

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

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present: First Selectman Pamela Sawyer (in-person), Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra (in-person), Adam Teller (in-person), Robert DePietro (via Zoom), Michael Eremita (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Interim Administrative Officer James Rupert (in-person), Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald (via Zoom), Patrice Carson, AICP, Consulting Director of Community Development (via zoom), UCONN Intern Josh Hull (via Zoom)

Others Present: William Dube (via Zoom), Raymond Hardy (in-person), Diversity Commission Chair Amanda Gordon (in-person), Nick Lavigne (CVC) (via Zoom), Anthony Girasoli (via Zoom), Eric Trott (via Zoom), Anne Decker (via Zoom) and two others by phone, and two others in-person

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: P. Sawyer shared the correspondence from the Bolton Conservation Chair for a parking lot opportunity to access the Nathan Hale Greenway. The Conservation Commission strongly believes that safe, maintainable and accessible parking to the trail head and NHG network is a high priority.
3. P. Carson – Four-Town Update and Budget:

P. Carson introduced Eric Trott and UCONN Intern Josh Hull and presented an overview of what the Connecticut Countryside group, made up from representatives from the towns of Bolton, Tolland Coventry and Mansfield, has accomplished and future plans. She said the purpose of the group is to raise awareness, marketing and visibility of what is going on in the towns and produce some new events across the four towns.

P. Carson presented FY24 budget request of \$5,000 from each of the four participating towns.

E. Trott noted there is a MOA outlining the structure of the group.

After discussion, consensus of the board was to consider the budget request as a separate line item in the budget during the budget process.
4. New Business
 - 4.A William Dube – Eagle Scout Project- Construction of Libraries at Herrick Park and Senior Center:

W. Dube presented his proposal for two wooden little free libraries, to replace the one at the Herrick Park playscape and to build a second one of same design at the Senior Center as a final Eagle Scout project. He said he would fundraise to cover the \$200 projected costs and is seeking town permission to dig and use concrete. Also under consideration is a place next to the free library at the senior center to drop-off donations for the food pantry. W. Dube said he is planning to start the project in April and finish in June. He offered to show the board his plans and 3D model.

A. Teller MOVED the town establish a process where requests for student projects be referred to the Town Administrator and refer them to the appropriate town departments for recommendation, only with the recommendation of the Town Administrator. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

A. Teller MOVED to refer the Eagle Scout Project of William Dube for construction of libraries at Herrick Park and Senior Center to the Town Administrator. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.B Raymond Hardy – Registration of Squaw Cave as an Historical Site:

P. Sawyer noted during discussions with the CT Department of Transportation (CTDOT) regarding the interchange at Route 384, Route 6 and Route 44, one of the things she found in the State's view of the Bolton Notch was an absence of understanding of the Native American significance Bolton Notch played in the town's history and sensitivity to the Town's Native American past. She said she reached out to R. Hardy to look into how the town moves forward to bring the knowledge to the CTDOT, specifically what knowledge does the town bring and who is the best person to bring it to.

R. Hardy presented a history of the significance of the Squaw Cave site, describing the areas of significance of the site. He suggested the town consider applying for a request to protect Squaw Cave as an historical site to the State Archeologist Dr. Sarah Sportman.

The members thanked R. Hardy for his research and presentation.

At this time, R. Morra MOVED to bring the topic regarding the recommendation of M. Eremita that all town vehicles be banned from exiting Notch Road onto Route 44 to item 10. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.C Proposed Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility Bill:

J. Rupert explained the bill is a strategy for managing packaging and printed paper at the end of life where the primary financial responsibility falls upon the producers of the packaging and paper instead of the municipalities and rate payers.

P. Sawyer commented this is a complex bill and the board does not have enough information to support the bill. Board discussion followed on supporting the concept of the bill.

P. Sawyer said Mid- NEROC, of which Bolton is a member, has approached the town to support the bill and the Legislature wants input as to what the board does not want in the bill. Discussion followed.

A. Teller MOVED the board direct to direct the Town Administrator to write a letter generally supporting the sentiment of the General Assembly's Raised Bill 115: An Act Concerning Extended Product Responsibility for Consumer Packaging R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION FAILED 2:3:0 with P. Sawyer, R. DePietro, and M. Eremita opposed.

4.D Resolution – Discussion and possible action were tabled to the February 9, 2023 BOS regular meeting.

5. Ongoing Business

5.A Update Alexandra Miller-Davey Presentation for Bolton High School (BHS) Trail Project – Insurance Information:

J. Rupert reported having a conference call with the town's insurer CIRMA with regard to liability insurance for mountain biking trails. He said CIRMA would not insure this activity as it is, historically, the single cause of the largest payout that CIRMA has had.

After discussion, the consensus of the board was to have the Town Administrator reach out to Alexandra Miller-Davey to inform her of the response from the town's insurer.

5.B Interval House Donation:

J. Rupert said he received a request from the Director of Advancement at Interval, which provides free and confidential services to victims of domestic violence in Bolton , to earmark \$1,000 in the town's FY2024 budget to help defray the cost of serving Bolton residents. Historically, the town has not given much to these types of organizations.

Discussion followed. No action taken.

5.C Ad-Hoc Diversity Commission Presentation

Members expressed appreciation for the professional product and work, information and time put into this project by the Commission.

Diversity Commission Chair Amanda Gordon presented the findings of the student survey and presented the commission's recommendations based on the study results, including an Equity and Inclusion statement from the Town. She thanked the BOS as the charge of the commission has ended.

Board discussion followed. Members recommended that the Board of Education be apprised of the survey findings.

P. Sawyer recommended a sub-committee meeting and, at least, one more BOS meeting to digest all the information before a board decision can be made. No action taken.

5.D ARPA Funding:

J. Rupert recommended, if the board wants to use the ARPA funding, the town go out with RFP for design services to put together a set of specifications for teardown of Notch Municipal Center and the greenhouse at Bolton Center School. Discussion followed.

A. Teller MOVED the Board of Selectmen direct the Town Administrator to prepare the necessary resolutions and requests for proposals to apply the ARPA money toward the projects of tearing down the Notch Road Municipal Center, removing the greenhouse from the high school and closing off the two buildings to accommodate those removals. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

6. Correspondence – Veteran’s Tax Exemption:

P. Sawyer referred to a letter from Barry Stearns, Vice-Chair of the Veteran’s Commission regarding the Veteran’s Tax Exemption. She said this letter was agreed upon by the Veterans Commission as a whole. The Veteran’s Commission is requesting the board to adopt the Veterans Property Tax Exemption under CT Public Act No.22-34 for the fiscal year 2023-2024, which would increase the current exemption of \$4,500 to \$10,000 or to phase the exemption over a five-year period. Discussion followed.

R. Morra, R. DePietro and M. Emerita volunteered to form an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to consider the Veteran’s Tax Exemption request and to try to report back to the full board at the March 9, 2023 regular meeting.

7. Appointments and Resignations:

7.A Resignation of Karen Heckman - Board Clerk

A. Teller MOVED to ACCEPT the resignation of Karen Heckman, with thanks and gratitude, as Board Clerk with appreciation. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

7.B Appointments

- Stephen Wierzbicki –Temporary Public Building Committee
- Matthew Wright – Ethics Committee
- Basia Caya – Ethics Committee
- Kathleen McCavanagh – Emergency Management Director

R. Morra MOVED to APPOINT Stephen Wierzbicki as a member of the Temporary Public Building Committee, Matthew Wright and Basia Caya as members of the Ethics Committee and Kathleen McCavanagh as Emergency Management Director for the Town of Bolton. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

7.C Re-Appointments

- Robert Morra – Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority (BLRWPCA)
- Richard Hayes Jr. – BLRWPCA
- James Rupert – Alternate to BLRWPCA

M. Eremita MOVED to RE-APPOINT Robert Morra, Richard Hayes Jr. as full members and James Rupert as an Alternate to the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:1 with R. Morra abstaining.

8. Reports and Updates

8.A Properties and Facilities Report:

J. Rupert reported:

- Tree cutting for the Connectivity Grant has begun and the town has executed the contract with Bartlett Tree for preservation of certain trees during the connectivity grant construction process.
- Jacobsen and Associates has started a survey of the area identified for a trail head parking area on Hop River Road. He and Joe Dillon met with Gwen Marrion to discuss details and align expectations. The town is on track for timely grant submittal.
- The Buildings and Grounds Team has completed room B at Notch Road and is currently working on room A to make two meeting spaces.

8.B FY22 Budget Report: J. Rupert reported there were no significant changes in the budget report.

9. First Selectman's Report: P. Sawyer reported State Police on Sunday found at least 100 vehicles that had been rifled through on Birch Mountain. She shared that Heritage Farm will be used for Winterfest on February 25th.

10. Administrative Officer's Report

10.A Monthly Report: J. Rupert reported on the following:

- Received confirmation of approval for LOCIP Grant and signed agreement sent back to the State of CT.
- Draft of TRIP Grant application completed and reviewed. Final grant application will be completed and submitted prior to the deadline.
- Novus is working with our current IT provider to enhance our cybersecurity. We had an onsite meeting with them this week and will take them to all Towns locations next week.
- I attended and participated in the CRCOG Policy Board meeting.
- The Neglected Cemeteries Grant application is largely complete and will have been submitted prior to the deadline on February 6th.
- On February 3 and 4 our cold weather protocols are in place. We have communicated to the public and Senior and Social Services is reaching out to at risk citizens.
- The job postings for the Building Official and Program Coordinator are out. We have three qualified applicants for the Building Official position to date. Interviews for both positions will be set up soon.
- We are looking to set up a meeting with Eagle Leasing which is the State vendor for temporary structures. I have begun dialogue with the Health Department regarding connections of the septic and water lines to the temporary structures.
- Supervisor reviews are underway.
- EMPG Grant was signed and submitted.

10.B Other: Discussion on M. Eremita's request that all town vehicles be banned from exiting Notch Road to Route 44 (the 384 interchange)

R. Morra MOVED to add item 10.B: Discussion on M. Eremita's request that all town vehicles be banned from exiting Notch Road to Route 44 (the 384 interchange) to the agenda. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

M. Eremita said his proposal is for the town to enact a policy to prohibit all town vehicles from crossing over Notch Road to get to Route 44. Discussion followed. Further discussion will be continued at the March 9, 2023 regular meeting.

11. Adjournment: P. Sawyer adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

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.