

BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Special Meeting & Budget Workshop #5
6:30 p.m. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra (6:39 p.m.), Mather Clarke, Gwen Marrion, Tim Sadler, Pamela Sawyer, Amanda Gordon

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald, Finance Director Jill Collins, Building Official Rich McKinnon

Others Present Via Zoom: Registrar of Voters Sandra Pierog, Registrar of Voters Bernice Dixon

1. **Call to Order:** R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Amanda Gordon MOVED to move agenda item #3 **Consider and Act on Approval of Two (2) Emergency Election Plans** to the first item on the agenda. G. Marrion SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.

2. **Budgets:**

Building & Land Use:

Building: R. McKinnon explained the payroll line item was reduced because the department went from one full time assistant building official to two part-time assistant building officials. The Training line item was increased because there are now three employees to send to training. Overall, the requested department budget has a \$4,000 reduction over the current year's budget.

Land Use: R. McKinnon said scanning and GIS are two items put in the capital budget but did not qualify. The GIS system to install would be about \$9,900, giving Bolton its own GIS program to access through the town's website and linked to a database that is updated every day. He answered questions from the board members.

For the request for \$57,000 for scanning, R. McKinnon said every file would be turned into a PDF for every address, itemized by whatever category they are, that could be emailed to anyone requesting information. All past history on a file would be digital. He answered questions from the Board Members.

Administration:

J. Rupert presented the requested FY2024-2025 Administration Department budget. He noted the largest increases are in the Professional/Technical Services and Other Technical Services line items. He explained the town is completing cyber security upgrades and enhancements and will now need more managed service and a little more on-site monthly support for the town offices, which adds to operating expenses. For the Other Technical

Services line item, J. Rupert explained, prior to this year, the licensing for Microsoft was going through the BOE inappropriately and the rates were low. Now the town needs to have business licenses for everyone who are using Microsoft, about \$300 per year per user. There are about 35 users. This category also covers all the software for other departments and all are experiencing an incremental annual increase.

Personnel Services budget: J. Rupert said the largest increases are in payroll taxes and pensions. He said, unofficially, the State Comptroller's Office is wrapping up the audit of the State Partnership Plan (health insurance) and thinks the annual increase will be closer to 2%, which would allow the town to make more positive adjustments in this category before the budget is finalized.

Insurance: J. Rupert explained there are increases for the addition of cyber liability insurance and an increase in property & liability insurance.

Probate Court: This is a shared service.

Police Protection: J. Rupert said this budget figure is an estimate and the town may not have the bill from the State for the State Troopers until after the budget is finalized.

Animal Control: This is a shared service. J. Rupert said he has not yet received the bill for Bolton's portion from the Town of Vernon but the cost has been going up systematically each year. Vernon supplies the staff and the building.

Emergency Management: J. Collins noted the town will receive \$3,000 from the State to offset the \$6,000 payroll cost.

Public Building Commission: J. Rupert said currently there are no public building commission projects, so this line item could be unfunded.

Refuse Services: J. Rupert said the contract pickup line item has gone up and is based on a cap of 5%, but this will be appropriately adjusted in March based on CPI according to the town's contract withal American Waste. This number could come down a bit. Tipping fees have gone up significantly and are based on the cost that the town pays per ton and the most recent tonnage numbers the town is able to collect.

Capital Reserve: Staff answered some questions from the board members on a few items in this category.

Capital Improvement: There is no funding in this budget.

Bond & Note Expenditures: The line item has to be increased from zero to \$20,000. J. Collins explained, after talking with the town's financial advisor, in order to roll the fire truck note, the town has to go through the same process the town did to get the loan for the \$630,000. This will involve fees from attorneys and financial advisor of about \$20,000.

Redemption of Bonds: J. Collins reported the town does not have the school's number of Columbia students, so she currently does not have a firm number for this category. Eighty percent of the Columbia students' tuition pays the bond for the school project.

Interest – Long Term Debt: J. Collins reported the town will have to pay an additional cost of \$25,000 - \$35,000 to pay the interest on the loan for the fire truck so this budget will increase.

BLRWPCA Debt: This budget is unchanged from the current year's budget.

- **Boards and Commissions:** The board members reviewed the requested FY2024-2025 budgets for the following boards and commissions:
Finance Committee
Auditing Services
Planning & Zoning Commission
Zoning Board of Appeals
Inland Wetlands Commission
Veterans Services
Conservation Commission

3. Consider and Act on Approval of Two (2) Emergency Election Plans:

B. Dixon explained this is a supplement to the emergency contingency model plan for elections from the State of Connecticut that the registrars can use and tailor to the needs of the town. These plans require BOS approval and must be filed with the Secretary of State's Office by 4:00 p.m. tomorrow to avoid penalties to the town.

P. Sawyer MOVED the Board of Selectmen accept the Emergency Plan for Early Voting and the Emergency Plan for Elections as presented. R. Fournier SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

4. Adjournment: A. Gordon MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

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.