

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2020– (immediately following public hearing)
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM**

Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: BOE Chair Andrew Broneill, Susan Pike, Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Scott Rich, Director of Business and Finance Kusal Huynh, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Town Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 8:26 p.m.

2. Public Participation: E. Bradley said Morris Silverstein wanted to participate in the budget public hearing that just concluded but was having connection issues and could not actually voice his comments and concerns. She spoke with Morris Silverstein after the public hearing and summarized his concerns. M. Silverstein said he feels there should be no tax increase or a reduction in the tax increase. The economic situation is going to be going on for a while and people have really taken a hit. On top of that people are being deprived of voting for a budget given the current situation. He feels the contingency fund should not be as high as \$250,000.00.

3. Discussion Re: FY 2021 Budgets (Revenues & Expenditures):

E. Bradley asked for feedback on what was heard during the public hearing.

R. Munroe appreciated that R. Galle and M. Silverstein participated in the public hearing.

C. Danna as a response to comments at public hearing, the question came up concerning the change in use change in use for the bonding in the use of capital improvements. His understanding was since the monies for the tennis courts came out of the BOE project, the monies had to be used for something related through the BOE rather than anything town wide. He asked for clarification since in the public hearing, J. Kelly said the monies could be changed in use.

S. Pierog said J. Kelly was correct when he said the town could reallocate those funds any way the town meeting approved. The opinion of the CAPA committee was that since the capital funds the town is reallocating came from an educational purpose, the town should continue to spend the monies on an educational purpose since it was a town wide referendum that authorized the original bonding for that purpose. That recommendation came to the BOS and then to the BOF.

R. Tuthill said that was only a recommendation. S. Pierog responded, at this point, the reallocation of the capital improvement funds has been approved by the BOS and the BOF, so under the governor's

executive order, it is a done deal. S. Pierog said those funds have been reallocated to specific projects and that is what the capital reserve fund does.

R. Tuthill asked if the board could reallocate the new capital funds. S. Pierog said the board could reduce the amount in the capital reserve fund down to the 1 mil number. The CAPA committee would then decide which project would get cut, reduced, or postponed.

K. Gourley commented the safety and liability issues associated with the tennis courts were also something to think about.

E. Bradley commented that, at this time, the BOF cannot go through and reorder the capital improvement plan. That is really a BOS function.

4. Discussion and Action Re: FY2021 Proposed Budget Revenues:

The board discussed comments heard at the public hearing. E. Bradley shared the two main actionable items the board can address that came out of comments from the community, concern the level of the contingency fund and the fact that the proposed budget has a tax increase.

R. Lally said he heard the same things and proposed the following motion to get discussion going:

R. Lally MOVED to reduce mil rate and hold it to 39 mils.

E. Bradley said, as a point of order, when the BOF is talking about the budget, the board starts with the expenditure side and then, as a result, comes up with a mil rate. The motion would have to be reworded to be a number in terms of expenditures.

Calculations were done to determine the dollar amount reduction to the budget to keep the mil rate at 39.

R. Lally rephrased the motion and MOVED to reduce the proposed budget by \$90,000.00. E. Bradley said an additional \$90,000.00 reductions would make the bottom-line total expenditures \$22,783,544.00. C. Danna SECONDED. Discussion followed.

E. Bradley said this results in a no tax increase, keeping the mil rate at 39, which means the board has to reduce something by \$90,000.00.

R. Munroe said the easiest and most transparent way to do this is to reduce the contingency fund to \$160,000.00. He said he has advocated a high contingency fund in the past but has he has considered the information he got previous to the last meeting and during the public hearing, he has concluded, based upon history, that \$160,000.00 should be adequate. In regards to public hearing comments on the purpose of the rainy-day fund, he considers the COVID-19 pandemic analogous to a tornado ripping through the town. If the town should end up with additional demands and the \$160,000.00 is not adequate to cover that, the town has the option of dipping into the rainy-day fund for justifiable expenses.

J. Kelly said if you take the total amount of the tax levy in the budget document expected based on the total number of expenditures the town is expecting and divide that by 39, his estimation is that if the board decreases the total expenditures by \$75,000.00 you would safely reach the zero increase.

C. Danna agrees to a zero increase in the mil rate but expressed concern of what would happen if the reduction only had to be \$70,000.00 reduction in the contingency fund to get there. He said he is unsure what the number for the reduction in the contingency fund really is.

E. Bradley commented there were a couple of tweaks to the grand list that were made after the board put out the budget for public hearing and wants to make sure that was incorporated into J. Kelly's calculations. J. Kelly replied these numbers were based off the budget document made available for tonight's public hearing.

E. Bradley apprised the members that the Chief Financial Officer had reached out to her over the weekend that there were a couple other small changes that slightly alter the grand list. Although the changes are small, E. Bradley said she would want them incorporated in before the board could come up with a final number.

K. Gourley said she is open to looking at options to cut, but not open to touching the contingency fund for the reason this situation is larger than anything anyone has ever experienced. It is not a point in time and could be a long period of time. She believes the board needs to adapt their position to be flexible about it. She said the board is in a position to prepare and be financially strategic, especially considering it is money that can go back. She would rather the town be over-prepared than under-prepared and find itself in a situation of going through the \$250,000 contingency fund and also have to dip into the rainy-day fund. That would affect the budgets in the years to come. She said have one eye on the present and one eye on the future. K. Gourley reiterated she is open to looking at areas to cut but feels strongly the board should not go below the \$250,000.00 in the contingency fund.

R. Tuthill said, if there is to be no tax increase, the board has to take the money from contingency. He noted, at one point, the board was solving for \$20,000.00 if the board was going to leave the contingency fund at its \$91,000 level. If the board wanted to have zero tax increase and have zero cuts, the contingency fund would have had to be reduced to \$71,000. To get to a contingency fund of \$250,000, the board needed \$180,000 more, \$90,000 of which was taken from the BOS and BOE and the board needed to raise \$90,000 in taxes where the .13 mi increase came from. Now he is hearing the reduction does not have to be \$90,000 and \$75,000 instead which would leave the contingency at \$175,000. He asked E. Bradley and J. Kelly what the figures really are.

J. Kelly explained Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins had recalculated the mil rate increase based on updated information on the grand list and calculated the proposed mil rate to be 39.16. J. Kelly said he went into the budget documentation put together for this evening and see the town needs to levy for the current year \$17,289,153. He said if you take that number and divide it by 39.16 one mil should equal about \$441,500.33. If you divide that by one hundred which should get you to .01 mils, that is \$4,415. He said then multiply that by 16 to get \$70,640.05. That should account for the 0.16 mils the board need to reduce. J. Kelly said, by his account, if the board reduced the budget by \$75,000, they will be very safe.

R. Tuthill MOVED to amend the motion before to achieve the desired result of a zero-tax increase, but instead of a reduction of \$90,000.00 to make it a reduction of \$75,000.00 and take it all from the contingency fund. R. Munroe seconded. Discussion on the amended motion followed.

C. Danna commented, if it takes \$75,000.00 from contingency, he thinks that is the way to solve the problem.

As a point of clarification on her position, K. Gourley she did not at the time agree to not raising the mil rate. All she said was that she was open to looking at options. She said she still stands by what she is saying with the contingency.

