

**BOLTON BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022– 7:15 pm
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEBSITE PLATFORM
Minutes**

Board of Finance Members Present: Chairman Emily Bradley, Vice-Chair Robert Munroe, Mather Clarke, Kristen Gourley and Charles Danna Jr.

Board of Finance Members Absent: Ross Lally

Board of Selectmen Present: First Selectman Pamela Sawyer

Board of Education Members Present: Superintendent of Schools Kristin Heckt

Staff Present: Interim Town Administrator Jim Rupert, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins and Board Clerk Linda McDonald

Others Present: Amanda Gordon, Alex Rivera, Nick Lavigne from Community Voice Channel (CVC)

1. Call to Order: E. Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

2. Public Participation: No public participation.

3. Approval of Minutes:

3.a Approval of December 22, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes:

The following amendment was made to the minutes of December 22, 2021: move “Nick Lavigne from Community Voice Channel (CVC)” from “Staff Present” to “Others Present”.

R. Munroe MOVED to approve the December 22, 2021 regular meeting minutes as amended. C. Danna SECONDED. By roll call vote, the MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 with K. Gourley abstaining.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports:

4.a Board of Education Update: Superintendent Heckt reported, as of December 31, 2021, the BOE budget is 40% expended for FY 2022. She informed the board the BOE does not expect any excess cost grant reimbursement for the current year as there are no students exceeding the current state projected cost threshold of \$88,507. The BOE has accounted for that in the Special Education budget and is holding steady at this point in time.

Superintendent Heckt reported that BOE had two large transfers. One transfer was for \$30,000 from salaries to operations. The funds are needed to fix things at the schools that are surfacing, partly due to the age of the buildings. The second is a \$8,000 transfer from salaries to systems management for EastCONN to manage the schools’ software licenses, administration and support. She explained, with setting up remote learning during the pandemic, the schools had to implement online components that had not been needed prior. The BOE kept many of the additional components because they have been beneficial to teaching and learning and for the students. The schools do not

have the capacity to manage the additional online components, so the BOE has contracted with EastCONN and the \$8,000 will cover the second half of FY2022. Superintendent Heckt made the BOF aware this will be an additional ask of \$16,000 in the FY2023 BOE budget.

Superintendent Heckt said the schools are still not fully staffed. She reported a school psychologist has been hired and will start soon. Superintendent Heckt said staff and students are to be commended for their resiliency throughout these challenging times.

- 4.b Tax Collection Summary: P. Sawyer reported as of December 31, 2021, the current overall tax levy collected was at 98.27%.

E. Bradley noted the initial tax bills were sent out to residents last year based on last year's mil rate. The incremental that was left after the new mil rate was approved is due February 1, 2022. Many residents paid the full amount last year based on the new mil rate. For those who had outstanding balances, paper notices went out at an additional cost to the tax collection budget. Problems arose when several residents who received paper bills overpaid the amount, (double paying the full amount), not just the difference owed. As a result of these overpayments, the Town has to refund \$40,000 to those people. (\$20,000 from overpayments in December 2021 and \$20,000 in January 2022.) These refunds will be reflected in the next two months' tax collection reports.

- 4.c Town Update: Revenues – J. Collins reported the tuition part will decrease from fewer Columbia students coming to Bolton but a large permit fee taken in in the Building Department has made up for that. The only issue she sees is with decreased revenue due to the extremely low interest rates.

J. Rupert said the town is looking into using ESSER funds for infrastructure, specifically a waterline from Manchester into Bolton Notch. He explained the Town is trying to find a way to use the funds to benefit the residents over a long period of time. This area has intense business occupancy and this project would help stabilize tax revenues and properties in the area could be business developed. J. Rupert said private partners may be willing to invest as well.

Expenses – J. Rupert reported the Town is 40.78% expensed as of December 31, 2021. He said the town's expenses are where they are to be expected at this point in in the fiscal year.

- 4.d Other: No other updates.

5. On-going Business:

- 5.a Budget calendar: The members reviewed the draft budget calendar for the FY 2023 budget review process. After discussion, J. Collins said she will correct the dates for the schools Spring recess to April 11-15 and offer alternative budget review meeting dates for dates on the calendar with conflicts for review and approval at the February meeting.

6. New Business

6.a Discussion and Possible Appointment of BOF Member:

E. Bradley reported the Bolton Republican Town Committee endorsed Alex Rivera as the Board of Finance member to replace William Roddy, who recently resigned from the BOF. The Bolton Democratic Town Committee endorsed Amanda Gordon for the vacancy. Per Town Charter the BOF may appoint a replacement to fill the vacancy.

Amanda Gordon and Alex Rivera introduced themselves to the board and presented brief backgrounds of their qualifications.

R. Munroe MOVED to appoint Alex Rivera as Board of Finance member. C. Danna SECONDED.

K. Gourley MOVED to appoint Amanda Gordon Board of Finance member. E. Bradley SECONDED.

E. Bradley took roll call vote as follows:

R. Munroe, C. Danna, and M. Clarke cast votes for Alex Rivera. K. Gourley and E. Bradley cast votes for Amanda Gordon.

Alex Rivera was appointed new Board of Finance member. The members thanked Amanda Gordon and Alex Rivera for their interest in serving on the BOF.

7. Adjournment: E. Bradley adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Next Meetings:

February 17, 2022 @ 7:15 pm

March 17, 2022 @ 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald, Board Clerk

Linda H. McDonald.

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