

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 19, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM**

Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Robert DePietro, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally and Kristen Gourley

Board of Education Members Present: Vice Chair Susan Pike, Christopher Davey, Anne Decker, and Rhea Klein

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Administrative Officer Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt, Director of Business and Finance for Bolton Schools Kusal Huyhn, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman E. Bradley at 7:15 p.m. She thanked Town staff for all their hard work putting this virtual meeting together. She recommended town residents email comments and questions to the Administrative Officer at townadmin@boltonct.org during the meeting, which will then be read at the meeting.

2. Public Participation: No public participation.

As a change to the agenda, R. Munroe MOVED the board consider agenda item 6a under agenda item 4. C. Danna SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

**3. Approval of Minutes:
February 20, 2020 Regular Meeting:**

R. DiPietro MOVED to APPROVE the regular meeting minutes of February 20, 2020 as presented. K. Gourley SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports:

4a. Tax Collection Summary:

J. Collins reported tax revenue collection is at 101.65% (99.86% last year) as of February 29, 2020. Motor vehicle tax collection is at 96.19% and supplemental tax collection is at 100.08% as of 2/29/2020.

J. Collins reviewed the FY 2020 revenue statement as of February 29, 2020. She said what is happening as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak could have a financial impact for the rest of the year on interest paid on Town accounts. Discussion followed on the questionable revenue source of interest for next year and for the board to keep this in mind when considering the FY2021 budget.

J. Collins reviewed areas she expects to be financially impacted by the current situation:

- She anticipates a decrease in tax collection.

- Town Clerk services are down. The Town is working to get dog license registration credit card payments online.
- There are no facilities rentals.
- There are no recreation department/senior center activities or programs scheduled.

First Selectman Pierog updated the board on the Town Aid Road (TAR) State Grant. She said TAR is in a bond package which has been approved by legislature, signed by the governor and now the State Bond Commission has to take action to sign the checks for distribution to the Towns.

Discussion followed on the revenue tuition line item, possibly having to reimburse money to Columbia and Hartford students because of there being less than 180 days in the school year. Superintendent Heckt said her opinion is the Town will still be servicing those students with online learning. C. Danna said the State has waived the 180-day school year requirement, so there should not be an issue with Columbia and Hartford.

In response to a question from E. Bradley, Superintendent Heckt said she has received no information that any BOE grants would change or be in jeopardy.

4b. Town Update: J. Kelly reported on year to date expenditures and said by the end of February the town was 2/3 through the end of the fiscal year. He said he was looking for any expenditure item that was over 66.6% and also over prior year expenditures, which included Auditor, Data Processing (over due to annual payment for Viewpoint software), Fire Commission, and Senior/Social Services (not an item of concern). He reported the budget is meeting expectations from the prior three years.

Discussion of FY2020 and FY2021 Revenue:

J. Kelly said he expects an uptick in the level of assistance for social services. The senior center, recreation department and library are not holding events. He said the Town has extra diesel fuel purchased and not used this season that cannot be returned to the supplier. First Selectman Pierog said she reviewed contract today and confirmed the only out in the contract regarding the purchase of excess diesel fuel is on supplier side.

R. Munroe asked if the Town has seen a reduction in the amount of single stream recyclables being rejected by the hauler due to contamination, specifically if the single stream habits of residents had improved to reduce amount of rejected material. J. Kelly responded Willimantic Waste Paper is seeing better recycling rates in this part of the state.

J. Kelly reported on one budget transfer in the amount of \$400.00 from town building operations to equipment for the purchase of a desk for the recreation director.

4c. Board of Education (BOE) Update: Superintendent Heckt reported on several issues regarding transfer of funds in February, including \$23,399.00 from supplies to operations & maintenance for repairs at Bolton Center School (BCS) and \$15,833.00 from supplies to operations & maintenance to cover shortfalls for urgent repairs at Bolton High School (BHS).

Superintendent Heckt emphasized the schools are operating in emergency mode, signing out chrome books for students without access to online learning as there are not enough for each child. She is working to remedy the shortage and provide a continuity of learning as the schools move to distance learning. She has purchased extra cleaning supplies and cleaning equipment for the custodians, who are working hard to clean buildings.

E. Bradley asked Superintendent Heckt about potential savings in the BOE budget as a result of the change to distance learning for students and staff. Superintendent Heckt responded she is not sure yet, but there could be potential energy savings.

R. DiPietro asked if there are any costs for providing teachers training in distance teaching. Superintendent Heckt said teachers have some training using Google Classrooms. Some additional learning platforms have been purchased, with the possible need to purchase others.

5. New Business

5a. Presentation and Discussion of Board of Education's FY2021 Budget:

The proposed Board of Education's FY2021 Budget can be viewed at https://www.boltonpublicschools.com/board_of_education/budget_information.