R. Lally commented he likes the change of the amount to \$75,000. He thinks the town probably has some of the contingency built in from the money the town is going to get back because it is so early in this whole thing and it makes him more comfortable taking this amount out of contingency.

R. DiPietro said he has the unique advantage of being on the BOF and being a Selectman. He said he listens well and understands what K. Gourley's intent is and appreciates her concerns. Listening to the comments at the public hearing, he said he has to appreciate the zero increase in the mil rate.

E. Bradley, having heard public hearing comments, said she is ok with no increase to the taxes. In terms of where to take the money from, it makes her nervous to reduce the contingency because this is so unprecedented. But, at the same time, she does not necessarily want to take from the Town or the BOE because they have planned out their budgets and the board has already made a cut to them so she is leaning to taking the money from contingency. She commented the one thing that makes her slightly uncomfortable is the quick math done tonight that the reduction is \$75,000 not \$90,000 based on what the board thinks the revised grand list is. She wondered if the board could make a decision tonight and can the board actually put that final number down on a piece of paper without having J. Collins confirm the grand list and double-checking that number.

J. Kelly responded that he does not have the actual adjusted grand list number in front of him. What he has is the number J. Collins sent to him based on the number she has actually reviewed herself.

R. Munroe commented the board has been in this situation before. What the board did was to authorize the Town Administrator to, in concert with the Chief Financial Officer, recognizing the will and desire of the board to have a zero tax increase and to make up the difference, not with further cuts from the boards but with a reduction in what the wish list was which included a \$250,000 contingency fund. He explained, if an adjustment has to be made, the board should be able to rely on the Town Administrator to do that for the board as long as he understands the full intent of the board. The board would not have to come back to vote on the confirmed amount.

R. Munroe clarified that the board has some doubt on a particular figure and variation in that number is insignificant and should not require an additional vote by the board. He thinks the board could empower the Town Administrator, as long as he fully understands the board's intent, then the slight adjustment would be made and the bottom line is no change in the mil rate, no change in the reduction of either two boards as already proposed, and whatever it takes to come out of the contingency fund, which is planned at \$250,000, to get to 39.00 mils is the amount to come out of contingency.

S. Pierog commented, if this were a normal year, what the BOF would be voting on tonight was the budget expenditure number to send to referendum. However, what the BOF will be acting on tonight is not the final cut either at the mil rate or at the expenditures because of the anticipation that, at the BOF's May meeting, the board will be adopting the budget expenditures and setting the mil rate so the board has time to get the correct numbers.

As a point of order, R. Tuthill noted there is a motion for an amount and an amendment on that motion still under consideration. E. Bradley said it would be helpful if both motions were withdrawn so the board could start clean with the intent since the board does not have the final number.

R. Lally and R. Tuthill withdrew their prior motions.

R. Tuthill MOVED approve a resolution to have the Town Administrator calculate the amount the contingency fund would have to be reduced to produce exactly a zero-tax increase, maintaining the current cuts made to the boards. R. Munroe SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:1:0 with K. Gourley voting nay.

5. Possible Discussion and Action Re: Ballot Question: No action taken.

R. Munroe MOVED to cancel the special BOF meeting scheduled for April 30, 2020. K. Gourley SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

S. Pierog explained, if it looks like the town is heading toward referendum, the board will need a special meeting before the regular meeting on May 21, 2020 to approve the ballot question. She believes that is a very remote possibility at this point. She said, given that, the board could adopt the budget at their regular May meeting.

E. Bradley said, if the town were heading for referendum, a special BOF meeting would have to be held before May 10th.

A special BOF meeting was put on the budget calendar for May 6th at 7:15 p.m. for the board to make the ballot question and give the Financial Officer enough time to update the budget documents.

6. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the special meeting at 9:27 p.m.

Next Meeting: **May 6, 2020 Special Meeting 7:15 PM (if necessary)**

May 10, 2020 Board of Finance must adopt the budget on or before this date.

May 21, 2020 Regular Meeting 7:15 PM

Respectfully submitted by

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr. Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: Susan Pike, Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Scott Rich, Director of Business and Finance Kusal Huynh, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Town Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. with roll call of participants. She recommended town residents email comments and questions to the Town Administrator at townadmin@boltonct.org or jkelly@boltonct.org during the meeting, which will then be read at the meeting.

2. Public Participation: First Selectman S. Pierog reported on Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 7S(6) which extends the grace period for the collection of municipal taxes. Under this provision that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) passed at their April 7, 2020 meeting, taxes are still due July 1, 2020 but the grace period to pay without penalty is extended to October 1, 2020. Past due taxes are not included in the BOS action. Resident that pay their taxes directly to the town can pay anytime between 7/1/2020 an 10/1/2020 without penalty. The Governor’s Executive Order does not include an extended grace period for taxes paid through escrow.

First Selectman S. Pierog said she receive notification from the Governor’s office chief legal counsel that BOF approval to reallocate Capital Funds without having to go to vote at a special town meeting is allowed under Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 7S(7) as follows:

“7. Allowance of Suspension of In-Person Voting Requirements for Critical and Time Sensitive Municipal Fiscal Deadlines. Notwithstanding any contrary provision of the Connecticut General Statutes, including Title 7, or any special act, municipal charter, ordinance or resolution that conflicts with this order, the legislative body of a municipality, or in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting other than a representative town meeting, the board of selectmen, and the budget-making authority of said municipality if different from the legislative body or board of selectmen, by majority vote of each such body, as applicable, may authorize (i) any supplemental, additional or special appropriations under Section 7-348 of the Connecticut General Statutes or comparable provisions of any special act, municipal charter or ordinance, (ii) any tax anticipation notes to be issued under Section 7-405a of the Connecticut General Statutes or comparable provisions of any special act, municipal charter or ordinance, or (iii) municipal general obligation bonds or notes to be issued in anticipation of such bonds to be issued pursuant to Chapter 109 of the Connecticut General Statutes for capital improvement purposes, without complying with any requirements for in person approval by electors or taxpayers, including but not limited to, annual or special town meetings requiring votes or referenda. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the legislative body and budget-making authority, if they are separate entities, are taking any action

specified in (ii) or (iii) above, or any action under (i) above, which involves an appropriation in an amount in excess of 1 % of the current year's total municipal budget without complying with any in-person approval requirements normally required by statute, special act, municipal charter, ordinance or resolution, such body(ies) shall make specific findings that such actions are necessary to permit the orderly operation of the municipality and that there is a need to act immediately and during the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency in order to avoid endangering public health and welfare, prevent significant financial loss, or that action is otherwise necessary for the protection of persons and property within the municipality. In so acting, the legislative body and, if different from the legislative body, the budget-making authority of the municipality, shall comply with open meeting requirements set forth in Executive Order No. 7B. All conditions precedent to any such approval, including without limitation, public notices, hearings or presentations, shall proceed in a manner as closely consistent with the applicable statutes, special acts, town charters, municipal ordinances, resolutions or procedures as possible, and in compliance with the open meeting provisions set forth in Executive Order 7B. Nothing in this order shall be construed to prohibit a municipality from conducting any in-person meeting, approval process, or referendum, provided such municipality first consults with local or state public health officials and conducts such meeting, approval process, or referendum in a way that significantly reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19.”

