



Town of Bolton

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021 7:00 P.M. - VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The March 23, 2021 Board of Selectmen Public Hearing on the recommendations of the Charter Revision Commission was called to order by First Selectman, Sandra Pierog, at 7:05 PM.

ROLL CALL

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly.

Kelly began by sharing testimony that was submitted in writing, authors of which included Daniel Buckson, Tom Manning, Milton Hathaway, the Inland Wetlands Commission, the Conservation Commission, and General Code. Those documents [can be found here](#). Ross Lally spoke on behalf of the Inland Wetlands Commission and Kelly spoke on behalf of General Code.

Calvin Trumbull of 28 Vulpi Road spoke against a move away from having a fully-elected Board of Finance.

Jay Brudz of 25 Hanover Farms Road spoke in his capacity as a Charter Revision Commission member, but noted that all views expressed are his own and not necessarily those of other Commission members. Brudz spoke in favor of the Commission's proposed change that would allow for budgets revised after referendum to be increased instead of being limited to only being decreased following a failed referendum. Brudz also spoke in favor of gender-neutral language and lowering the numeric threshold for triggering a referendum.

Cheryl Udin of 31 Keeny Drive spoke in favor of gender-neutral language being used throughout the Charter.

Michael Eremita of 30 Lori Road spoke in favor of gender-neutral language being used throughout the Charter.

Emily Bradley of 22 Norma's Way spoke in favor of keeping the Board of Finance the same as it has been historically. She stated that she would not support having the Board of Finance dissolved.

Morris Silverstein of 16 Mount Sumner Drive supports the statements made by Emily Bradley and would not support seeing the Board of Finance dissolved.

Richard Tuthill of 233 Bolton Center Road also spoke in favor of maintaining the current Board of Finance, as he believes it acts as a fiduciary for the town.

Adam Teller of 23 Elizabeth Road spoke to the comments of Jay Brudz, noting that four members of the Board of Finance, under the current system, can cut a budget without anyone else having an opportunity to restore those funds at a later point in the process. The newly-proposed budget process will allow for the public to redress any issues related to overzealous cutting from the Board of Finance. Teller also stated that the Boards of Selectmen and Education conduct more in-depth research into funding requests and that the Board of Finance is not necessarily as educated on the minute details of each budget and are therefore not necessarily as equipped to make difficult decisions.

Peter Van Dine of 81 Vernon Road spoke against the combination of the Inland Wetlands Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Barry Stearns of 21 Cook Drive stated that he has two major concerns with the Charter Revision Commissions proposals: he believes that the way that the election of the First Selectmen is handled in the new proposal is not a positive change, and he does not want to see the Board of Finance be changed or done away with.

Robert Morra of 15 Tinker Pond Road stated that he believes the purpose of this new Board of Finance proposal is to ensure that the Board of Finance is as educated on each budget as possible.

Kimberly Miller of 88 Highridge Farm Lane stated that she believes the Board of Finance does not possess the same level of education on each budget as the members of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education do, and therefore a change in the Board of Finance structure makes sense.

Michael Eremita stated that he agrees with comments made by Morra and Miller, and further stated that Board of Finance members do not attend budget hearings with department directors the way that Board of Selectmen members do and therefore they do not have the same information to work with as they make budget decisions.

Richard Tuthill stated that the Board of Finance does receive information about each line item related to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education budgets. He believes that the Board of Finance takes too much time reviewing routine numbers rather than focusing on addressing outliers. He stated that the Board of Finance has access to enough personnel that it is able to make educated decisions. Tuthill further stated that any member of the public that does not like the Board of Finance's decisions can vote those Board members out of office.

Morris Silverstein stated that the Board of Selectmen is a group where three people could decide that the Board of Finance should be dissolved, and therefore any criticism that the Board of Finance is a Board where only four members could cut the budget is invalid.

Tom Manning of 18 School Road stated that he believes any resident of Bolton should be able to serve in elected and appointed office, not just individuals who are US Citizens.

Monita Hebert of 11 Deer Run Road stated that very little has changed in the past several Charter Revision processes, but that the world has changed vastly in that time. Thus, she believes that any part of the Charter that is subject to change in the next ten years should be removed from the Charter now and added to ordinances where they can be more readily amended in the future.

Cheryl Udin asked what comes next in the process, and First Selectman Pierog stated that public comment will continue to be collected up until 7:00 PM on Tuesday, April 6th, 2021. The Board of Selectmen will make a decision at that time about what changes the Charter Revision Commission should make to their report. The final questions will be on the November ballot.

At 8:23 PM, the Chair recessed the hearing to the April 6th, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Joshua Steele Kelly, Administrator

See minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.