

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 – 7:15 pm
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes**

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

Board of Selectmen Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog and Selectman Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: Town Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

Others Present: Nick Lavigne

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.
2. Public Participation: S. Pierog reported the Town has had a total of 30 confirmed COVID-19 cases as of Monday, September 14th.
3. Approval of June 18, 2020 Minutes:
The minutes of June 18, 2020 were amended as follows:

3. Approval of May 21, 2020 Minutes: ~~KG~~ **K. Gourley** MOVED to approve the May 21, 2020 regular meeting minutes as amended. ~~CD~~ **C. Danna** SECONDED.

4c) BOE Update: E. Bradley complimented Joseph Maselli, Principal of Bolton High School, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt on their great work putting together the ~~8th grade~~ **high school** graduation at Mansfield Drive-In.

K. Gourley MOVED to approve the June 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes as amended. Charlie Danna SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 5:0:2 with R. Tuthill and R. Munroe abstaining.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports

a) Tax Collection Summary:

J. Collins reported:

As of June 30, 2020, the current tax levy collected was at 100.18 % of the revised number. The current motor vehicle levy collected was at 101.58% and the supplemental motor vehicle levy collected was at 103.43%. She commented the Town ended the year better than expected, given the pandemic health crisis.

For fiscal year 2021, as of July 31, 2020, the current tax levy collected was at 74.79%. The motor vehicle levy collected was at 51.15% and the supplemental motor vehicle levy collected was at 103.43%.

For August 31, 2020, the current tax levy collected was at 82.27% compared to last year's collection of 99.97%. J. Collins noted the grace period to pay taxes has been extended to October 1, 2020.

b) Town Update: For revenues as of August 31, 2020, the second month into fiscal year 2021, the revenue collection rate was 7.51%. J. Collins reported no State grant checks have been received, with the exception of the first round of Town Aid Roads (TAR). She said processing July revenues were a little slow going as well, with the banks less accessible due to the pandemic measures.

For expenditures, J. Kelly reported, as of August 31, 2020, the Town expensed 91.60% of its fiscal year 2020 unaudited budget. He noted there was a surplus in every line item with the exception of Recreation. Unexpended expenditures totaled \$520,048.97, of which \$225,000 is a rollover.

For fiscal year 2021, J. Kelly reported the Town has expensed 16.27% expensed of the budget as of August 31, 2020.

E. Bradley asked if the planning of elections will be affected by the expected large volume of mail-in balloting. J. Collins responded two small grants are coming in from the Secretary of State for making a safe polling place for purchasing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies and to help with election procedures.

c) BOE Update:

K. Heckt reported, as of June 30, 2020, beyond the commitment made last spring of \$165,000, the BOE was able to return an additional \$194,811 (unaudited number) to the Town from the fiscal year 2020 budget. As of June 30, 2020, the BOE expended 97% of their budget. She said the asbestos abatement program has been closed out.

She said, as of August 31, 2020, the BOE is 7% expended for FY 2021 and expects the budget to be fully expended.

K. Heckt updated the board on several challenges regarding providing education to students. She said there are several positions available, including 8 open positions in special education, and attributes the difficulty filling the positions to virus concerns. She noted all children are receiving the support they need according to their IP. Another area presenting a challenge has been obtaining 100 replacement chrome books. The BOE has purchased a lot of PPE for use in the schools.

She said the schools are using a hybrid model to educate students until October 1, 2020. K. Heckt noted teachers have been working throughout the summer to put together their

classrooms and plans for hybrid learning. She praised the staff for their commitment to the students and their flexibility during this stressful time.

The BOF members expressed their gratitude to the school staff and BOE for their hard work providing the students a great educational experience during difficult circumstances and ability to adapt to many educational formats.

K. Heckt explained funds have had to be expended defending the BOE in a nationwide class action lawsuit regarding remote learning for special education students. The case is being heard in the New York court system.

K. Heckt noted teacher contract negotiations are coming up. However, the teacher's union and the BOE have reached a tentative off-the-record agreement on file with the Town Clerk. If approved at Town meeting, this would save money usually spent on attorney fees and arbitration.

E. Bradley confirmed a tentative agreement has been reached between the teachers and BOE, with an 8.45% wage increase over a three-year period. The next step is for the agreement to go vote at town meeting, tentatively scheduled for October 6, 2020. The Town is waiting on direction from the State on how to hold the town meeting. E. Bradley said she is preparing a presentation on the contract for the Town meeting.

S. Pierog added an in-person Town meeting is allowed with social distancing and mask protocols as outlined by the State, but the Town is also investigating with the State the possibility of holding a remote virtual Town meeting.

5. New Business

Consideration and Possible Action on Additional Appropriation to be Authorized for the Purpose of Repairing Components of Enrico Road:

J. Kelly reported back in June he received notification from the highway foreman regarding a drainage pipe collapse under Enrico Road. A video survey underneath the road showed that the stormwater collection system in a certain area under the road has collapsed. Michels Pipe Services was chosen off the State bid list with help of the Town Engineer and has quoted a price of \$213,850 to fix the issue. An additional 2% would need to be added to the cost for a performance bond, bringing the cost to approximately \$220,000. J. Kelly explained the Town needs to act before the temperature drops as, if left over the winter, the cost of repair would increase significantly. The Town is requesting an appropriation request from the BOF to go to vote at Town meeting for the pipes to be repaired.

R. DePietro MOVED to go to public vote to allocate up to \$220,000 from the General Fund to repair the drainage pipe under Enrico Road. R. Munroe SECONDED.

R. DePietro MOVED to amend the prior motion to have the funds to repair the drainage pipe under Enrico Road come from the rainy-day fund. R. Lally SECONDED.

J. Kelly suggested allocating the funds from the General Fund would be a better source from a bonding perspective, to minimize the impact to the Town's bond rating. J. Collins concurred. Discussion followed on alternative ways to fund the project.

R. DePietro MOVED to withdraw his amendment to the original motion. R. Tuthill SECONDED.

By roll call vote, the MOTION to go to public vote to allocate up to \$220,000 from the general fund to repair the drainage pipes under Enrico Road CARRIED 7:0:0.

The funding of the project will go to public vote at the Town meeting tentatively scheduled for October 6, 2020.

6. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 8:53 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting: October 15, 2020 Regular Meeting - 7:15 PM

Respectfully submitted by *Linda H. McDonald*

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

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