First Selectman S. Pierog said approval to reallocate capital improvement funds without having to go to town meeting must be adopted by majority vote of the both BOS and BOF. The BOS approved the reallocation of stale and leftover capital funds to new projects at their April 7, 2020 meeting. At that meeting the BOS also authorized the budget-making authority (BOF) to act in the place of a public vote in the event that health conditions prevent a public vote from taking place. The call to town meeting has to be posted 14 days before town meeting, scheduled for May 7th.

Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt reported Governor Lamont has closed schools until May 20, 2020. The Town is continuing with distance learning, with early dismissal on Wednesdays to allow for teacher professional development. She said, per Executive Order SR(3), the Board of Education (BOE) has to negotiate with M&J Bus company as stated in the order below:

“3. Preservation of Student Transportation Services and Special Education Providers. To the extent that a board of education, or in cases where the municipality holds the contract, the municipality with agreement from the board of education, determines that a contract related to student transportation or the provision of special education services by a public special education provider or an approved private special education provider requires amendment to more accurately reflect the actual costs incurred during the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergencies, all parties shall promptly negotiate amendments to such contracts with student transportation providers and/or special education providers with terms that are consistent with the goals of: (1) sustaining continuity of service when school resumes; (2) continuing (a) to make tuition payments to special education providers so that they may compensate their active employees and provide them health insurance and (b) to make payments to transportation providers so that they may compensate their active employees and provide them health insurance; and (3) requiring the contracted company to attest and provide reasonable documentation of the fact that it is charging only the actual and reasonable cost of sustaining wage and health insurance payments for active employees and/or fleet while also engaging best efforts to avoid unnecessary costs. Such continued compensation and health insurance for staff or others providing special education and transportation services and employees shall be continued to the greatest extent practicable - whether full-time or part-time - at rates commensurate to those paid and provided immediately prior to the declaration of these public health and civil preparedness emergencies, whether

or not services are actually or immediately rendered. Nothing in this provision shall allow for contracted companies to be enriched beyond the actual and reasonable costs incurred for the purposes set forth above.”

Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt explained she is seeking guidance from the Town’s legal counsel Shipman & Goodwin and clarity on the executive order from the governor’s office on how to proceed.

Town Administrator J. Kelly said the amount of leftover diesel for the busses will be purchased next year at the higher rate for the amount of fuel not used this year. The Town contracted with the fuel company for a certain amount of diesel at a certain rate during the fiscal year. First Selectman S. Pierog noted this was factored into the FY 2021 budget proposal presented to the BOF.

3. Consider and Act on the Reallocating and Reaffirming of Capital Funds:

E. Bradley said the BOF has reviewed the reallocation of the capital improvement funds and agreed to send \$832,000.00 to town meeting at the March 19, 2020 BOF meeting. In response to the current pandemic situation, Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 7S allows the BOF to approve the capital improvement stale funds to be put into new capital improvements without going to town meeting.

Town Administrator J. Kelly addressed the change in the grand total in the “Re-allocation of Capital Funds “ document presented at tonight’s meeting. He explained grand total of \$1,055,196.25 in the stale capital funds is higher due to changes with the re-authorization of preliminary architectural (\$87,000) and building assessments (\$61,896.92) for the Town Hall facility expansion and includes the additional \$74,299.33 that was previously allocated for FY 2022 that the BOS moved to the FY2021 budget.

R. Tuthill MOVED to reallocate the stale and leftover capital funds to new projects in the FY2021 budget.
K. Gourley SECONDED. Discussion followed. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

4. Discussion Re: FY 2021 Budgets (Revenues & Expenditures):

E. Bradley noted the proposed FY2021 budget has projected revenues of \$22,152,725 and expenditures of \$22,878,843. The Contingency Fund has \$91,000, a carryover from last year. She said \$66,000 of the contingency fund and \$41,244 for set aside for teachers retirement system that was not used could be rolled forward.

E. Bradley asked First Selectman S. Pierog if, from her perspective, there are any unexpended funds that the BOS could commit to the FY2021 budget. First Selectman S. Pierog responded, at this point the BOS is comfortable with \$100,000. Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt said the BOE voted last night to put forward \$125,000.

These items total \$332,244 of additional revenues that come into play for the FY 2021 budget.

As requested by the board, Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt presented a Pandemic Planning phase two document with potential unbudgeted implications by category, including books, E-books, subscriptions, special education, district technology hardware, legal and operations/maintenance. Discussion followed.

First Selectman S. Pierog said she doesn’t see any cost differential from what is in the Town budget and what is expended in the event of another round of the virus in the future. The Town would maintain normal office operations and, if needed, funds would be re-allocated.

E. Bradley explained there is \$50,000 that can carryover from the reserve for fund balance and \$250,000 for an adjustment for a temporary loan (in case there was not a budget in place by the start of the FY). She said there is a delta of \$19,575.00 if the contingency fund remains at \$91,000 and the give backs don't change.

Discussion followed on the possibility of a cash flow problem with the 90-day extension to pay taxes, d what could happen if there is a phase two of COVID-19 (loss of jobs, less revenue), and on reasons for increasing the contingency fund. (pandemic, recession)

Fist Selectman S. Pierog reported the state is receiving 1.3 billion in funds from federal government to be distributed to help education and FEMA money reimbursements will be received next FY at 75% level for some expenses incurred because of the pandemic crisis.

E. Bradley explained the public hearing on the budget scheduled for April 28,2020 will be a virtual public hearing. The public will be able to email questions in advance of the hearing. J. Kelly said Zoom has tightened the security on their meetings. Only board and staff members invited by the host will be able to participate with audio and visual. Others, including the public, will participate by audio only. Depending on the status of crisis, the budget put forward by the BOF will either go to referendum or the BOF will use the authority in Executive Order 7S to vote on budget without going to referendum.

5. Consider and Act on: FY 2021 Proposed Budget for Public Hearing (Possible Action):

E. Bradley polled the members on their perspective and sense of when a final FY2021 budget number could be developed before going to public hearing. No action was taken on this agenda item.

6. Review of Budget Calendar: Discussion followed on the need to hold a meeting on Tuesday, April 14th. The majority of the board members thought a budget number could be reached at the regular meeting scheduled next Thursday, April 16th. The legal notice posting deadline for the public hearing is April 20, 2020.

R. Tuthill MOVED to cancel the April 14, 2020 special meeting. R. Munroe SECONDED. By roll call vote, MOTION CARRIED 6:1:0 with R. Lally opposed.

Next Meetings:

- April 16, 2020 Regular Meeting 7:15 PM
- April 28, 2020 Public Hearing/Board of Finance Special Meeting (if Necessary) 7:00 PM (THIS IS A TUESDAY)

7. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the special meeting at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr. (7:21 p.m.), Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro (7:42 p.m.)

Board of Education Members Present: BOE Chair Andrew Broneill (7:32 p.m.), Benjamin Davies (7:57 p.m.) Susan Pike (7:25 p.m.), Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Director of Business and Finance Kusal Huynh, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Administrative Officer Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. with roll call of participants. She recommended town residents email comments and questions to the Administrative Officer at townadmin@boltonct.org during the meeting, which will then be read at the meeting.

