

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING  
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023  
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD  
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

**MINUTES**

**Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person:** First Selectman Pamela Sawyer, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Adam Teller

**Board of Selectmen Members Present Via Zoom:** Michael Eremita, Robert DePietro

**Staff Present In-Person:** Town Administrator James Rupert

**Staff Present Via Zoom:** Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

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

**Others Present In-Person:** Amanda Gordon, Jamie Freeman, William Freeman, Rich Hayes, Jim Loersch, Carol Rady, Rodney Fournier, James Aldrich

1. **Call to Order:** P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. **Public Comment:**

Carol Rady of 282 Hebron Road suggested the use of traffic mirrors for vehicles to see around the corner and bend at the Hebron Road-Webster Lane intersection. She said there is a 40-inch traffic mirror that will give 250 feet of view.

Jim Loersch of Brookfield Road said he is pressing for a new Town Hall as the current building is obsolete. He said the town should build a new town hall at the old elementary school site. He commented he would like to talk with someone on how the sidewalk on his property on Bolton Center Road will be installed. He also expressed concern with the lack of sedimentation controls regarding the drainage work on Bolton Center Road near Notch Road.

James Aldrich of 35 Hanover Farms Road commented on the need to increase the pay and benefits for the First Selectman's position for the future success and well-being of Bolton. He read a prepared statement supporting his position.

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

3.a **Regular Meeting Minutes - August 8, 2023:**

The August 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes were amended as follows:

"5.c Some ~~people~~ **residents** may have an issue paying the tax amount once a year but the rest of the town residents shouldn't have to ~~float these people~~ **cover this expense.**"

R. DePietro MOVED to approve the August 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes as amended. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

3.b **Special A/P Meeting – August 22, 2023:**

R. DePietro MOVED to approve the August 22, 2023 special A/P meeting minutes as presented. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**4. Appointments:**

**4.a Diane DeNuzio: from Alternate to Full Member of Inland Wetlands Commission – term ending 7/1/2026:**

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen appoint Diane DeNuzio as a full member to the Inland Wetlands Commission for the term ending July 1, 2026. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**4.b Patrice Carson: Appointment as Central Regional Tourism District Representative:**

A. Teller MOVED that the Board of Selectmen appoint Patrice Carson as Central Regional Tourism District Representative, term ending three years from appointment date. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**5. New Business**

**5.a Discussion on Sharing Troopers with Surrounding Towns:**

P. Sawyer reported some conversation has been started and the town is working on seeing if there is interest to share troopers.

**5.b Discussion on Ribbon Cutting/Open House for Temporary Building:**

P. Sawyer said delivery is projected to be September 29th. She said the town is very pleased with the efforts of the Town Administrator. J. Rupert updated the members on the progress and said there has been a lot of support from the town crew as well as the Buildings and Grounds department pulling this all together. He estimated it will take 3-4 weeks after delivery to get the building fully operational.

**5.c Consider and Act on Bolton Living History Budget:**

P. Sawyer reported there will be an encampment along with the dedication of living history signs on October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. She asked the board to consider spending up to \$5,000 from Founders Day fund to finish off any items still needed for the event.

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen approve the allocation of up to \$5,000 from the Founders Day fund to be utilized by the Town Administrator for supporting the Founders Day event. A. Teller SECONDED. Discussion followed. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**5.d Consider and Act on Bid Waiver for Connectivity Trail:**

J. Rupert reported that the board has received a \$17,000 proposal from Landie Construction to complete the Connectivity Trail. He said the town Highway Foreman has asked the board to consider Landie Construction to finish the trail. J. Rupert explained spring weather conditions have put the Highway department further behind than had been anticipated. Other town projects need to be completed before winter as well as normal everyday things that had been put on hold while working on the trail. J. Rupert said there is money in the account to be able to finish this and considers this to be a fair price. Discussion followed.

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve the bid waiver to allow Landie Construction to complete the construction work on the Connectivity Trail between Notch Road and the Library for the amount of \$17,000. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**5.e Bid Waiver from Board of Education:**

The BOS received correspondence from Superintendent Heckt that, pursuant to the bid ordinance, the BOE waived the bid for the purchase of Chromebooks and will purchase the Chromebooks through the Interlocal Purchasing System for \$25,415.

**5.f Discussion on Diversity Draft Statement:**

R. Morra said he spent time going over the proclamation developed by the Diversity Commission. He drafted a simplified statement that he proposed go before a subcommittee to be looked at and a comparative analysis done.

R. Morra, M. Eremita and R. DePietro agreed to serve on a subcommittee to review the draft statement and will report back to the full board at the October meeting.

**6. Ongoing Business:**

**6.a Stop Signs at Webster Lane:**

P. Sawyer noted correspondence was received from Bill Freeman dated July 13, 2023 and John Gasper dated August 30, 2023. She said there is correspondence from the Town Engineer Joseph Dillon dated August 31, 2023, accompanied by a copy of prior correspondence to the Administrative Officer dated November 2017.

J. Rupert said he spoke with J. Dillon over the phone and let him know the Board of Selectmen felt that if he believed it was necessary, the town could bring in a traffic control engineer. J. Rupert said J. Dillon looked at his notes and memo from 2017 and said, as his position as Town Engineer is not going to change.

