O'Connor, Hop River Road, found the Everything Bolton CT Facebook page helpful in getting answers to questions, and thought social media could be used to the town's advantage. Many people can't attend all the meetings. A social media page, such as Columbia's trooper page, would make information more accessible and also make sure that the information being shared is accurate. R. Munroe said there are many board meetings this time of year and encouraged people to round out participation by coming to them once in a while. They are limited in what they can do for communication. The Journal Inquirer covers much of the activity. R. Munroe, J. Stille, and R. Morra have been doing CVC shows on the budget for the last couple of Tuesdays as well. E. O'Connor suggested that putting CVC shows online would increase access without much cost besides time.

**3. Discussion and Action Re: FY17 Proposed Budget Revenues and Expenditures:**

R. Munroe led the board in discussion about expenditures and further reductions. The referendum results were 394 yes to 545 no. At this point reductions have been made in the amounts of \$64,000 to the BOE, \$42,000 to the BOS, and \$75,000 to the capital budget. He thought the BOF should reduce the budget by half a percentage point at minimum, about \$75,000, to get down to a 2.37% increase.

R. Gallé agreed a half percentage point should be the minimal starting reduction. He favored a \$100,000 cut. He thought the BOF should consider that there was no final confirmation of state trooper cuts yet.

R. Flowers thought the BOE has made substantial cuts and had no more flexibility than the BOS. He questioned the trooper program, since some towns make do with one. He also wanted to look at non-essential personnel. R. Munroe repeated that the boards decide where to apply cuts. R. Morra said he would cut anything else before troopers. J. Stille said there have been no staff increases in the past few years. Several departments are one or two people. R. Morra said it would be impossible to maintain current services with fewer personnel. They already go outside of town for animal control services.

E. Bradley thought if all staff were essential, they might look at raises. J. Stille said very few full time people are non-union. R. Morra said negotiations are just starting and would not end in time for referendum. E. Bradley asked about the history of budget cuts between multiple referendums. R. Munroe said before last year (when the budget passed on the first time), there was usually about a half percentage point cut between referendums. However, those budgets had a higher starting point.

R. DePietro thought a half percentage too high. He said he believed they had done their due diligence with the first budget. He said he would prefer to leave it, even if impractical.

M. Maulucci thought they had a good budget, and at this point it was very difficult to choose what to cut. He wanted the decrease to be small, possibly around that half percent.

R. Munroe said it is justifiable to have certain amount of debt in the capital reserve budget, as it has supported capital items. The BOF discussed the role of debt in that budget to further reductions years ago, and debt has continued to play a role since. It means the town just doesn't end up purchasing. The reduction is presented to the BOS, which considers whether to absorb it in capital reserve or the main operating budget. There is also the contingency fund. The entire state trooper increase is \$61,000 based on the best info J. Stille and R. Morra can get. It includes around \$51,000 in raises and fringe benefits. If the BOF reduces the BOS budget because it sees the \$61,000 as non-essential and it becomes a real cost, there is nowhere to go. The town will be in a deficit situation. He suggested taking \$25,000 from contingency to support the trooper budget if the state reduction goes forward, leaving the BOS budget.

M. Silverstein said the vote was a mandate for a reduction. He said it is not their duty to oversee how the budget is spent, get out the vote, or ensure a passing number of yes votes, only to set the number.

R. Gallé **moved** to reduce \$75,000 from the BOS and \$25,000 from the BOE. E. Bradley **seconded**. Discussion: R. Gallé said it was with the hope that state trooper cuts would not pass down, and the intent to look at the contingency fund if they do. R. Munroe understood the hope that the bulk of the BOS cut (about \$50,000) would be out of the trooper budget. But of the remaining \$25,000 to come from the BOS, he said it was not comparable to cut the same amount as the BOE since it carried different weight. **Vote** 6:0:2, R. DePietro and M. Silverstein against; M. Silverstein because he thought cuts should be deeper.

#### **4. Discussion and Action Re: Ballot Question for May 24, 2016 Budget Referendum:**

E. Bradley **moved** that the question read "Shall the Annual Budget for the fiscal year 2016-2017 as recommended by the Board of Finance in the amount of \$20,806,118 be adopted?" R. Galle **seconded**. **Vote** 5:0:2, R. DePietro and M. Silverstein against, M. Silverstein because he thought cuts should be deeper.

**5. Adjournment:** R. DePietro moved to adjourn. M. Silverstein seconded. Meeting adjourned 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Benitez, Recording Secretary

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.