2. Public Participation: First Selectman S. Pierog reported there is no update in information from the Governor's office regarding direction on the municipal budget process. The public hearing on the FY2021 budget, scheduled for April 28, 2020, was confirmed by the board and will be conducted in a virtual meeting format.

3. Discussion Re: FY 2021 Budgets (Revenues & Expenditures):

E. Bradley said with the COVID-19 situation, knows everyone is concerned with putting budget numbers out for expected revenues and expenditures, but discussion can happen on items the board anticipates will impact the budget next year.

Town side:

- Interest Income revenues will probably be much lower than last year. J. Collins said she is waiting to see 1st quarter 2020 interest income revenue figures.
- Less fee revenue collected from building use rentals, less fees collected in the Town Clerk's office, Library has suspended collection of overdue fees, no revenue coming in for NCAAA chore work for seniors, building permits fees, lower revenue from telephone fees.
- Money from the YMCA and church rentals in the Notch Road Municipal Center will go from \$51,000 to \$24,000 next year as the church lease is up in October and will not be renewed. Currently both the YMCA and church have closed operations in the municipal center. Rent will still be owed but the Town is not sure when the payments will be received.
- The Town will not receive revenue from Coventry for a shared Behaviorist in the school system next year, as the position will become full-time in Bolton.

Education side:

- Regular and special education tuition are not expected to decrease, but special education billing could be affected.
- The BOE is reaching out to outplacement facilities to see if they can continue to provide outplacement services for students. The BOE is waiting for information and guidance from the Department of Education and the facilities.
- The ECS grant will be lower next year by \$63,000.00.
- Columbia and Hartford special education student tuition will be lower than what was brought in this year.

Discussion followed on the possibility of residents having trouble paying taxes with loss of jobs and if there was any relief considered by the BOS. First Selectman S. Pierog responded the Governor has reached an agreement with financial institutions to postpone mortgage payments for 90 days. She added that municipalities have asked the Governor to allow either additional time (90 days) for residents to pay taxes or to allow the Towns to waive interest charges. First Selectman S. Pierog said she has asked the Department of Labor (DOL) for data on newly filed unemployment claims by town.

E. Bradley said the next step will be to start quantifying each of the previously listed categories to get real numbers to finish off this fiscal year as well as what are the numbers moving into next fiscal year.

First Selectman S. Pierog said the town will provide the figures at the next meeting as well as what the current grand list would raise at the current mill rate.

In response to a request from C. Danna, Administrative Officer J. Kelly will research data from old BOF minutes for an historical perspective relating to drops in revenue in other financial crises.

E. Bradley asked where the BOS and BOE think they might have funds leftover that could be applied to next year's budget.

First Selectman S. Pierog responded bills coming from State police for extra overtime protection for a recent incident in town and an additional cost for quarantine facilities for first responders. She stated circumstances were very different five weeks ago. Now she is hoping the Town has enough to cover expenses for the rest of the year.

Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt said the situation is fluid and she will provide more information as it becomes available. The BOE may have to purchase extra technology and associated resources for distance learning.

BOF members posed questions to BOS & BOE members present on the budget documents presented to the board as prior meetings.

First Selectman S. Pierog noted, in adherence with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), any information to be discussed at the meeting has to be posted at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting on the Town's website. Any information distributed at the meeting cannot be considered or discussed.

4. Consider and Act on: FY 2021 Proposed Budget for Public Hearing (Possible Action): No action taken.

5. Review of Budget Calendar: The board will tentatively continue budget discussion at the April 2, 2020 special meeting. A definitive decision to hold the meeting will be made tomorrow, pending information from the BOS and BOS.

Next Meetings:

April 2, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm – Zoom Virtual Platform

April 8, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm –Zoom Virtual Platform **(THIS IS A WEDNESDAY)** (if necessary)

April 9, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm –Zoom Virtual Platform (if necessary)

April 16, 2020 – Regular Meeting – 7:15 pm - Town Hall or Virtual Platform

6. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 19, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM**

Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Robert DePietro, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally and Kristen Gourley

Board of Education Members Present: Vice Chair Susan Pike, Christopher Davey, Anne Decker, and Rhea Klein

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Administrative Officer Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt, Director of Business and Finance for Bolton Schools Kusal Huyhn, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman E. Bradley at 7:15 p.m. She thanked Town staff for all their hard work putting this virtual meeting together. She recommended town residents email comments and questions to the Administrative Officer at townadmin@boltonct.org during the meeting, which will then be read at the meeting.

2. Public Participation: No public participation.

As a change to the agenda, R. Munroe MOVED the board consider agenda item 6a under agenda item 4. C. Danna SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

**3. Approval of Minutes:
February 20, 2020 Regular Meeting:**

R. DiPietro MOVED to APPROVE the regular meeting minutes of February 20, 2020 as presented. K. Gourley SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports:

4a. Tax Collection Summary:

J. Collins reported tax revenue collection is at 101.65% (99.86% last year) as of February 29, 2020. Motor vehicle tax collection is at 96.19% and supplemental tax collection is at 100.08% as of 2/29/2020.

J. Collins reviewed the FY 2020 revenue statement as of February 29, 2020. She said what is happening as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak could have a financial impact for the rest of the year on interest paid on Town accounts. Discussion followed on the questionable revenue source of interest for next year and for the board to keep this in mind when considering the FY2021 budget.

J. Collins reviewed areas she expects to be financially impacted by the current situation:

- She anticipates a decrease in tax collection.

- Town Clerk services are down. The Town is working to get dog license registration credit card payments online.
- There are no facilities rentals.
- There are no recreation department/senior center activities or programs scheduled.

First Selectman Pierog updated the board on the Town Aid Road (TAR) State Grant. She said TAR is in a bond package which has been approved by legislature, signed by the governor and now the State Bond Commission has to take action to sign the checks for distribution to the Towns.

Discussion followed on the revenue tuition line item, possibly having to reimburse money to Columbia and Hartford students because of there being less than 180 days in the school year. Superintendent Heckt said her opinion is the Town will still be servicing those students with online learning. C. Danna said the State has waived the 180-day school year requirement, so there should not be an issue with Columbia and Hartford.

In response to a question from E. Bradley, Superintendent Heckt said she has received no information that any BOE grants would change or be in jeopardy.

4b. Town Update: J. Kelly reported on year to date expenditures and said by the end of February the town was 2/3 through the end of the fiscal year. He said he was looking for any expenditure item that was over 66.6% and also over prior year expenditures, which included Auditor, Data Processing (over due to annual payment for Viewpoint software), Fire Commission, and Senior/Social Services (not an item of concern). He reported the budget is meeting expectations from the prior three years.

Discussion of FY2020 and FY2021 Revenue:

J. Kelly said he expects an uptick in the level of assistance for social services. The senior center, recreation department and library are not holding events. He said the Town has extra diesel fuel purchased and not used this season that cannot be returned to the supplier. First Selectman Pierog said she reviewed contract today and confirmed the only out in the contract regarding the purchase of excess diesel fuel is on supplier side.

R. Munroe asked if the Town has seen a reduction in the amount of single stream recyclables being rejected by the hauler due to contamination, specifically if the single stream habits of residents had improved to reduce amount of rejected material. J. Kelly responded Willimantic Waste Paper is seeing better recycling rates in this part of the state.

