

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
March 22, 2022 – 7:15 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
MINUTES**

Board of Finance Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Kristin Gourley, Charles Danna Jr., Mather Clarke, Alex Rivera Ross Lally

Board of Selectmen Members Present: First Selectmen Pam Sawyer, Robert Morra, Interim Town Administrator Jim Rupert, Robert DePietro, and Adam Teller

Staff Present: Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Ashleigh Johnson

Others present: Susan Pike

Absent: Mike Eremita

1) **Call to Order:** E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M.

2) **Public Participation:**

E. Bradley called for public participation, but there were no comments

3) **New Business:**

a. **Presentation and Discussion of Board of Selectmen's FY2023 General Government, Capital, and Debt Budgets:**

J. Rupert opened the presentation of the FY 2022-2023 budget with highlights of Town goals. The main highlight of the town goals were transparency, modernization, efficiency, and resourcefulness. He then highlighted the Grand List changes for FY2021, noting the 2.7% total growth across the previous fiscal year, with most of this increase coming from motor vehicle with a total increase of 24.6%.

J. Rupert then presented the budget changes in the Town Proper, which has a 2.87% increase, with capital items decreasing \$27,294 and debt costs increasing from \$981,573 to \$1,180,851. He then highlighted the Town Proper budget noting a staff wage increase of 2.25% and health insurance costs up by 8%. The fire commission's budget was increased due to wage increase for line officers and replacement of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). Election costs also increased due to State of CT splitting the town into two voting districts.

J. Rupert next noted the Top Five Increases in the budget by dollar value, which were Personnel Services (health insurance increase), Refuse Services (increase in fees), Building and Land Use (Director of Community Development and Assistant Building official wage increases and Contracted services with shared towns), Fire Commission (wage increase and equipment), and Elections (increase due to 2 voting districts).

Next J. Rupert highlighted the Top Five Decreases in the budget by dollar value, which were Police Protection (change in staffing), Highway Department (reduction in road repairs, tree trimming & sand/salt purchase for next year), Administration (decrease in Professional & Technical Service line of budget), Senior Services (Project Coordinator transferred to FT Recreation Director & the position was decreased to 28 hours), and Public Health (contract was decreased with EHHD).

The presentation then shifted to Debt Outlook and it was noted by J. Rupert that 2023 has the highest debt and it decreases each year. Most of this debt is from capital projects and construction of the high school.

On the topic of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the total cost is \$438,598, \$19,308.21 proposed for reallocation from completed projects, with a total of \$464,290 tax payer ask.

J. Rupert concluded the presentation by going over the FY 2023-FY2027 Capital Improvement Plan and Board of Education budget draft. This draft includes several projects that the BoS intends to bond for, including Assessor revaluation, fire suppression water supply, Herrick Park Soccer Field, Highway road resurfacing, highway skid-steer loader, natural gas infrastructure, Notch Road Municipal Center demolition, and a modular office along with the Center School exterior door replacement and the high school garage for a total cost of \$483,598.

b. Discussion of FY2023 Budgets:

Discussion followed on the Grand List and the possible cap on the mill rate for 29 mills. C. Danna noted that in the presentation it was stated that there would be a large increase due to elections which isn't true and is a cyclic thing that happens. He also stated that the increase would be beyond our control like other things. P. Sawyer informed everyone that Bolton has been split into two districts, North and South, and by law there has to be two polling places with a two fold increase. A. Rivera asked if we were no longer supporting the economic development commission because of changes to our charter or if we are deciding not to put any more money into it this year. J. Rupert responded to let everyone know it was no longer in the charter as a required committee for our town. P. Sawyer informed everyone it could certainly be resurrected with a decision by the Board of Selectmen and if there were interest by the townspeople to serve on it. A. Rivera asked the Board if it was possible to remodel the Notch Road Municipal Center instead of demolishing it. R. Morra responded to Rivera's question by saying the building is in very poor condition, bad leaks which aren't able to be stopped and will eventually turn to mold. He also explained that it would be more expensive to remodel and fix than to just demolish. P. Sawyer invited A. Rivera to visit the Municipal Center to show him the condition of the building.

4) Ongoing Business:

a. Budget Calendar:

Next meeting is March 24, 2022 at 7:15 P.M. via zoom about expenses thus far and revenue.

5) Adjournment:

E. Bradley adjourned meeting at 8:27 P.M.

Next Meetings:

March 24, 2022 – Special Meeting

March 29, 2022 – Special Meeting (THIS IS A TUESDAY)

March 31, 2022 – Special Meeting

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.