

**TOWN OF BOLTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
7:15 P. M., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025
*TOWN HALL/ZOOM**

Finance Committee Members Present at Town Hall/Zoom: Chair Ross Lally, Member Amanda Gordon (left 8:40 p.m.), Member Rhea Klein, Member Tyler Egner, Member Robert Morra, Member Ashley Phelan (Zoom). Absent was Member Chris Connelly.

Staff Present Via Town Hall/Zoom: Board of Education Superintendent David Caruso, Board Clerk Mary Johnston, Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins, and Selectmen Rodney Fournier.

Others Present Via Town Hall/Zoom: Jim Loersch

1. Call to Order

R. Lally called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

R. Lally advised the Committee he will not vote on agenda items due to a conflict of interest.

2. Public Participation:

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

3a. July 2, 2025, Special Meeting

R. Morra MOVED to adopt the July 2, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. R. Klein SECONDED the motion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5:0:0

3b. July 23, 2025, Special Meeting

R. Morra MOVED to adopt the July 23, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. R. Klein SECONDED the motion. A. Gordon added a clarifying statement to these Minutes as a result from questions by the residents “the previous mil rate calculation of 31.91 for this proposed budget was miscalculated by the Director of Finance because it did not properly account for the liability from people who chose to have their tax refund applied to their taxes. This is the calculation that is not normally included in the mil rate and was the result of the tax issues from the prior fiscal year.” The Committee was in agreement with this statement as part of tonight’s meeting Minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5:0:0.

3c. July 30, 2025, Special Meeting

T. Egner MOVED to adopt the July 30, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. A. Phelan SECONDED the motion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5:0:0.

3d. August 13, 2025, Special Meeting

R. Morra MOVED to adopt the August 13, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. A. Phelan SECONDED the motion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5:0:0.

4. Elected Official and Town Staff Reports

4a. Board of Education Update

A. Phelan reported as of June 30, 2025, the Board of Education has expended 96% of the approved budget or \$15,909,860 as compared to 95% last year. There is an under expenditure of \$636,297, which is an increase of \$51,400 from the prior projection. The Board of Education committed \$400,000 towards the FY26 Budget, therefore the revised under expenditure after the Board of Education's commitment is \$236,297. D. Caruso reported everything for the current budget is looking good so and that one teacher vacancy position has been advertised. A. Gordon asked if the two positions that was voted to eliminate had occurred. D. Caruso replied to the positions have been eliminated from the budget. A. Gordon asked where that money had been applied in this budget. D. Caruso replied the savings was applied to several line items.

4b. Tax Collection Summary

J. Collins reported on the June 30, 2025, tax collections with a percentage of 100.21%; July 31, 2025, received 1.95%; and August 30, 2025, received 75.30%. R. Lally stated the tax bills have not been sent out yet. The Committee discussed motor vehicle tax bills and appeal process.

4c. Town Update

J. Collins reported the June 30, 2025, Revenues collected ended at 100.04%. J. Collins reported 63.22% has been collected through August 30, 2025. R. Lally pointed out approximately \$4.9 million short in collections. The Committee held a discussion on the Other Grants revenues that are showing \$0 collected in August. J. Collins said grant funds should be posted monthly. A. Phelan asked J. Collins to send an email to D. Caruso and herself as to why no monies were being posted. R. Lally asked to be copied on this email. A. Gordon requested an explanation on why this is not being done. J. Collins reported 2.74% of Other Town Revenue has been collected as of August 30, 2025. A. Gordon asked to see trends for the last 10 years for the Town and Board of Education. R. Lally asked about Land Use to which J. Collins replied it was due to a contract. T. Egner asked about Fire Commission being low compared to previous years. R. Morra replied it is due to tax monies not being collected yet. The Committee discussed the Month End Balances through August 2025 and the cost if the balance goes below \$5 million. R. Lally suggested inviting banking partners to discuss interest projections. R. Lally asked J. Collins to invite the banking partners to the October meeting to discuss interest projections. The Committee will provide questions prior to the meeting. A. Phelan asked about interest rates summary. J. Collins replied the Selectmen has this information and can be provided to the Committee on the monthly Interest report. The Committee reviewed the Interest Reports for FY 25 and FY26 with a difference of approximately \$70,000 shortfall for the current fiscal year. The Committee discussed the projections for interest collections and possible reductions. R.

Lally pointed out to be aware of revenue shortfalls and where these shortfalls could come out of the budget. J. Collins said the Town's budget would be frozen should shortfalls occur. A. Gordon suggested having a policy should the Town budget is frozen due to revenue shortfalls and unexpected expenditures.

4d. Other

R. Klein requested more discussion on implementing two payment option for taxes after hearing from residents. A. Gordon requested Town staff put together a pros/cons list to present to the Selectmen for consideration. R. Morra said there is the loss of compounding of interest for this proposal. A. Gordon asked about the bank providing an analysis report of interest. J. Collins replied this information is hard to project. R. Lally pointed out there is a cost to maintain services. A. Phelan suggested having the two payments for taxes that taxpayers can elect to participate.

5. Ongoing Business

5a. Communication

R. Lally discussed the possible changes to the Committee and Selectmen members and the feedback from taxpayers as to why no one was being held accountable for mistakes made during the budget process. R. Lally also discussed tax rates, process between Board of Selectmen and Board of Education, and how to get taxpayers to understand the possible impact of declining services. R. Morra added residents do not increase in taxes but values in property increased during revaluation. R. Lally stated the Town will not receive \$750,000 for motor vehicles due to lower mil rate and less interest collected. R. Lally stated the budget process for the next fiscal year will be starting shortly.

6. New Business

6a. Distribution and discussion of Financial Statements

J. Collins stated she has nothing to report other than they have been distributed. J. Collins stated any questions should be directed to the Auditor. R. Lally stated the Committee should put together their questions before meeting with the Auditor. J. Collins will schedule the meeting with the Auditor for the November meeting.

7. Adjournment

R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. R. Klein SECONDED the motion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: 4:0:0.

Respectfully submitted by Mary J. Johnston

Mary J. Johnston

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

SEE ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER.