J. Kelly reported on one budget transfer in the amount of \$400.00 from town building operations to equipment for the purchase of a desk for the recreation director.

4c. Board of Education (BOE) Update: Superintendent Heckt reported on several issues regarding transfer of funds in February, including \$23,399.00 from supplies to operations & maintenance for repairs at Bolton Center School (BCS) and \$15,833.00 from supplies to operations & maintenance to cover shortfalls for urgent repairs at Bolton High School (BHS).

Superintendent Heckt emphasized the schools are operating in emergency mode, signing out chrome books for students without access to online learning as there are not enough for each child. She is working to remedy the shortage and provide a continuity of learning as the schools move to distance learning. She has purchased extra cleaning supplies and cleaning equipment for the custodians, who are working hard to clean buildings.

E. Bradley asked Superintendent Heckt about potential savings in the BOE budget as a result of the change to distance learning for students and staff. Superintendent Heckt responded she is not sure yet, but there could be potential energy savings.

R. DiPietro asked if there are any costs for providing teachers training in distance teaching. Superintendent Heckt said teachers have some training using Google Classrooms. Some additional learning platforms have been purchased, with the possible need to purchase others.

5. New Business

5a. Presentation and Discussion of Board of Education's FY2021 Budget:

The proposed Board of Education's FY2021 Budget can be viewed at https://www.boltonpublicschools.com/board_of_education/budget_information.

Superintendent Heckt reviewed the components of the Board of Education's FY2021 Budget power point presentation. The proposed BOE budget for FY2021 reflects a percentage increase of 3.68% or \$527,307.00, with the largest increase in benefits and reductions in the Special Education and Administrative/business budgets.

Other parts of the BOE budget reviewed by Superintendent Heckt included total projected grant awards/Projected revenues, Capital items proposals, enrollment projections and the 2015-2020 Strategic plan.

Superintendent Heckt concluded her presentation by stating she is proud of the amazing work of the staff.

Questions from the board included the areas of projected State Grants (Choice monies) and the Capital proposal for the BHS Soccer field.

E. Bradley thanked the BOE and Superintendent Heckt for the informative budget presentation.

5b. Appropriation/Reauthorization of Capital Expenditures:

First Selectman Pierog reported that the Capital Acquisition, Planning, And Allocation Committee (CAPA) met and approved a Capital Improvement Plan for FY2021 totaling \$1,399,969. Total taxpayer ask would be \$567,969.00, a tax increase of one and one third mills.

Town of Bolton, CT Funds Available for Redistribution Spring 2020:

First Selectman Pierog noted the funds below in the Capital Reserve Fund represent totals that are left over from other projects. While there is still more money to be found in the Capital Reserve Fund, the other dollars are still awaiting use as part of some other project. It has been found by the town's Finance Department that the following dollars can and should be brought back to town meeting to be assigned for some future use:

Bolton High School & Central Office Project: \$640,269.38
Capital Reserve Fund Town Building Repairs/Upgrades \$103,310.34
BOE Building Repairs/Upgrades \$20,262.25
BOS Equipment Replacement/Repairs \$28,870.68
BOE Equipment Replacement/Repairs \$188.50
BOS Vehicle Replacement/Repairs \$46,154.25
BOE Vehicle Replacement/Repairs \$13,125.41
Air Conditioning \$10,766.52
Communication Equipment \$31,594.03
Parking Lot Repaving \$3,146.54
Open Space \$8,611.43 Subtotal: \$266,029.95
GRAND TOTAL: \$906,299.33

First Selectman Pierog reported the BOS and CAPA require approval from the BOF per Town Charter to send \$832,000.00 of this total to Town Meeting to be reallocated for future use.

K. Gourley MOVED that the \$832,000.00 be sent to Town Meeting. R. Munroe SECONDED.

Discussion followed. First Selectman Pierog explained that capital reserve monies cannot be returned to general fund and must stay as capital expenditure as per Chapter 8.10 of Town Charter. First Selectman Pierog said she will share explanation of this in the Bolton Bulletin and on social media for the public.

E. Bradley commented the format of holding a town meeting may be different, given the current pandemic crisis. First Selectman Pierog said the timeline is to tentatively schedule a town meeting to occur immediately before the next regular BOS meeting on April 7, 2020.

MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

First Selectman Pierog said there has been no information yet from the governor on how municipalities can hold town meetings. The Town has five days from today until the legal notice has to be published in order to hold a Town Meeting on April 7th. She will update the BOF as soon as she has information of any changes in meeting procedures authorized by the governor.

Discussion followed on continuing the budget process. The governor has said meetings and public hearings could be held remotely as long as the meeting recording can be made available in 48 hours on the Town's website. Orders from the governor include extending the budget process by 30 days per action of the BOS. First Selectman Pierog indicated she would call an emergency BOS meeting if the BOF wants this 30-day extension.

Board discussion followed on the pros and cons of an requesting an extension of time and other virtual platforms that could be used to accommodate a large group of participants. Consensus of the board at this time is to proceed with the budget process as scheduled in the budget calendar, with the option to ask the BOS for a 30-day extension in the future.

5c. Charter Revision Discussion:

E. Bradly reported on an email she received from the Charter Revision Finance and Taxation Sub-committee. The sub-committee would like to meet with the BOF in the near future. The Charter Revision Committee is looking at the section of the Charter that deals with BOF's responsibilities roles and responsibilities. E. Bradley said she will download the attachment she received with the email and send to the members. She will review the meeting schedule for a date the BOF could meet with Charter Revision Finance and Taxation sub-committee.

6. Ongoing Business:

6a. Discussion of FY2020 and FY2021 Revenue (discussed under agenda item 4)

6b. FY2021 Budget Calendar: E. Bradley said additional budget discussion meetings could be added to the calendar if necessary.

R. Munroe asked if town residents could be notified that the Resident Assistance Fund is available for those in need. J. Kelly said he would include the information on the fund in the next special bulletin.

6c. Shared Services: Superintendent Heckt thanked the Town staff for dealing with recent community issues.

E. Bradley added she is proud of the Town and asked that participants provide feedback on this virtual meeting to herself or Administrative Officer J. Kelly.

7. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

Next Meetings:

March 26, 2020 – Special Meeting – Virtual Platform

March 31, 2020 – Special Meeting – Virtual Platform **(THIS IS A TUESDAY)**

April 16, 2020 – Regular Meeting – Location to be determined

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: Susan Pike, Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Scott Rich, Director of Business and Finance Kusal Huynh, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt, Andrew Broneil, and Nathan Levine.

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Town Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly, and Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins.

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. with roll call of participants. She clarified that members of the public could call in to the meeting but would not be seen visually.

2. Public Participation: E. Bradley requested that S. Pierog give an update on the state of COVID-19 regulations and any news coming out of the governor's office regarding new regulations. S. Pierog mentioned that not much has occurred over the course of the past week with regard to executive orders that would affect Bolton. S. Pierog mentioned that the Bond Commission has approved the \$200,000 bond for the Town Aid Road grant and additional aid such as Municipal In-Aid and LOCIP. K. Heckt gave an update concerning executive order 7R, concerning payment of bus companies, and mentioned that the school had been part of a Q&A to explain this. The schools are closed until at least the 20th of May under current executive orders.

