

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, MAY 2, 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 (7:16 p.m.), 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), Rodney Fournier, Amanda Gordon

Others Present In-Person: Jim Loersch, Mike Sheehan, Betsey Sheehan, William Rady, Jake Mott, William Freeman, Dorothy Hall

1. **Call to Order:** P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. **Public Comment:**

Jamie Freeman of 3 Daria Drive commented that she and the neighbors have seen an increase in safety hazards and their quality of life has declined, stemming from people not stopping at the stop signs at the intersection of Webster Lane. She said there is a fear of collisions on a regular basis and the noise level has increased from heavy revving of truck engines at the stop signs. Her hope is that the board will re-evaluate the stop sign and remove it.

William Rady of 282 Hebron Road commented that the other stop signs on Hebron Road are very useful because they control traffic but the stop signs at Webster Lane do not control traffic and were put in for the purpose of controlling speed but, in reality have created an environment that is less safe.

Mike Sheehan of 4 Daria Drive commented on cars not coming to a legal stop at the stop signs and the noise factor. He suggested using the blinking speed sign in place of stop signs might help slow the traffic. His hope is that the board can make an adjustment.

Jim Loersch of 3 Brandy Street commented he is a strong believer that the town needs a new Town Hall. He shared a newspaper article on the new town hall in Farmington. He suggested a new town hall could be constructed in the footprint of the old elementary school on Notch Road.

Jake Mott of 275 Hebron Rd commented he is more inclined to having a state trooper sit somewhere and enforce the speed limit more than trying to get people to stop. He said 90% of the people do not stop at the sign at night.

Bill Freeman of 3 Daria Drive commented he does not believe the stop signs are going to serve a purpose there. He said a speed sign would be better.

P. Sawyer thanked the audience members for coming and speaking at the meeting. She said she received an email from Carol Rady of 282 Hebron Road, which she will add to the record, with observations of the stop signs, results and conclusions from her efforts to create an actual report of incidences on this issue.

3. Approval of Minutes:

3.a April 4, 2023 –Regular Meeting: The following amendment was made to the April 4, 2023 regular meeting minutes:

“7.d A. Teller said he believes the board or the department heads, not the Town Administrator, should take the heat when the public asks about the ~~fluffy~~ **flurry** of transfers at the end of the budget.”

R. Morra MOVED to approve the April 4, 2023 regular meeting minutes as amended. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

3.b April 18, 2023 – Special A/P Meeting:

R. Morra MOVED to approve the April 18, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. A Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4. Appointments:

R. Morra MOVED to add 4.d Resignation of Mark Altermatt as member of ZBA and Town Moderator. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.a Cheryl Udin – BLRWPCA:

R. Morra MOVED appoint Cheryl Udin to the BLRWPCA. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.b Diane DeNunzio – Inland Wetlands Commission (Alternate):

R. Morra MOVED to appoint Diane DeNunzio to fill an Alternate vacancy on the Inland Wetlands Commission. M. Eremita SECONDED. P. Sawyer thanked D. DeNunzio for stepping forward to be on the commission. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.c Robert Morra and James Rupert -Eastern Highland Health District (re-appointments):

R. DePietro MOVED to re-appoint Robert Morra as Alternate and James Rupert as representative to the Eastern Highland Health District Board of Directors. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.d Resignation of Mark Altermatt as member of ZBA and Town Moderator:

A. Teller MOVED to accept the resignation of Mark Altermatt with regret as town meeting moderator and ZBA member. M. Eremita SECONDED. P. Sawyer thanked Mr. Altermatt for all his service to the town. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5. New Business

5.a Consider and Act on Request for \$\$ from Temporary Building Commission:

J. Rupert explained the committee put together solicitations design build and are asking the BOS to consider and act on \$50,000 for securing professional engineering and architectural services and \$99,000 for the design build team solicitations. He said he told the commission’s chairman

that the BOS would probably put this on hold since the goal right now is to create a master plan for the fire department which may have a significant impact on what a new addition to the fire department would look like.

R. Morra concurred that would be appropriate at this time.

A. Teller added, at the last tri-board meeting, a straw poll was taken with the people in the room of what the town's building projects priorities were going to be and the firehouse was not among the top three. He agrees with R. Morra that this is premature.

R. DePietro concurred with R. Morra and A. Teller. The BOS has to encourage the long-term strategy plan and also think about the delivery of the new fire truck. He said he does not want things to get postponed for too long.

M. Eremita agreed that if the town is going to proceed with the master plan, that should be done first. He said he has serious concerns about long-term planning because the town rarely follows the plan they develop. He also expressed concern about safety in that building.