Superintendent Heckt reviewed the components of the Board of Education's FY2021 Budget power point presentation. The proposed BOE budget for FY2021 reflects a percentage increase of 3.68% or \$527,307.00, with the largest increase in benefits and reductions in the Special Education and Administrative/business budgets.

Other parts of the BOE budget reviewed by Superintendent Heckt included total projected grant awards/Projected revenues, Capital items proposals, enrollment projections and the 2015-2020 Strategic plan.

Superintendent Heckt concluded her presentation by stating she is proud of the amazing work of the staff.

Questions from the board included the areas of projected State Grants (Choice monies) and the Capital proposal for the BHS Soccer field.

E. Bradley thanked the BOE and Superintendent Heckt for the informative budget presentation.

5b. Appropriation/Reauthorization of Capital Expenditures:

First Selectman Pierog reported that the Capital Acquisition, Planning, And Allocation Committee (CAPA) met and approved a Capital Improvement Plan for FY2021 totaling \$1,399,969. Total taxpayer ask would be \$567,969.00, a tax increase of one and one third mills.

Town of Bolton, CT Funds Available for Redistribution Spring 2020:

First Selectman Pierog noted the funds below in the Capital Reserve Fund represent totals that are left over from other projects. While there is still more money to be found in the Capital Reserve Fund, the other dollars are still awaiting use as part of some other project. It has been found by the town's Finance Department that the following dollars can and should be brought back to town meeting to be assigned for some future use:

Bolton High School & Central Office Project: \$640,269.38
Capital Reserve Fund Town Building Repairs/Upgrades \$103,310.34
BOE Building Repairs/Upgrades \$20,262.25
BOS Equipment Replacement/Repairs \$28,870.68
BOE Equipment Replacement/Repairs \$188.50
BOS Vehicle Replacement/Repairs \$46,154.25
BOE Vehicle Replacement/Repairs \$13,125.41
Air Conditioning \$10,766.52
Communication Equipment \$31,594.03
Parking Lot Repaving \$3,146.54
Open Space \$8,611.43 Subtotal: \$266,029.95
GRAND TOTAL: \$906,299.33

First Selectman Pierog reported the BOS and CAPA require approval from the BOF per Town Charter to send \$832,000.00 of this total to Town Meeting to be reallocated for future use.

K. Gourley MOVED that the \$832,000.00 be sent to Town Meeting. R. Munroe SECONDED.

Discussion followed. First Selectman Pierog explained that capital reserve monies cannot be returned to general fund and must stay as capital expenditure as per Chapter 8.10 of Town Charter. First Selectman Pierog said she will share explanation of this in the Bolton Bulletin and on social media for the public.

E. Bradley commented the format of holding a town meeting may be different, given the current pandemic crisis. First Selectman Pierog said the timeline is to tentatively schedule a town meeting to occur immediately before the next regular BOS meeting on April 7, 2020.

MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

First Selectman Pierog said there has been no information yet from the governor on how municipalities can hold town meetings. The Town has five days from today until the legal notice has to be published in order to hold a Town Meeting on April 7th. She will update the BOF as soon as she has information of any changes in meeting procedures authorized by the governor.

Discussion followed on continuing the budget process. The governor has said meetings and public hearings could be held remotely as long as the meeting recording can be made available in 48 hours on the Town's website. Orders from the governor include extending the budget process by 30 days per action of the BOS. First Selectman Pierog indicated she would call an emergency BOS meeting if the BOF wants this 30-day extension.

Board discussion followed on the pros and cons of an requesting an extension of time and other virtual platforms that could be used to accommodate a large group of participants. Consensus of the board at this time is to proceed with the budget process as scheduled in the budget calendar, with the option to ask the BOS for a 30-day extension in the future.

5c. Charter Revision Discussion:

E. Bradly reported on an email she received from the Charter Revision Finance and Taxation Sub-committee. The sub-committee would like to meet with the BOF in the near future. The Charter Revision Committee is looking at the section of the Charter that deals with BOF's responsibilities roles and responsibilities. E. Bradley said she will download the attachment she received with the email and send to the members. She will review the meeting schedule for a date the BOF could meet with Charter Revision Finance and Taxation sub-committee.

6. Ongoing Business:

6a. Discussion of FY2020 and FY2021 Revenue (discussed under agenda item 4)

6b. FY2021 Budget Calendar: E. Bradley said additional budget discussion meetings could be added to the calendar if necessary.

R. Munroe asked if town residents could be notified that the Resident Assistance Fund is available for those in need. J. Kelly said he would include the information on the fund in the next special bulletin.

6c. Shared Services: Superintendent Heckt thanked the Town staff for dealing with recent community issues.

E. Bradley added she is proud of the Town and asked that participants provide feedback on this virtual meeting to herself or Administrative Officer J. Kelly.

7. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

Next Meetings:

March 26, 2020 – Special Meeting – Virtual Platform

March 31, 2020 – Special Meeting – Virtual Platform **(THIS IS A TUESDAY)**

April 16, 2020 – Regular Meeting – Location to be determined

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.