Ross Lally arrived at 7:22.

3. Approval of Minutes: E. Bradley stated that, in the interest of time, it may behoove the Board to table the approval of the minutes from the past 5 meetings in order to save time at this meeting.

Motion made by R. DePietro, seconded by R. Munroe, to table approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

Voting for: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Voting against: None

Motion carries, 7-0.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports:

- a. Tax Collection Summary: J. Collins presented the tax collector's report, stating that the current yearly levy is at 101.85%, compared to the 99.97% of the previous year. This change comes from the fact that adjustments have not yet been completed. R. Munroe asked if there was any change from last month. J. Collins stated that there has been no change since the information given at the previous meeting, but that the numbers presented at this meeting were good as of the March 31st. R. Munroe asked again if the net collection of \$17,495,086 had changed since the previous meeting. J. Collins clarified that numbers presented here were for the end of the prior month, and this was clarified as the point of confusion.

J. Collins then presented the March Revenue statement, stating that income had slowed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. J. Collins stated that further information concerning the town's income would be forthcoming to help the BOF decide on the mil rate for the upcoming fiscal year. E. Bradley noted that, due to COVID-19, revenues that the town expected to be lower included: interest income, building use fees, library fees, town clerk fees, and municipal center rent. S. Pierog

noted that \$24,859 in Municipal projects had been approved by the bonds commission. Town Aid Road grant has also been approved but is not part of the general fund revenue.

- b. Town Update: J. Kelly presented the 2020 expenditures as of March 31. J. Kelly indicated 3 lines of spending that are currently trending higher than in previous years - these were Data Processing, Fire Commission, and Conservation. Data Processing fees have been higher than normal because of a large number of long term contracts that had been paid in the past month. Conservation is trending high, but is expected to balance due to reduced clerk fees over the next month. Fire Commission fees have historically been high. J. Kelly next presented the Town Budget transfers from April, the majority of which were used to cover payroll lines due to changes in staffing. Additional transfers were made to rent temporary housing for first responders to the COVID-19 crisis who may need to quarantine and cannot return home during the pandemic.
- c. Board of Education Update: K. Heckt spoke first to the memo, received by the BOF, regarding the transfer of \$22,000 in funds from Electricity to Supplies and Repairs and Maintenance in an effort to address unexpected operations emerging from COVID-19. K. Heckt next spoke to school budget expenditures as of March 31 - the school's budget is currently 68% expended for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. K. Heckt was asked by R. Tuthill if the school was reporting transfers within CHOICE Monies according to the spending plan. K. Heckt stated that such reporting has not historically been done, and that the choice to do so would be up to the BOE. R. Lally asked for clarification concerning what percentage of the BOE budget was made up of the CHOICE monies and was this not currently being reported on. E. Bradley clarified that the % of the budget was small, though did not know the exact number off the top of her head. R. Munroe stated that ~\$400,000 of grant money was anticipated this year. R. Tuthill expressed his concerns about CHOICE monies because they directly affect the BOE's expenditures, but E. Bradley mentioned that the CHOICE funds are used as an expense offset, and that although education costs have been rising, the grants offset that rising cost. K. Heckt confirmed E. Bradley's statements, and also spoke more about how CHOICE funds are acquired and spent.

5. Discussion Re: FY 2021 Budgets (Revenues & Expenditures): E. Bradley spoke to the progress that the Board of Finance has made over the past few meeting – starting with the budget gap of \$704,124 at the April 2 meeting, the board had managed to reduce that gap in the following meeting to only \$19,575 via revised revenues, givebacks from the BOS, BOE, unspent contingency funds and the temporary loan and expenses that were not needed because we adopted a budget by July 1. R. Tuthill asked for clarification on the where the \$1,280,488 of Cash Surplus available for Appropriation came from. He knows that part of it was from the town and BOE under expending but is uncertain about the remainder. S. Pierog noted that the value arises from the most recent audit, where revenues were higher and expenses were less than expected. R. Tuthill noted that if they reduced the contingency budget for the following year the projected budget gap would be closed.

E. Bradley turned the discussion to just this topic - what should the contingency value be for the coming fiscal year? E. Bradley referenced points raised by R. Lally and K. Heckt in previous meetings, concerning the uncertainty of the world at the moment due to COVID-19 and the importance of having sufficient contingency should expected revenues fall through or expenses rise.

J. Kelly offered a sampling of contingency values and bond ratings from surrounding communities for comparison purposes. Bolton's most recent budget featured a contingency fund that was .41% of the total budget, which was similar to the neighboring towns of Columbia and Marlborough (both having a .38% contingency).

E. Bradley spoke to a situation that arose in Bolton several years ago wherein the town chose to increase the

contingency fund in the budget due to inherent uncertainties in state economics. This ended positively for the town, as the action was viewed as being fiscally responsible and improved the town's Bond rating.

K. Gourley mentioned that she had heard of a time when the contingency fund was at \$250,000, and E. Bradley confirmed that this was the situation that she had been referring to. R. Munroe mentioned, however, that historically the contingency fund had often been much lower than this - totaling only \$25,000 for many years.

R. Lally suggested that looking at the extremes was unlikely to be beneficial, as such extremes were unlikely to happen. Despite this, he surmised that there would be many rising expenses in the COVID influenced economy and reduced income for the town and potential cash flow problems. R. Lally suggested that going up to 2% of expenditures is likely unnecessary, but it might be prudent to increase the contingency above the currently discussed \$91,000.

J. Collins shared with the board in addition to the concerns of R. Lally, a large number of unemployment claims have been coming through lately, and there could be a rise in individuals coming onto the Town/BOE's insurance plan due to loss of coverage on their spouse's insurance because of unemployment.

R. Tuthill asked for clarification on what 2% of expenditure would look like for a contingency fund - E. Bradley stated that the value would be \$454,271. To achieve that value of contingency in the budget, it would translate to a mil rate of 39.80. Conversely, raising the contingency to \$250,000 would translate to a mil rate of 39.34 if taxes were used to finance the increased contingency budget, or \$180,000 in cuts to hold mil rate constant at 39.00.

Motion made by R. Lally, seconded by R. DePietro, to set the contingency for the 2020-2021 fiscal year at \$250,000.

R. Tuthill voiced his agreement for this value, and mentioned the existence of the town's rainy day fund of \$1,600,000 should the contingency fund not be sufficient to cover the unknowns in the coming year. R. Munroe expressed his support for a higher contingency value, but indicated concerns about the cost to the taxpayer in these hard economic times and advocated aiming for a contingency value of \$180,000 and a 0% increase in taxes. R. Lally concurred about the issues R. Munroe felt that raising taxes under the present circumstances would be the inappropriate thing to do if it is at all avoidable.

While K. Gourley agreed that it would be ideal to avoid raising taxes at this time, adequate spending is important to prevent the issues caused by COVID-19, and preparatory spending is worth more than reactionary spending when it comes to preventing damage to the community. E. Bradley mentioned that costs are going to rise due to higher medical insurance and unemployment claims, and the town needs to be prepared for them.