A. Teller MOVED that the Board of Selectmen communicate with the Public Building Commission that the BOS believes this project needs to be put on hold until the strategic plan is developed for the fire department. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:1:0 with M. Eremita opposed.

5.b Consider and Act on Amending the Capital Budget on Behalf of the BOE at the May 16, 2023 Annual Town Meeting:

J. Rupert explained the BOE had leftover bond monies in 2017. The BOS has taken action to allocate that monies in the capital budget for the BOE to be able to use them for a fireproof stage curtain, cafeteria kitchen stove, energy management system and lockers to the extent of the remaining funds are available. As of July 1, 2023 that money will have gone stale so, in order to keep this money in the capital budget for those purposes, it requires action at a town meeting. He said, if the board wishes, the call for the annual town meeting and resolutions have been amended to include that ask.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve amending the call and resolutions for the May 16, 2023 Annual Town Meeting as follows:

4. To authorize the approval of the remaining funds from the 2017 borrowing allocation for the Board of Education projects at the Bolton Center School, according to Section (a)(iv) of the approved resolution of the town meeting on January 25, 2017, for the purposes of the replacement of the fireproof stage curtain, cafeteria kitchen stove, energy management system and lockers, to the extent of the remaining available funds continue to be available for those approved purposes through July 1, 2024.

Item #4

RESOLVED: That the remaining funds from the 2017 borrowing allocation for the Board of Education projects at the Bolton Center School, according to Section (a)(iv) of the approved resolution of the town meeting on January 25, 2017, for the purposes of the replacement of the fireproof stage curtain, cafeteria kitchen stove, energy management system and lockers, to the

extent of the remaining available funds continue to be available for those approved purposes through July 1, 2024.

A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.c Consider and Act on the Call and Resolutions for the Annual Town Meeting on May 16, 2023:

A. Teller MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve the call of the annual town meeting and the accompanying resolutions for May 16, 2023. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.d Consider and Act on Giveback of Unused Funding from FY2022-2023:

J. Rupert explained he and the Chief Financial Officer have identified \$85,000 in specific areas they believe can be given back as noted below. He is asking the board to leave it up to his and the Chief Financial Officer's discretion to find an additional \$15,000 so the town can appropriate a giveback of \$100,000 even.

Administration - \$25,000
Finance - \$3,000
Unemployment Compensation - \$25,000
Fire Fighter Retention - \$4,912
Workers Compensation - \$11,312
Health Insurance - \$5,358
Mileage Stipends/Reimbursement - \$2,000
Probate - \$318
Animal Control - \$100
Fire Marshal Payroll - \$5,000
Temporary Building Commission - \$3,000
Various Budgets - \$15,000

Total - \$100,000

R. Morra MOVED the Board Of Selectmen notify the Board of Finance that the BOS will be returning an unexpended amount of \$100,000.

R. DePietro amended the motion as follows: "and give the Town Administrator the leeway to find the extra \$15,000". R. Morra accepted the amendment.

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

5.e Consider and Act on Approving taking \$350 from the Founders Day Fund for the Veterans Commission to Pay for Sgt. Clark's Memorial Plaque:

P. Sawyer commented that this bronze plaque has been approved by the Veterans Commission to honor Sgt. Clark that will be carved into the bench.

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve taking \$350 from the Founders Day Fund for the Veterans Commission to pay for Sgt. Clark's Memorial Plaque. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.f Consider and Act on the Use of Town Vehicles using Notch Road at Route 384:

P. Sawyer noted this issue has been discussed by the board and referred to correspondence dated February 14, 2023 from Town Attorney Richard Barger with his opinion regarding the use of Notch Road access to Routes 6 and 44 by town employees driving town-owned vehicles as requested by the board.

M. Eremita said this is a very grave concern of his. He strongly recommended that the board go ahead with a guideline against using Notch Road to access Routes 6 and 44 by town employees driving town-owned vehicles.

A. Teller MOVED the BOS authorize the Town Administrator to issue a dialogue to all town employees instructing them not to use the entrance to 384, Route 6 and 44 from Notch Road unless there is no other reasonable alternative or there is an emergency situation. M. Eremita SECONDED.

R. DePietro asked A. Teller for clarification on the motion if employees would be asked to sign the guideline to be put in their personnel folder. A. Teller responded he would like the Town Administrator to issue a memorandum or instructions to all employees not to use it.

