

The Board of Selectmen held its regular meeting on January 19, 2016, at the Town Hall with the First Selectman Robert Morra presiding. In attendance were: Selectmen Michael Emerita, Robert Neil, and Sandra Pierog; Administrative Officer Joyce Stille and several members of the public. Member Gwen Marrion was excused.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comment:** Nicholas Grottole, 256 Hebron Road, presented a summary of his Eagle Scout project at Herrick Park. The BOS approved of the project work so far and commended him for his efforts. For his high school Capstone Project, N. Grottole proposed expanding and blazing the current trail at Herrick Park, converting the current trail sign to a Kiosk station and identifying/labeling trees along the route. By consensus, the Selectmen agreed to have Buildings and Grounds Supervisor John Butrymovich and Administrative Officer J. Stille review and approve the Capstone project as proposed.
3. **Approval of Minutes:**
  - A. **December 1, 2015 Meeting** – R. Neil moved to approve. M. Emerita seconded. Vote 3:0:0.
  - B. **December 15, 2016 Retreat** – R. Neil moved to approve. M. Emerita seconded. Vote 3:0:0.
4. **Correspondence:**
  - A. **Letter of Appointment of Alternate to Planning and Zoning Commission:** Eric Luntta, PZC Chairman wrote that Thomas Robbins was appointed to the PZC as an alternate member.
  - B. **Letter of Resignation from Richard Jewell, Conservation Commission Alternate:** Richard Jewell resigned from the Commission. R. Neil moved to accept his resignation and send a letter commending his service. M. Emerita seconded. Motion passed 3:0:0.
5. **Unfinished Business:** None.
6. **New Business:**
  - A. **Charter Oak Greenway Shared Use Path and Path Extension:**

R. Morra noted the public informational meeting on January 7<sup>th</sup> on the proposed Path and issues such as safety, visibility, and privacy. Several attendees were present, some for and some against. Comments on the draft BSC Group Preliminary Design Report will be accepted until February 1, 2016. R. Morra also assured attendees that the town is far from a decision.

Erin Bolduc, 41 Castlerock Lane, raised the issue of funding and cost to the town.

R. Morra said there are no funds currently available or designated for the trail construction. The section termed the “missing link” would most likely not be constructed until the expressway junction (I-384/Route 44 & 6/Notch Road intersections) has been redone by the state. The state DOT is responsible for the trail design in this area and is studying options.

R. Morra also explained that the study and its preliminary analysis and plans are funded by a grant through DEEP. Town cost is an in kind match. Traffic safety and management on Route 44 from Bolton to Mansfield is also under study through CRCOG as part of the Next Gen Project. The BOS was asked if there was a dollar limit to what the board or town may approve. J. Stille said that it is tiered as to what approvals are necessary. The level of funding for a trail out of Town funds would most likely require a referendum. The dollar amount necessary for the project depends on what grants are available and secured by the state and/or town. R. Morra said he felt that since it would be in state right-of-way property, it should be state funded and he expects it to be a completely state-driven project.

E. Bolduc also asked what placement the Path might have on the town's timeline in relation to other large projects. R. Morra said since it is a state project, it is not on the town's to do list.

Tom Balkus, 21 Laurwood Drive, asked for clarification on how the missing link. R. Morra said that DOT is not willing to start something that doesn't connect to anything, so the construction of that section could depend on a redesign of the expressway junction. T. Balkus asked who would be responsible for Path/trail maintenance. J. Stille said plans are not that far along yet, but current trails are maintained by the DOT for any paving, and other things like trash are town responsibility.

Gloria Wood, 71 Tolland Road, asked if the Path's placement on Route 44 was definite. When the BOS answered no, she explained it seemed so at the presentation by the trail committee. R. Morra said the presentation was on the placement that the BSC had found to be the best design. G. Wood asked if there were other alternatives to come under consideration. R. Morra said he believed that other routes were found to be very difficult, but it is possible that placement would shift depending on the expressway redesign. G. Wood clarified that the construction of the Manchester trail limits options for how one might go through Bolton. The BOS affirmed that and the Manchester portion of the trail is a done deal. G. Wood asked who would be responsible for mowing grass in the proposed 5 foot buffer along Route 44. R. Morra's opinion was that it should be the state's since it is state right of way.

Lani Kerr, 27 Quarry Road & 1212 Boston Turnpike, noted that the language used in both the BOS meetings she had attended seemed focused on the future, which conflicts with the language and reports about funding and pursuing grants already under way. She asked if it is possible to have a FAQ on the town site to help clarify information. Though they were saying it is to be a state project, it is the town that is seeking grants, funding, and put the study in motion. Route 44 also has a lot of commercial and residential property for sale. She wondered what effect the Path would have on buyer interest, since the frontage all along the properties would be subject to reconstruction by the state.

