

**BOLTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
7:15 PM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Finance Committee Members Present In-Person: Robert Morra, Amanda Gordon, Rhea Klein, Ashley Phalen, Robert Munroe, Ross Lally

Finance Committee Members Absent: Christopher Connelly

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert (7:21 p.m.)

Staff Present Via Zoom: Finance Director Jill Collins, Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald, Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Others Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier (non-voting Ex-Officio Finance Committee member)

Others Present Via Zoom: Nick Lavigne (Community Voice Channel)

1. **Call to Order:** R. Morra called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

2. **Public Participation:** There was no public participation.

3. **Election of Officers:**

R. Morra MOVED to nominate Ross Lally as Chairman of the Finance Committee. A. Gordon SECONDED. Hearing no other nominations, R. Morra closed the nomination. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

R. Morra MOVED to nominate Robert Munroe as Vice as Chairman of the Finance Committee. A. Phalen SECONDED. Hearing no other nominations, R. Lally closed the nomination. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

4.a November 16, 2023 Regular Meeting:

Consensus of the committee was to accept the November 16, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented.

5. **Elected Official and Town Staff Reports:**

5.a Tax Collection Summary

J. Collins reported, as of November 30, 2023, the current tax levy collected is at 100.54% of 98% collection. The current motor vehicle levy collected is at 95.71% of 94% collection. The prior year's collection was at 124.07%. Interest collected is at 84.44%. She said things are as planned at this point.

5.b Board of Education Update:

Superintendent Heckt reported as of November 30, 2023, the BOE is 27% expended for FY 2024 compared to 29% at this time last year. The BOE has actualized \$83,357 in savings of salaries and \$67,272 in benefits. The BOE anticipates additional savings in, at least, the salaries category. There are currently two unfilled certified staff positions, two unfilled paraprofessional positions. K. Heckt noted one unfilled position is a science teacher position at the high school, which occurred the day before the school year started. By reconfiguring the school class schedule, a one-year temporary solution was reached for this school year in order for students to receive the credits they need for graduation. The entire salary for that position has been actualized for this school year. The BOE will be filling that position for the next school year.

Superintendent Heckt informed the committee the BOE approved a \$20,000 transfer from Personnel Benefits to Systems Management. She explained this licensing is necessary to provide the tooling for automated patching for Windows and third-party applications. Also included in that cost is Novus security services for those end points which provides management and specific reporting and protections most commonly requested as requirements for cyber liability insurance. She said the BOE is pleased with the work that Novus is doing, specifically their work on an audit of the technology systems.

5.c Town Update:

Revenues: J. Rupert reported the town is doing well with revenues. He said the town is waiting on a large amount of money from the State of Connecticut for ECS and Adult Education grants.

Responding to a question from A. Gordon, J. Collins said the revenue from the nips tax goes into liability because there are specific things the town has to spend it on. J. Rupert said, last year, \$12,000 of the nips tax revenue was used to offset a budget cut in street sweeping, which is an appropriate use of those funds. J. Rupert said each of the town's three package stores sell approximately 600 nip bottles per day. J. Collins said the town recently received a check for \$6,000 and will receive more.

R. Fournier asked about the large increase in interest revenue from what was budgeted to the actual amount. A. Gordon explained last year the Board of Finance budgeted \$15,000 in revenues for the Interest category based on the prior year's interest. The actual to date for that category is \$259,602.22. In between that was a re-negotiation of the interest rate on the town's main account which resulted in significantly higher revenue. R. Lally said this committee should review the process of always looking for ways to enhance revenue. Discussion and questions followed. The consensus of the committee was to have staff ask the bank to provide something to show how interest is calculated for the town to help the committee in the budget process.

Expenditures: J. Rupert said he is concerned with the Waste Collection category and money may have to be moved into that category. He is watching that category carefully. Reasons contributing to the rate of expenditure are the fluctuation in tonnage costs and fluctuations in the commodities market and the trend has been down. J. Rupert said everything else is on track.

R. Lally mentioned the town has applied for a \$10,500 early voting grant from the Secretary of the State's office. Because of the requirement of early voting in primaries and elections, the Registrar of Voters' budget will increase.

5.d Other: J. Collins reported the grand list for the supplemental is \$6,588,484, which calculates to, at 100% collection, \$213,664.78. The town went with 94% collection for regular motor vehicles and the calculation is \$195,000. J. Collins believes the town will collect that.

6. New Business

6.a 2024 Meeting Dates

R. Morra MOVED to approve the 2024 regular meeting calendar as presented. R. Munroe SECONDED. J. Collins said the January meeting will have to be a special meeting by statute because that date is less than 30 days from approval of the meeting date by the committee.

R. Morra amended his prior motion and MOVED to approve the 2024 regular meeting calendar as amended, changing the January 18, 2024 to a special meeting and adding Thursday, January 16, 2025 to the regular meeting calendar. R. Munroe SECONDED the amended motion. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

6.b Meeting Dates for CAPA Meetings:

R. Morra MOVED to set the CAPA meeting dates as a special meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. and a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. R. Munroe SECONDED. Some committee members had a conflict with the time of the January 25th meeting.

R. Morra amended his motion and MOVED to set the CAPA meeting dates as a special meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. and a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2024 at 5:00 p.m., location of each meeting to be determined. R. Munroe SECONDED the amended motion. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

6.c Discussion and Possible Approval of FY2025 Auditor and Finance Committee Budget:

Finance Committee FY2025 budget request: After discussion, R. Morra MOVED the Finance Committee FY2025 budget request as follows: Payroll - \$2,000, Advertising-\$200, and Office Operating Expenditures-\$500. A. Gordon SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

Auditing Services FY2025 budget request: R. Morra MOVED to keep the proposed Auditing Services FY2025 budget request at \$45,000. A. Gordon SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

6.d Approve Budget Transfer:

R. Morra MOVED to approve the transfer of \$125 from category Other Professional Services in the Seniors account to the category Other Contracts in the Public Health account. A. Gordon SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

7. Communications

7.a Letter from the Board of Finance:

R. Lally summarized the contents of the memo. He said the Board of Finance was trying to make sure that anything the board noted get passed along as suggestions, best practices, or considerations. He said a lot of it was around just being fiscally responsible and keeping communication open, look at the town's financial statements and digging a little bit deeper into the yearly audit to make sure the town is in compliance.

R. Lally asked that the January 18, 2024 special meeting agenda include a session to discuss how the committee members work together as a team when it comes to presentation of the new budget.

8. **Adjournment:** R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. R. Munroe SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald

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