

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 30, 2023 – 7:15 P.M.
HYBRID MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM &
TOWN OF BOLTON, 222 BOLTON CENTER RD, BOLTON
MINUTES**

Board of Finance Members Present: Ross Lally – Chairman, Robert Munroe – Vice Chair, Kristen Gourley, Mather Clarke, Ashley Phelan, Amanda Gordon, and Charles Danna Jr.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Pam Sawyer – First Selectman

Board of Education Members Present: Rhea Klein, Christopher Davey, Susan Pike, and Andrew Broneill

Staff Present: James Rupert – Town Administrator, Kristin Heckt – Superintendent, Jill Collins – Chief Financial Officer, and Ashleigh Johnson – Board Clerk

1) Call to Order: R. Lally called this meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

2) Public Participation:

Denay Johnson explained she moved to Bolton for the school system and said she was particularly interested due to the Elementary School World Language classes. She is hoping no more cuts will be made to World Language, but also hoping there will not be any cuts to sports and others, saying it could reduce growth in Bolton.

3) Approval of Minutes:

C. Danna MOVED to approve all of the minutes as presented. K. Gourley SECONDED.

C. Danna AMENDED this motion to go through each meeting minutes and approve separately.

a) March 16, 2023 Regular Meeting:

R. Munroe MOVED to approve the March 16, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. C. Danna SECONDED. By roll call vote, PASSES 6:0:1.

b) March 21, 2023 Special Meeting:

R. Munroe MOVED to approve the March 21, 2023 Special Meeting minutes as presented. A. Gordon SECONDED. By roll call vote, passes UNANIMOUSLY 7:0:0.

c) March 23, 2023 Special Meeting:

K. Gourley MOVED to approve the March 23, 2023 Special Meeting minutes as presented. M. Clarke SECONDED. By roll call vote, passes UNANIMOUSLY 7:0:0.

4) New Business:

a) Discussion and possible action on BOS Resolution for Appropriation of \$100,000 from FY2022 surplus to Capital Reserve Fund for Grant Matches to go to Town Meeting on April 18, 2023

J. Collins explained the need to bring this subject to the public for a vote at the next town meeting. A. Gordon asked if this money can be used for other things or if it is only allowed for the grant matches. J. Collins said it will be used for grant matches unless it is taken back to a town meeting for approval.

K. Gourley MOVED to approve the BOS resolution for appropriation of \$100,000 from FY2022 surplus to Capital Reserve Fund for grant matches to go to Town Meeting on April 18, 2023. C. Danna SECONDED. By roll call vote, passes UNANIMOUSLY 7:0:0.

b) Discussion and possible action on BOS Transfer of \$60,000 from Administration Professional Tech. Services line to Separation Fund to go on to Town Meeting on April 18, 2023

R. Munroe MOVED to approve the BOS transfer of \$60,000 from Administration Professional Tech. Services line to Separation Fund to go on to Town Meeting on April 18, 2023. K. Gourley SECONDED. By roll call vote, passes UNANIMOUSLY 7:0:0.

5) Ongoing Business:

a) Discussion of FY2023 Budgets (expenditures & revenues):

J. Collins discussed FY2023 budget details with the Board. She explained that we are doing well currently. She also explained that we should lower the motor vehicle collection rate to 96 or 94% due to the motor vehicle mill rate cap.

K. Gourley asked if we should expect any curveballs. J. Collins suspects we will get what we have expected to get.

J. Collins presented other town revenues and the Board deliberated each line item to go over whether the amounts should increase, decrease, or keep the projected amounts the same. After deliberations, R. Lally estimated that the adopted numbers of \$21,682,525 increased approximately \$250,000, but that doesn't include possible surplus from BOS or BOE.

K. Heckt announced that at the moment the BOE isn't in the position to commit any monies with continued issues in Special Education, including legal fees. K. Gourley asked for clarification as to whether the BOE is going to need funding from the BOF or if they just are expecting to not be able to give back any monies. K. Heckt said they are still figuring it out themselves, but they are hopeful that they won't require any monies from BOF.

R. Lally and J. Collins said potential surplus could be available to use in FY24 from FY22 and FY23.

b) Discussion of FY2024 Budgets (expenditures & revenues):

R. Lally explained that fully funding the budget goes from 39.99 mills to 44.9 mills. If we want to keep the mill rate the same there will be cuts needed, close to \$1 million. The surplus from FY23 isn't included in the 44.9 mills estimate.

C. Danna MOVED to adopt the budget as presented with no increases or decreases. R. Munroe SECONDED.

C. Danna began discussion by stating he doesn't believe we should be decreasing the budget simply because it would be short changing the community. He stated that he has heard the budgets proposed and he believes they are fair asks for this economy.

Explaining how we shouldn't cut the budget when we have so much support for this budget this year, and he believes we should let this go to referendum and let people vote. R. Munroe does not believe the people of Bolton will vote for this increase in the mill rate. He stated we also should be careful with our wording as far as saying cuts versus reductions, since there will more likely be reductions, but that sometimes does lead to cuts. K. Gourley said we need to start thinking about how reductions do mean cuts. A. Gordon explained that neither BOE nor BOS are requesting new items on the

budget, the raise in the budgets are to keep things going and the increase in the cost of living and the union contract costs. With this, any reduction would result in cuts to services.

R. Munroe states he isn't ready to put the full budget forward without getting more feedback from the BOS and BOE. R. Lally suggested waiting and deciding at a later meeting once we receive more information.

C. Danna WITHDREW his motion to adopt the budget as presented with no increases or decreases.

c) Discussion on Public Communication/Outreach:

The Board discussed changes to the budget documents to make everything more simplified for voters.

d) FY2024 Budget Calendar:

A. Gordon MOVED to cancel the Special Meeting on April 4, 2023. K. Gourley SECONDED. By roll call vote, passes UNANIMOUSLY 7:0:0.

6) Adjournment: R. Lally adjourned this meeting at 9:40 PM.

Next Meetings:

April 4, 2023 – Special Meeting (THIS IS A TUESDAY) (if necessary) - CANCELLED

April 6, 2023 – Special Meeting (if necessary)

Respectfully submitted by Ashleigh N. Johnson, Board Clerk

Ashleigh N. Johnson

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

SEE ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER.