

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 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: Interim Administrative Officer James Rupert

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Others Present Via Zoom: Nick Lavigne (Community Voice Channel), Fire Chief Bruce Dixon

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: There was no public comment.

3. Resignations:

A. Teller MOVED to add the resignation of Tina Pryor as library assistant to agenda item 3. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

R. Morra MOVED to accept the resignation of Lance Dimock with appreciation and regret. R. DePietro SECONDED. R. Morra thanked L. Dimock for his dedication and commitment to the community. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

R. Morra MOVED to accept the resignation letter of Tina Pryor with appreciation and regret. R. DePietro SECONDED. P. Sawyer said T. Pryor has been a positive warm, inviting, encouraging and well-informed member of the library staff. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4. New Business

4.A Discussion on 4-Day Work Week:

J. Rupert said at the Personnel subcommittee meeting tonight, he reported he had spoken with employees one on one and received comments from staff including town hall and the finance department. After discussion, it was not the will of the board to move this forward at this time.

4.B Bolton Center School Air Conditioning Bid Waived:

J. Rupert explained, in accordance with the Town's bid policy, the BOE has the authority to waive the bid process and are required to notify the BOS.

4.C Consider and Act on Waiving the Bid for the Skid Steer:

J. Rupert said the town secured a used skid steer coming off lease agreement with Mohegan Sun from Kahn tractor, for \$20,000 less than what is currently in the capital budget.

R. Morra MOVED to approve the purchase of a used skid steer with approximately 25 hours of use for \$60,000 or less from funds currently reserved in the budget for such use. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

M. Eremita MOVED to waive the requirement for competitive bidding for the purchase of the skid steer in accordance with section 3 of the "Bids" ordinance. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.D Consider and Act on Applying for Safer Grant for Fire Department:

J. Rupert said, if the BOS decides to move forward and apply for a Safer grant, the town will do everything in its power to make the short deadline. He said he and Chief Dixon have agreed, no matter what the decision of the board tonight, they will work together to come up with a comprehensive plan of the future needs of the fire department, to do the homework now so the town is ready when this grant opportunity comes around in the future and the board decides to take advantage of it.

R. DePietro said he spent two hours reading the grant information and has concluded it would be a waste of time to pursue this grant right now.

With the consensus of the board, Fire Chief Dixon was asked to comment. Chief Dixon said even if the town applied for and received the grant, the department still has to come up with a plan on how to implement that. He said it is time to get a plan in place, evaluate what the needs are going forward and concurred with J. Rupert they will work together to get a plan put together.

Chief Dixon said there are four sides to this plan: operational, financial, labor laws, and community support. J. Rupert added combining the addition of paid staff with volunteer staff has to be well thought out as well.

Consensus of the board was to ask the fire department to work with the Town Administrator to put together a possible plan to bring forward that the board could show to the town. P. Sawyer commented, hopefully, the town will have another opportunity to apply for this grant.

No action was taken on this agenda item.

Chief Dixon noted there may be fees from outside agencies associated with putting together a strategic plan and asked if there was money to cover this.

J. Rupert recommended, since the town is not moving very fast with the plan for a fire station addition, to go to town meeting and move some of the monies in the capital budget into a project that would allow the town to cover the associated costs. He said there is no money planned in this year's or next year's budget.

A. Teller noted there are CDS grant opportunities from Connecticut Senators Blumenthal and Murphy and Congressman Courtney available and \$15-\$20,000 for a strategic plan for the fire

department might be the kind of thing they would consider. J. Rupert said this could be addressed under agenda item 4.F: Consider and Act on CDS and Grants.

4.E Consider and Act on Draft Referendum Dates and Town Meeting Date:

R. DePietro MOVED to set the budget town meeting date for Tuesday, May 16, 2023. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

A. Teller MOVED to set the budget referendum date for Tuesday, May 23, 2023 with June 6, June 20, July 11, July 25 as possible additional dates. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.F Consider and Act on CDS and Grants:

J. Rupert reported he received information - (7:46) can apply for multiple grants,

P. Sawyer said Blumenthal recommended the town apply for the same grants from the house and senate sides. Suggested applying for four.

Discussion followed on possible projects to include in the grant application. The following projects were on the table after discussion:

- modular space
- \$25,000 strategic plan (personnel, equipment, structure) for fire department
- HVAC for BCS
- BHS soccer field with track 2.2 M
- fire suppression
- BCS upgrade for fire alarm system for \$40,000
- Heritage Farm bathrooms
- 2.2M for a water line and appropriate drainage from Manchester through the Bolton business district
- Herrick Park soccer fields based on updated pricing from Town Engineer
- fire station addition for approximately 1.7M
- mapping of cemeteries for next year for \$50,000

P. Sawyer polled the members to narrow the selection down to four projects.

R. DePietro asked for discussion on applying for grants for solar farms for the town. Discussion was tabled to a future meeting.

A. Teller MOVED to authorize the Town Administrator to apply for FY24 Congressionally Directed Spending grants for the following projects:

- \$25,000 for a Strategic Plan for the Fire Department
- \$2.2 million dollars for a soccer field with track at Bolton High School
- \$2.2 million dollars for a water line with appropriate drainage from Manchester through the Bolton business district

- Construction of Herrick Park soccer fields based on updated pricing for the project from the Town Engineer

M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

M. Eremita MOVED to add the following items to the agenda under New Business.

- 4.g: Interest Form from Jessica Webb for Appointment to the BLRWPCA
- 4.h J. Rupert email from PZC regarding public hearing on cannabis regulations
- 4.i Joint Grant Application Request between the Deputy Fire Marshal and the Senior Center

4.g Interest Form from Jessica Webb for Appointment to the BLRWPCA:

The members reviewed the interest form from Jessica Webb where she expressed her concern about water quality and wanting to serve the community. The members were impressed with her storm/sewer experience.

M. Eremita MOVED to appoint Jessica Webb to fill a vacancy on the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority Board of Directors. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.h - J. Rupert email from PZC regarding public hearing on cannabis regulations:

J. Rupert said he received an email from the PZC Chairman on the PZC public hearing continued to March 8, 2023 regarding proposed cannabis regulations. The Chair said the PZC members would appreciate comments, either spoken or written, from the BOS while the public hearing is still open.

After discussion, consensus of the board was to individually contact the PZC with their thoughts.

4.i Joint Grant Application between the Deputy Fire Marshal and the Senior Center:

J. Rupert said the Deputy Fire Marshal and the Senior Center would like the BOS to apply for a grant for knox boxes in the amount of \$5,000. The in-kind match could be done through the installation of the knox boxes, \$250 in value.

M. Eremita explained the fire apparatus has the knox box lock system, where you type in your social security number and it opens the knox box. The fire department would like one for the new service truck and would like to put the cost of \$1,000 onto that grant to buy the knox box safe locking mechanism for the new medical service truck. He said the fire department could pick up the 5% in-kind service for that amount.

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the purchase of 25 knox boxes for \$5,000 plus \$1,000 for the key safe to go in the medical service truck response vehicle. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5. Ongoing Business:

5.A Diversity Training Dates:

J. Rupert said the dates for the diversity training are April 18 1-4 pm, April 19, 9 a.m. to noon, and April 19, 6-9 p.m. Each session will be virtual and can accommodate 25 people.

5.B Review Draft Financial Policy for Student Activity Fund:

J. Rupert said the draft has been sent to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the following Financial Policy for Student Activity Fund pending approval of the Board of Education:

RESOLUTION: Effective with the 7/1/2022 account balances, the Board of Selectmen allow certain Board of Education department specific revenues which are non-fiduciary in nature to be deposited into the school student activity accounts, which are fiduciary in nature and to allow any remaining unspent balances of these non-fiduciary funds to be carried over from year to year. A listing of the sources and uses of these non-fiduciary funds must be presented to the Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Town Administrator for review and approval by October 1 every year. Everyone must agree on the approvals. Any new revenue sources or changes in approved uses that occur during a fiscal year and prior to the yearly review must be submitted to the above-mentioned Boards and individuals who must approve the request before the new funds can be received or before the changes in any approved uses can be made.

R. DePietro SECONDED.

A. Teller noted what is missing in the policy is an annual accounting of what fund amounts are being rolled over from year-to-year.

M. Eremita MOVED to amend his motion to approve the following Financial Policy for Student Activity Fund pending approval of the Board of Education as follows:

RESOLUTION: Effective with the 7/1/2022 account balances, the Board of Selectmen allow certain Board of Education department specific revenues which are non-fiduciary in nature to be deposited into the school student activity accounts, which are fiduciary in nature and to allow any remaining unspent balances of these non-fiduciary funds to be carried over from year to year. A listing of the sources and uses of these non-fiduciary funds must be presented to the Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Town Administrator for review and approval **with an accounting of the funds that were received and spent annually** by October 1 every year. Everyone must agree on the approvals. Any new revenue sources or changes in approved uses that occur during a fiscal year and prior to the yearly review must be submitted to the above-mentioned Boards and individuals who must approve the request before the new funds can be received or before the changes in any approved uses can be made.

R. DePietro SECONDED the amended motion. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.C Consider and Act on Budget:

The members asked for the budget document. J. Rupert responded the budget document is being worked on but the board could act on the budget because there was consensus at the last budget workshop to propose a budget with a 5.31% increase.

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Town Proper budget with a 5.31% increase as agreed upon during the BOS workshop time. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.D Review Draft ARPA Funding Motion:

J. Rupert requested the members to review the draft ARPA funding motion for action at the next meeting.

6. Reports and Updates

6.A Properties and Facilities Report

- Update on Temporary Building:

J. Rupert reported the town looked at units from Eagle Leasing but found them not suitable with no insulation in the floors, little insulation in walls and ceilings, and being only 8' wide. P. Sawyer noted the town is trying to provide quality workspace for the employees.

J. Rupert and P. Sawyer looked at a Willscot Redi-plex 64' x 36' unit, containing 8 offices, a conference space, a kitchenette, small closet and restroom. He said this best unit fits the need of the town. J. Rupert said the initial goal of the town was to have a lease-purchase program. Since this particular unit is so much nicer than other units for sale, Willscot will not sell the unit to the town, only lease it. Some of the rental costs could be reduced by the town building or buying the ramps. He said this particular building does fall within the budget discussed. Willscot provided a 5-year lease proposal for \$42,906 yearly. The Town Charter does not allow more than a 3-year lease. P. Sawyer noted this is an update to the board. No action will be taken until there is more information and March 21 is the next A/P meeting.

J. Rupert said, if the town was able to commit soon, a building could be delivered as soon as May.

6.B FY 22 Budget Report:

J. Rupert nothing has really changed. Highlighted items are the ones the town has been watching, but nothing alarming.

6.C Budget Transfers :

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the following transfers:

- \$6,900 from the Highway department line-item Tree Trimming to line-item Equipment.
- \$3,000 from Town Building Operations line-item Supplies to line-item Postage.
- \$2,525 from Building and Land Use department line-item Payroll to Other Payroll.

R. De Pietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

6.D A/P Report:

R. DePietro MOVED to approve the A/P Report as presented. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 with A. Teller abstaining.

7. First Selectman's Report:

P. Sawyer shared there are two more positive covid cases in town from last week. That number does not account for those who home test.

8. Administrative Officer's Report

8.A Monthly Report:

J. Rupert addressed the increase in legal fees from the town attorney.

J. Rupert reported he received a memo from the town attorney regarding the use of Notch Road access to Routes 6 and 44, which has been a topic of board discussion that perhaps Town employees should be advised or ordered not to use this intersection when driving town-owned vehicles. He quoted the attorney's conclusion as follows:

"If I were a member of the Board of Selectmen, I would be leaning toward the guideline memo which I believe would give the Personnel Director and/or the Board of Selectmen more discretion in dealing with a violation of the guideline."

Consensus of the board was to table discussion and possible action on this item to the next meeting.

8.B Other: No other report.

9. Adjournment: R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 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.