



# Town of Bolton

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
JOINT MEETING WITH THE  
BOARD OF FINANCE & BOARD OF EDUCATION  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2020  
7:00 PM – VIRTUAL  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

The October 5, 2020 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:02 PM.

#### ROLL CALL

**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Deputy First Selectman Kim Miller, Selectman Robert DePietro, Selectman Michael Eremita, and Selectman Robert Morra.

**BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Emily Bradley, Deputy Chair Robert Munroe, Robert DePietro (also a Selectman), Kristen Gourley, Charlie Danna (arrived 7:16 PM), and Richard Tuthill.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Andrew Broneill (arrived 7:09 PM), Rhea Klein, Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Scott Rich (arrived 7:20 PM), and Benjamin Davies.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

**AGENDA ITEM 3A – Discussion on budget and related items for the current fiscal year, next year, and subsequent years, including REVENUES.**

**DISCUSSION:** Collins was asked to present information about revenues. Collins shared the fact that there appears to be an unaudited surplus \$144,347 in revenue from Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. Between this, the Town returning \$295,411, the Board of Education returning \$194,841, and \$220,000 being allocated to repairing Enrico Road, there is a possible unaudited cash surplus from FY 2020 of \$414,599. Questions were asked by members of all boards in an effort to clarify numbers leading into FY 2022. Collins shared information about tax collection in FY 2021, which has been impacted by COVID-19-related Executive Orders and economic circumstances.

**AGENDA ITEM 3B – Discussion on budget and related items for the current fiscal year, next year, and subsequent years, including EXPENDITURES.**

**DISCUSSION:** This conversation is presented out of order, as Pierog asked that discussion of 3C be held before discussion on 3B. Collins stated that as of October 31, the Town has spent \$1,693,740.36, or 29.33%, of the FY 2021 budget. Broneill was asked if he would like to share any information about Board of Education expenditures, and Heckt shared that there are a

number of factors that are impacting their level of expenditures, including but not limited to vacant positions, increased special education costs, and other COVID-19-related costs. Discussion continued on the subject of state and federal relief for expenditures related to COVID-19.

AGENDA ITEM 3C – Discussion on budget and related items for the current fiscal year, next year, and subsequent years, including DEBT SERVICE.

DISCUSSION: Pierog shared information about the four bonds that have been issued by the Town that have or will have an impact on the Town in and following FY 2021. The longest bond was the 2012 bond, issued for 20 years, which will be paid off in May 2032. Eremita noted that the Town is nowhere near its maximum indebtedness. Questions were asked about how the maximum indebtedness is calculated by the state. Tuthill asked what it would take to increase the Town's bond rating, which Kelly noted would require an increased Fund Balance and Pierog noted was partially impacted by the fact that the State of Connecticut does not have a favorable bond rating itself. Pierog went on to state that the Town's interest rate on all the bonds was generally more favorable than the rates being issued on the market right now.

AGENDA ITEM 3D – Discussion on budget and related items for the current fiscal year, next year, and subsequent years, including CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS.

DISCUSSION: Pierog invited Eremita to speak about a possible new Capital expenditure related to the Firehouse. Eremita began by explaining some of the issues that the Firehouse currently faces with its current size and configuration. He stated that there are four main pieces of fire apparatus that cannot currently drive through the Firehouse due to the fact that there are only a handful of bays and the Firehouse has a depth that allows for two fire trucks to be housed in the same column. The Fire Department is proposing that the Firehouse be expanded to allow for more bays so that the main apparatus components can all drive out the front of the Firehouse, which he claims would make operations safer and more efficient. The expansion would include one more bay, which was originally proposed back in the 1980s, and the Fire Chief has asked that the CAPA Committee propose an allocation for a study so that the true cost of a Firehouse expansion can be considered in an educated manner.

Pierog went on to describe the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan and to talk about a few of the major items that are projected to be funded in FY 2022 and beyond. Discussion followed.

AGENDA ITEM 3E – Discussion on budget and related items for the current fiscal year, next year, and subsequent years, including PENDING CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES.

DISCUSSION: Broneill stated that the main challenge coming up for the school was the money to re-roof the Center School. Morra stated that he hoped rooftop solar can help to offset costs of the roofing project. Pierog stated that the Town's pending challenges and opportunities include acquiring a new fire truck, potentially expanding the Firehouse, and expanding Town office space. She concluded that she felt the town was on the right track overall. Munroe and Tuthill asked follow-up questions of Heckt.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Health Insurance.

DISCUSSION: Kelly and Heckt jointly shared information about the CT-CHIP Health Insurance situation that the Town and Board of Education have faced over the past Fiscal Year. Kelly shared that, while the cost of insurance went up by 19.5% from FY 2020 to FY 2021, that was a one-time adjustment that may or may not repeat itself again, and Heckt noted that the two-year increase average

was only about 8%. Heckt also noted that Bolton itself has higher claims than most in the consortium, and thus the FY 2021 increase could have been much worse if we had not been a part of the consortium.

Pierog concluded the meeting by informing the group that Bolton has been designated as an “Orange” town, with 10-14 COVID-19 positive cases per 100,000 residents over a rolling 14-day period, and furthermore the entire State will be moving into “Phase 2.1” in its fight against the second major wave of COVID-19 cases in 2020.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Steele Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Joshua Steele Kelly, Administrator