R. Morra clarified that the current study is grant funding the town received many years ago for trail design. No decisions on the possible funding for construction has been made but anticipate it will be state funds. He said that in his opinion, looking at the CRCOG transportation study and

the Next Gen plans, there is no way the state can do a bike or highway project without realigning and funding.

E. Bolduc added she was also thinking about the effect on opportunities for selling, buying, and moving along Route 44.

Jim Adams, 48 Stonehedge Road, said he did not want to dismiss the above concerns, but commercial and residential properties near and adjacent to bike paths were found to increase in value, selling faster and for more.

Sylvia Ounpuu, 48 Stonehedge Road, asked everyone to attend the forum at 7:00 pm, Monday, February 29, at BHS. Craig Della Penna, Executive Director of Northeast Greenway Solutions and a real estate agent, will be speaking and able to discuss questions and concerns. S. Ounpuu reiterated her support for a Route 44 extension. She explained she believes the residents who live closest to the Path will benefit the most, based on the testimony of others who have been through the same thing. She agreed safety is a huge issue for the area. Her understanding is that the state wants to connect through to UConn as part of Next Gen, and since it is a state goal and state right of way, it seems that if Bolton does not interact with it, the state will come through and do whatever they want. So this is a way to have some say in the process.

Barbara Amodio, 50 Volpi Road, said she had sat on the Vibrant Communities Initiative at one point, and connectivity had been a major issue. The Path would add connectivity in Bolton.

J. Adams gave some suggestions addressing the current major safety issues in the area, which were well received on Facebook:

- Reduce lane widths
- Eliminate the double lane section at Quarry Road as it is too often used as a passing lane instead of a climbing lane
- Add a timer for the South/44 stoplight to the sensor
- Use the South/44 stoplight to create breaks in traffic, allowing more time for motorists from South to turn and for residents to enter and leave their driveways/side streets
- Advanced green for the left hand turn at Quarry

J. Stille said that the Town has already pursued many of same items state. R. Morra added that the DOT recognizes the issues, but is taking a long time to do anything. A new light is being installed at South Road, but it took a year and hasn't advanced any further.

G. Wood asked if there would be another safety or feasibility study done closer to a Path going in, since it would be 5-6 years in the future and the current data would be outdated. R. Morra said he could not answer that.

Greg Zalewski, 1020 Boston Turnpike, was highly against a bike / pedestrian path. He said there were comments about possibly allowing small vehicles, and that is how things grow. Lots of homes and businesses don't want the Path. They have already been through the sewer

construction, and the sewers will have to be redone too in order to put in a Path. He also brought up the traffic that would be on the Path, such as dogs, or snowmobiles as has occurred in his neighborhood.

B. Amodio asked everyone to come to the forum in February. She said Craig Della Penna knows more than she and S. Ounpuu.

M. Emerita said that if the Path were to go through to UConn, he believes its use would be mostly for pleasure, because no one would use it to go all the way from Farmington to UConn. For a Path on the road, motorized vehicles would make sense. On a removed trail, they would not be allowed, but the situation has to be considered.

R. Morra emphasized that no action is being taken at this time nor any future action planned.

#### **B. Lower Bolton Lake Status Report:**

R. Morra shared information from the joint meeting set by Representative Mulligan with various parties to discuss the catfish stocking and electrofishing study results. The study on fish population had good results, with some good bass and other fish present. George Knoecklein continues his ongoing study on algae and plankton and will hopefully have that information in his spring report. S. Pierog asked if DEEP plans to restock with catfish so the Selectmen know whether to get a program against it. J. Stille said that the DEEP will not be making any decisions until spring following another meeting. She added that according to Knoecklein, the catfish do not have much of an adverse effect on how the lake fares. Gloria Wood asked why the catfish were stocked in the first place. J. Stille said besides providing good fishing, plankton is part of their diet, and their absence may contribute to the lake issues when the population is low.

#### **C. FY16 Budget Report:**

The budget is currently 45.01% expensed, compared to 44.97% at this point last year.

#### **D. FY17 Budget:**

Bolton's reduction in the state budget is just under \$26,000 for current fiscal year.

E. Bolduc asked what and where the town's overall plan was available for public information. R. Morra said the town has a five year plan for capital expenses that do not include bonding. Bonding items go through a different process than the annual budget. E. Bolduc said she understood why funding comes up at different times and from different sources. She asked why residents don't know ahead of time when that was part of the town government's plan all along, and said it makes it harder for residents to make decisions. She also asked what the town's overall plans were for business, the budget, and revenue; and whether such plans were documented anywhere. J. Stille noted that over the last couple of years, several meetings of subcommittees and informational meetings had been held to discuss and review needs of the town. She added that the PZC just recently finalized the POCD which lays out a ten year plan for

the town. R. Morra discussed some changes the town has pursued through zoning changes, the 2+2+2 meetings, and the EDC.