J. Rupert said the concern is the stop signs make the intersection safer because of limited sightlines coming out of Webster Lane. J. Dillon said, if the town could maintain the sightlines, it might be a different situation where the town might consider removing the stop signs. J. Rupert explained the problem is that it appears to the town engineer that some of the area that the town would have to maintain sightlines on is private property. In order to determine that, the town would have to send a survey crew there to do some work and might have to obtain easements from a private property owner.

A. Teller said he sympathized with the residents who have been here multiple times. He said, looking at the 2017 information he sees sightlines recommended for 30, 35 and 40 miles per hour. He realizes although the speed limit may be 25 mph, nobody thinks that anyone travels at that speed on that road with or without stop signs. A. Teller, said from an engineering standpoint, it is completely reasonable to install stop signs at that location and to expect that they will improve the situation and safety of the intersection. He said he does not feel it is appropriate for the board, in the face of J. Dillon's new comment, to remove the stop signs, but don't do it until the town has cleared the sightline and made sure the town can continue to maintain the cleared sightlines.

A. Teller said the BOS works as a lay board based on the information given to them by professionals that work for them and that is the last word. He said it would be a substantial expense to do a survey and hire a traffic consultant for one intersection and does not think it is warranted for the board to do. He noted there are people on Webster Lane supporting the stop signs. There are groups of people that want different things and the board cannot do anything

but resort to the professionals and their opinions. The board has an obligation to do things based on what they are given by professionals.

M. Eremita expressed his opinion that the town has hired people and they have given the board professional advice which basically is to leave the stop signs as is unless the town could guarantee sightlines. He said if the board were to go against their paid experts, and knowing the town could not in good faith say the town maintain those sightlines seven days a week, 24 hours a day 365 days a year, and the town did remove those stop signs and something should occur, the town would be liable for its actions.

R. DePietro said he agrees completely with the previous comments.

R. Morra commented he the only modification he would consider is making the intersection a two-sign situation. He said coming out of Webster Lane you cannot look left or right and if traffic is really moving, you have to nail it to get out of there safely. The worst visibility is coming from the south, from Andover and he said that the stop sign has to stay there. You cannot move safely forward without having that stop sign. He said the only one he would even consider removing is the Hebron Road stop sign because that has a better line of sight. He said that would go against everything the town engineer said.

P. Sawyer commented she did a ride-along in a town truck on a very snowy evening and noted it was one very dangerous intersection that required, she believes, stopping from all directions during bad weather.

No action was taken to change the current situation at the intersection. P. Sawyer noted if there is any new future new information that comes before the board, the board has the ability to bring a motion before the body and could act on it at that time.

**7. Reports and Updates:**

**7.a Properties and Facilities Report:**

**7.a.1 Temporary Building:** This was previously reported on in agenda item 5.b.

**7.a.2 Connectivity Trail:** This was previously reported on in agenda item 5.d.

**7.a.3 Library Patio:**

P. Sawyer thanked the Hartford Foundation for the generous \$10,000 grant and the town buildings and grounds crew who have done an amazing job making sure this gets done well.

M. Eremita noted it was not just the grounds crew but also the highway department sharing services and working together to get the job done.

R. Morra complimented the crews on the professional job they did.

P. Sawyer asked the Town Administrator to put something in the employee files of the two crews, complimenting them on working together to get the job done.

**7.b Cyber Upgrades: Moving to (.Gov) Domain:**

P. Sawyer reported town has migrated from the bolton.org domain to the bolton.gov domain to strengthen cyber security. J. Rupert added the process is going well and the public and staff response to the change in service is positive.

**7.c FY 24 Budget Report:** J. Rupert reported there are no concerns at this point.

**7.d Budget Transfers:** No action needed.

**7.e A/P Report:**

A. Teller MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

**8. First Selectman's Report:** P. Sawyer reported on the school bus driver strikes in other towns and noted school proceeded as normal today. She said the town is proceeding with the loan for the fire truck. She reported the Library, Senior Center and Town Hall have been opened as cooling centers during this heat wave. She said there was an accident on Bolton Center Road today.

M. Eremita added the truck assembly is on schedule and should be in town no later than Thanksgiving. After an inquiry from R. DePietro, P. Sawyer directed the Town Administrator to ask the Fire Department to come up with a list of options of what to do with the old truck for the board to review. J. Rupert suggested convening a meeting of the Facilities and Public Safety subcommittee asking the Fire Chief to provide a report to that group so that group can come back to the full board with a recommendation. P. Sawyer asked the Facilities and Public Safety subcommittee to convene and report back to the full board within a month.

**9. Administrative Officer's Report**

**9.a Monthly Report:** J. Rupert said there have been significant reports of invasive species at Middle Bolton Lake. He noted the Town of Vernon has contracted with a company to provide treatment for Middle Bolton Lake. He added some of the invasives have come into Lower Bolton Lake and treatment and consultants may recommend treatment in the fall. Areas of concern have been mapped out and notices have been posted for the Middle Bolton Lake treatment.

**9.b Other:** P. Sawyer said the BOS has been asked by the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to provide local input to a name change application for an historic cave off Bolton Notch. She asked the members to review the name request application materials for action, possibly at the September 19<sup>th</sup> A/P meeting.

Consensus of the members was to hold the next A/P meeting on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

**10. Adjournment:** R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

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.