R. Tuthill stated that the country will almost certainly experience a second and potentially a third wave of COVID outbreaks, and that the town should be very cautious about having sufficient contingency. R. Tuthill also thinks that the majority of the \$180,000 needed to finance a \$250,000 contingency should come in the form of cuts to and givebacks from various town boards.

Voting for: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Voting against: Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr.

Motion carries, 5-2.

Having affirmed to set the contingency fund at \$250,000 E. Bradley posed the question of funding this line item to the BOF.

Motion made by R. Tuthill, seconded by R. DePietro, to raise the mil rate by an estimated value of .13 to 39.13 (with the intent of generating \$90,000 in tax revenue), and to cut the BOS budget by \$30,000 and the BoE budget by \$60,000.

R. Tuthill argued that the BOE and BOS have traditionally underrun their budgets by far more than \$90,000 together, and that this request would not be too difficult on either body. R. Lally, C. Danna, K. Gourley, and R. DePietro agreed, and echoed the sentiment that everyone has to sacrifice in order to pull together through the COVID-19 crisis, and the town boards will tighten their belts alongside the taxpayers through this situation.

Voting for: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro, Charles Danna Jr.

Voting against: Vice-Chair Robert Munroe

Motion carries, 6-1.

6. Consider and Act on: FY 2021 Proposed Budget for Public Hearing (Possible Action): E. Bradley asked J. Collins if it was appropriate to make a motion to go to public hearing with a specific value, to which J. Collins replied in the affirmative.

Motion made by R. Tuthill, seconded by K. Gourley, to go to public hearing with a proposed budget of \$22,873,544

Voting for: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro, Charles Danna Jr.

Voting against: Vice-Chair Robert Munroe

Motion carries, 6-1.

E. Bradley thanked everyone involved in this process for their hard work, especially during this difficult time in which meetings had to be held remotely.

7. Review of Budget Calendar: E. Bradley examined the budget calendar and determined that the budget needed to be filed with the Town Clerk by Wednesday, 4/22/20. This will set the public hearing for **Tuesday, 4/28/20 at 7:00 PM** - it will be a meeting via zoom, open to the public, and comments and questions from the public will be encouraged. After the public hearing, the BOF will convene for a special meeting to discuss the public hearing.

The BOF has a scheduled special meeting on **Thursday, 4/30/20 at 7:15 PM**, to discuss any changes in the COVID situation and to finalize the budget if needed.

R. Tuthill asked whether or not a referendum was needed at this point. S. Pierog stated that the BOS has authorized the BOF to make final decisions regarding the budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year due to the COVID-19 crisis. Should large public gatherings no longer be prohibited by the 12th of May, the public referendum on the budget will be held on May 26th. Should it not be, the BOF will make and approve the final budget per the authorization of the BOS.

Next Meetings:

- April 28, 2020 Public Hearing/Board of Finance Special Meeting (if Necessary) **7:00 PM (THIS IS A TUESDAY)**
- April 30, 2020 Special Meeting

8. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the special meeting at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Michael James Stankov

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Stankov", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Charles Danna Jr. Ross Lally, Kristen Gourley, and Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: Susan Pike, Anne Decker, Christopher Davey, Scott Rich, Director of Business and Finance Kusal Huynh, and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Administrative Officer Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

Others Present: Nick Lavigne, Steven Toomey

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m. with roll call of participants.

2. Public Participation: First Selectman S. Pierog reported the town meeting situation for Bolton has not been yet addressed by the Governor.

She said Governor Lamont issued Executive Order 75 yesterday, a section of which addresses suspension and modification of tax deadlines and collection which reads as follows:

“6. Suspension and Modification of Tax Deadlines and Collection Efforts. Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of Chapter 204 of the Connecticut General Statutes or of any special act, charter, home-rule ordinance, local ordinance or other local law, there shall be established two programs to offer support to eligible taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents who have been economically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Such programs shall be known as the "Deferment Program" and the "Low Interest Rate Program." Each municipality, as defined in section 7-148 of the general statutes, by determination of its local legislative body, or, in any town in which the legislative body is a town meeting, by a vote of the board of selectmen, shall participate in one or both programs and shall notify the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management no later than April 25, 2020, about which program or programs it is electing to participate in. a. Deferment Program. During the period of March 10, 2020, the date that I declared the public health and civil preparedness emergency, through and including July 1, 2020, municipalities participating in the Deferment Program shall offer to eligible taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents a deferment by ninety (90) days of any taxes on real property, personal property or motor vehicles, or municipal water, sewer and electric rates, charges or assessments for such tax, rate, charge, or assessment from the time that it became due and payable. Eligible taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents are those that attest to or document significant economic impact by CO VID-19, and/ or those that document they are providing relief to those significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall issue guidance as to which taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents shall be considered eligible for the Deferment Program, but participating municipalities may, upon approval of its local legislative body, or, in any town in which the legislative body is a town meeting, by a vote of the board of selectmen, extend eligibility for the deferment program to other categories of taxpayers, businesses, nonprofits, and residents.”

3. Discussion Re: FY 2021 Budgets (Revenues & Expenditures):

The board members reviewed and discussed the Town of Bolton Proposed Budget for FY2021 draft. The proposed budget reflects \$1,280,488.00 cash available from FY2020 that would roll into next year. Total FY2021 revenue is proposed at \$20,690,425.00 and total expenditures are \$22,871,843.00. This would result in a \$638,134.00 shortfall which includes rolling in contingency funds (\$66,000) if not used this year.

J. Collins reported the DMV is waiving motor vehicle registrations at this time and other revenues will be down due to less foot traffic in town departments.

The board members discussed the FY2021 projected BOE grants budget presented by Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt. Members discussed presenting the information in a way clearer to the public.

Superintendent of Schools K. Heckt noted, in the event of another upsurge of the virus in the fall, the BOE would not be in a position provide a chrome book to each student and may need more funds to purchase additional chrome books if available. There is currently a shortage. She will present an alternative scenario budget plan to the board to reflect current circumstances.

E. Bradley said there is not enough information at this time to make decisions on the revised figures for this year's budget and next year's proposed budget. Board discussion followed on adopting a budget in these uncertain times. E. Bradley asked the members to bring their creative thoughts on where the board needs to take the budget for discussion at the next meeting.

Members thanked J. Collins, J. Kelly and S. Pierog and the rest of the financial staff for putting the revenue documents together for tonight's meeting on short notice.

4. Consider and Act on: FY 2021 Proposed Budget for Public Hearing (Possible Action): No action taken.

5. Review of Budget Calendar: R. Munroe MOVED to eliminate the special 4/8/2020 meeting from the budget calendar. K. Gourley SECONDED. By roll call, MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

Next Meetings:

April 9, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm –Zoom Virtual Platform (if necessary)
April 14, 2020 - Special Meeting – 7:15 pm –Zoom Virtual Platform (if necessary)
April 16, 2020 – Regular Meeting – 7:15 pm - Town Hall or Virtual Platform

6. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2020– 7:15 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes

BOF Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Richard Tuthill, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe (7:28 pm), Charles Danna Jr., Ross Lally (7:23 pm) and Kristen Gourley

BOF Members Absent: Robert DePietro

Board of Education Members Present: Christopher Davey and Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: First Selectman Sandra Pierog, Administrative Officer Joshua Steele Kelly, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman E. Bradley at 7:15 p.m.