Budget workshops begin next week. The first workshop, the BOS will meet with representatives from the highway and library budgets.

**E. Consider and Act on STEAP Grant Resolution:**

M. Emerita moved to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED: to authorize Joyce Stille, Administrative officer, to submit a STEAP Grant application on behalf of the Town of Bolton and any associated documents for a grant for the Town Facilities Community Septic System Project.

R. Neil seconded. Motion carried 4:0:0.

**F. Tanker Bid:**

The lowest bid came in at \$474,885.00, with the option of adding a stainless steel (instead of aluminum) tank body and compartments at an additional \$5,946.00, which would include a 30 year warranty. S. Pierog moved to accept the low bid from New England Fire Equipment & Apparatus Corp. of \$474,885.00, with the optional stainless steel body at \$5,946.00, authorizing the Fire Chief to commence with the optional of sale of the ET234 and authorizing the Administrative Officer and First Selectman to proceed with executing the contract but the warranty bond must be included. R. Neil seconded. Motion carried 4:0:0.

**G. Consider and Act on Budget Transfer and / or Appropriation Requests:**

In the Finance Department budget, R. Neil moved to transfer \$10,000 from Regular Payroll to Other Contracts and \$8,000 from Regular Payroll to Other Payroll for the Interim Finance Director and additional staff coverage respectively. M. Emerita seconded. Motion carried 4:0:0.

**7. Ongoing Business:**

**A. Subcommittee Reports:**

**Finance and Administration Subcommittee:** Subcommittee reviewed the implementation of the Ethics Ordinance. "At time of evaluation" will be corrected to "at time of hire" in the last bullet under item 3 in the minutes. The BOS discussed the implementation plan, acknowledgement of receipt form and appointments to the Board of Ethics but agreed to postpone further discussion and action until the full board is present.

For capital, M. Emerita proposed putting away \$50,000 each year towards when the next fire truck goes (in about 10 years or less). It would be a better financial practice and hopefully allow the town to be able to pay with cash instead of by bond. The board agreed it would be a good practice if financially possible.

**B. Properties and Facilities:**

J. Stille reported that the contract had been signed and dry ice blasting has been completed at the barn. Now they are looking at some additional items that were uncovered when work was done in preparation for the blasting and as a result of the blasting. We are waiting for estimates before moving forward. The town submitted its letter to the court for restitution but the insurance company has informed us and the court that they will be handling restitution.

For the LEED certification at Bolton High School, J. Stille reported that architect had submitted the information to the USGBC and GBCI. Questions were sent back and the architect resubmitted the information on just prior to Christmas. The institutes were closed until January 4<sup>th</sup>. We are now waiting to hear if review has started. They average 30 days for review or further information requests.

**C. Revenue Sources:**

The tennis grant was submitted last year. No information was received in response and it was not a priority since the STEAP grant for the tennis courts was not received. No further action will be taken.

**8. First Selectman's Report:****A. Water Supply / Cisterns:**

Johnson Pond ready for drafting and dry hydrant installed at Zeppa's pond. The Fire Chief will finalize agreement for Pesce's pond upon returning from vacation.

**B. Economic Development:**

R. Morra also reported that there have been inquiries about the Giglio's property including Lyndale Stand. Properties are along Route 44.

**9. Administrative Officer's Report:****A. Expressway Properties:**

The latest opinion from Attorney Barger was received. With CRCOG, the DOT is looking at what liability there would be on the town's end if landlocked property is given back to the previous owners.

**B. Personnel:**

A job offer has been made for the Assistant Town Clerk position based on necessary background checks. The Finance Director process is resuming now that the holidays are over. Kent Cavanaugh, Maintainer I, is resigning the end of January due to moving. An internal candidate is interested which will lead to the advertisement of a position in February.

**C. Community Connectivity Program:** J. Stille reported that she and staff were already working on an application for two areas of town: the extension of the greenway on Route 44 with the spur to Indian Notch Park and the area from the high school to the Notch Road Municipal Center. This is a (free) Road Safety Audit.

**10. Appointments:** No action taken based on discussions about the appointments to the Board of Ethics.

**11. Adjournment:** R. Neil moved to adjourn. M. Emerita seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm. .  
Motion carried 4:0:0.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sarah Benitez*

Sarah Benitez, Recording Secretary

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