P. Sawyer recommended the Town Administrator hold a meeting to announce the guideline and make sure every employee is aware of it, including the Eastern Highland Health District and reach out to the shared services employees.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.g Consider and Act on Request from the Heritage Farm Commission for Ansaldi Construction to fill in the Manure Pit at Heritage Farm:

P. Sawyer said this is a piece of town property.

R. Morra commented that he thinks the fill-in should be supervised by the town's building and grounds supervisor.

J. Rupert responded that, in discussion with the Building and Grounds supervisor, he agreed to this. The pit has a concrete bottom and concrete walls and would have to be broken up. The town would have to ensure this is done properly so there are no drainage issues. J. Rupert said Ansaldi is willing to do the work at no cost. There have been no specific discussions as to what type of fill it would be.

Consensus of the board was to table discussion and to add this topic to the next facilities committee meeting agenda and bring additional information to the full board.

6. Ongoing Business: None

7. Reports and Updates:

7.a Properties and Facilities Report: None

7.b FY 22 Budget Report: J. Rupert reported no concerns.

7.c Budget Transfers:

J. Rupert explained the cost of paving this year is extraordinary and the town is out of money in the paving budget. The town is trying to use funding already in the highway budget to cover paving of Shoddy Mill Road, trying to preserve the money in Town Aid Roads (TAR) so, when the town is successful in getting a grant application for the Lyman Road Bridge, the funds in TAR can be used cover the town’s cost share portion of that grant.

R. Morra MOVED to approve the Highway Department transfer requests of \$19,000 from Payroll category, \$15,000 from Overtime-Payroll category, \$20,000 from Tree Trimming category and \$20,000 from Sand & Salt category to Road Repair category to cover additional road repairs. M. Eremita SECONDED.

J. Rupert said milling of Shoddy Mill Road is expected to take place on or about May 11th. The catch basin tops have already been replaced with paving scheduled around May 18th or 19th. The fire department has been notified of the anticipated work.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 with A. Teller abstaining.

7.d A/P Report:

R. DePietro MOVED to approve the A/P Report as presented. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

8. First Selectman’s Report:

8.a Dedication of Sargent Clark Bench (private and public):

P. Sawyer said there will be a private dedication for the family and a public dedication later on.

9. Administrative Officer’s Report

8.a Monthly Report:

J. Rupert reported the town is in a good position this year with salt and sand. However, there was an agreement in place to purchase 120 more tons of salt for this fiscal year. That has to be paid for whether or not the town uses the material. J. Rupert 60 tons of the additional salt has been stored in the town’s existing salt shed. He thanked the Town of Andover which has allowed Bolton to store the remaining 60 tons of salt in Andover’s salt shed until next year. This additional salt will be the first used next year, putting the town in a good place to start the next fiscal year.

J. Rupert said he received official notice today that Town Attorney Barger is moving to the Halloran & Sage law firm. He explained the board will have to make a decision between now and June 1st of whether they would like the town files to remain with Attorney Barger and be transferred to Halloran & Sage. In conversation with Attorney Barger, J. Rupert was informed that the rates will not change. This issue will be put on the agenda for the next A/P meeting.

J. Rupert reported the town did not get the grant for the parking lot at the Nathan Hale Greenway.

J. Rupert reported he and P. Sawyer met with someone from Senator Murphy's office, talking about what the town's challenges are. He said the senator's office has responded with several ideas to help the town find solutions with regard to a new roof on the school and the building of a town hall. With the issue of the tear-down of Notch Road Municipal Center, it was suggested he meet with the group from UCONN's Technical Assistance for Brownfields Program (TAB). This meeting occurred and the group confirmed the project does not qualify for a brownfields grant for tear-down but they offered to look into the town's hazardous materials report to see if some abatement can be done rather than tear the building down. The group also offered to re-image the use of that space, for a town hall, senior housing, a green space, a community center.

J. Rupert reported that the Fire Department has applied for a \$2,500 grant that is a reimbursement. He said reimbursement funds normally go into the town's general fund. The fire department would like to have use of those funds and are asking that those funds, when they come in, be deposited back into the fire department fund. P. Sawyer said this issue will be added to the next A/P meeting agenda.

8.b Tolland Micro Transit Grant Update:

J. Rupert reported Tolland has decided not to move forward with the grant application to sponsor a two-year regional micro transit grant.

8.c Other: No other report.

By consensus, the next A/P meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on May 16, 2023.

By consensus, the next Veterans Tax Ad-Hoc committee meeting was scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on June 1, 2023.

P. Sawyer said she will look at the calendar and reach out to the members of the Facilities/Public Safety Committee to schedule a date and time for the next meeting.

10. Adjournment: R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 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.