2. Public Participation:

First Selectman S. Pierog shared information on the Governor's two executive orders (7C and 7I) issued regarding municipal budgets. The 30-day exception is mandatory for towns whose budget process must be completed by 5/15/2020. Bolton has until 5/24/2020 to complete the budget process per Town Charter. First Selectman S. Pierog said the BOS will reschedule the budget referendum to occur after 5/15 and before 5/24, the Charter deadline.

After conferring with Town Counsel, First Selectman S. Pierog was informed that neither executive order 7C or 7I cover Town meetings. The Town budget meeting cannot be held in a virtual format due to the need for the public to vote on the budget and will probably be rescheduled when a meeting could actually be held. First Selectman S. Pierog said she is waiting for additional information from governor's office and will keep the board informed. She said the budget public hearing can be held using the virtual format per the Governor's executive orders 7C and 7I. The public hearing on the budget is scheduled for 4/28/2020.

Superintendent K. Heckt reported the students and staff started with distance learning last Monday and commended her staff for their hard work. She shared that the schools have received a generous donation of \$20,000.00 from Simonize USA (Foundation?) toward the purchase of 85 larger Chromebooks for the teaching staff. The Chromebooks the teachers are currently using will be collected, cleaned up, and re-distributed for student use.

3. Presentation and Discussion of Board of Selectmen's FY2021: General Government, Capital & Debt budgets:

Details of the FY2021 Town budgets can be viewed on the Board of Finance Town website page at www.bolton.govoffice.com under 2020 BOF Agendas and Minutes.

Administrative Officer J. Kelly presented a general overview of the proposed FY 2021 Town budgets to the board. He said the goals the Town is striving for are transparency, accessibility, modernization, efficiency and resourcefulness. The proposed BOS Town budgets reflect a 1.78% total increase.

General Government- Town Proper: Administrative Officer J. Kelly shared the following Town proper budget highlights:

- Majority of Staff see a 2.75% wage increase; Medical Insurance costs up 19.5%.
- Addition of Full-Time Program Coordinator for Recreation and Senior Center.
- Money appropriated to allow for Ordinances and Regulations to be electronically codified and maintained.
- Deputy Town Clerk being made full-time to allow for more record-related projects to move forward.
- Fire Marshal's budget raised to bring town into greater compliance.
- Decreased Administration budget will still allow for more services to be offered, including the development of a town magazine and the hiring of a graduate research assistant.
- Tax Collector's Office transitioning from a year-round, part-time position to seasonal staff.
- Fire Commission budget raised to allow for more cancer-preventing protective gear.

Board members emphasized to the public that the Town and BOE are doing due diligence in keeping medical insurance costs down.

The top five increases by dollar proposed in the Town budget are in the personnel services, (\$66,896), Land Use & Emergency Management (\$25,904), and Town building operations (\$23,145), Fire Commission (\$20,684) and Senior & Social Services (\$20,355) line items.

The top five decreases by dollar are in the Recreation (-\$33,185), Refuse services (-\$22,094), Tax Collector (-\$20,816), Highway Department (-\$19,842), and Administration (-\$19,228) line items.

E. Bradley asked if any major changes to the Town proper side of the budget could be seen due to the COVID-19 crisis. Administrative Officer J. Kelly responded possibly in the Emergency Management line. R. Lally commented many town residents have less or no income due to the reality of the current health crisis situation and the BOF needs to be mindful of this during the budget process. K. Gourley commented some things can't be compromised on and part of the BOF responsibility is to consider safety, consider liability, and to take into consideration the return on investments.

Debt Costs: Administrative Officer J. Kelly reviewed Bolton's debt outlook and current debt obligations. The debt costs total \$1,090,995, an increase of 0.87%.

Capital (CIP): Administrative Officer J. Kelly reported the Town has a five-year FY 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan. For FY 2021, the total cost the Town and BOE are hoping to fund is \$1,399,969.00 with a \$567,969.00 taxpayer ask after using \$832,000 in funds proposed for re-allocation from "stale"/completed CIP projects. Per Ch 8.7 (C)(1)(b) of the Town Charter, the Capital Reserve Fund must have between 1-4 mills allocated to it each year.

The proposed Capital Improvement items for FY 2021 total \$25,720.00. Discussion followed on the Fire Suppression Water Supply Town Project funding of \$50,000 yearly in the five-year plan. Administrative

Officer J. Kelly referred the Board to the detailed document of the proposed capital improvement plan available in their meeting packet.

In FY 2022, Town is expected to bond out for several items totaling \$2,120,000. Over the five-year CIP period the total taxpayer ask is projected at \$3,054,931.00. Administrative Officer J. Kelly shared the list of the CIP items with proposed funding in FY 2021.

Members of the board noted the public should understand the capital reserve fund is money in the bank that can only be withdrawn for a large capital project and is not new money the town would be asking for.

The top five capital projects are for Bolton High School (BHS) Tennis courts (\$580,000), roof replacement and masonry (\$236,000) at Bolton Center School (BCS), Town Garage paving (\$70,000), highway plow truck replacement (\$70,000) (paid over 3 payments – this is year 2 of 3) and purchase of a BOE stake body truck (\$55,000).

Questions/board comments on budget proposal:

R. Lally thanked staff for the presentation. From the point of view of the public, he asked if there is a need for a separate fleet stake truck for the BOE and could consideration be made to consolidate the BOE and Town fleets. Superintendent K. Heckt responded usually both the Town and BOE use the stake truck. First Selectman S. Pierog added the vehicle would be used sometimes by the town to move equipment around and would probably be used daily.

K. Gourley commented the tennis court repair at BHS is a safety and liability issue.

E. Bradley thanked everyone who put time and effort into this budget presentation.

4. Discussion on FY2021 Budget:

Chief Financial Officer J. Collins reported said she is still looking at revenues since departments have been closed to the public and revenues are expected to be down. Going forward, she will look at next year's revenues as though everything will be back to normal.

Administrative Officer J. Kelly reported all town facilities are opened for staff, with most working from home. Beginning Monday, March 30, 2020, residents will be able to request and take out library materials online for pick up outside the library at designated times. All returned books will be isolated offsite for 4 days before being put back into circulation. He said the Town is not planning for library staff layoffs during the virus outbreak.

5. Review of Budget Calendar: E. Bradley said next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at 7:15 p.m. using the zoom meeting platform. Superintendent K. Heckt noted the next BOE regular meeting is scheduled for April 8th and the BOE members would not be available to participate in the BOF meeting scheduled that night.

Administrative Officer J. Kelly will reach out to members having difficulty connecting to virtual meetings. E. Bradley is looking for feedback to make this type of meeting easier and more effective for everyone.

6. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the regular meeting at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

Next Meetings:

March 31, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm - Virtual Platform **(THIS IS A TUESDAY)**

April 2, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm – Virtual Platform (If necessary)

April 8, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm – Town Hall or Virtual Platform **(THIS IS A WEDNESDAY)** (If necessary)

April 9, 2020 – Special Meeting – 7:15 pm – Town Hall or Virtual Platform if necessary)

April 16, 2020 – Regular Meeting – 7:15 pm - Town Hall or Virtual Platform

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.