

**TOWN OF BOLTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2026
TOWN HALL/ZOOM**

Finance Committee Members Present Via Town Hall/ Zoom: Chair Ross Lally, Member Tyler Egner, Member David Cowles, Member Rodney Fournier, Member Melissa Wielandt, Member Benjamin Davies, Member Denay Johnston

Staff Present Via Zoom/In Person: Board of Education Superintendent David Caruso, Interim Finance Director Stephanie Smigala, Town Administrator Jim Rupert, Andrew Broneill, Board Clerk Mary Johnston

Others Present Via Zoom/In Person: Jim Loersch, Linda Armstrong, Betty Caruso, Amanda Gordon, Melissa Battles, Rebecca Harmon, Callie Dannhauser, Daniel Freeman,

1. Call to Order

R. Lally called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Public Participation

Amanda Gordon strongly recommended that a list of non-union salaries be published on the Town's website. J. Rupert replied the information is available in the budget but can be difficult to locate. D. Cowles said this information should be readily available.

3. Ongoing Business

3a. Presentation of Referendum Results: Official report of the moderator regarding the budget vote on 5/19/2026.

R. Lally reported the referendum failed with a vote of 599 No and 397 Yes.

3b. Discuss and possibly act on budget revisions for a second referendum

The Committee discussed the percentage of cuts to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education FY 2027 budgets. After considerate discussion on cuts, R. Fournier MOVED to use \$26,796,962 for the 2nd budget referendum with the following breakdown: Total Board of Education-\$17,209,402; Total Town Proper-\$7,423,598; Total Contingency Fund-\$50,000; Total Debt Service-\$1,421,514; and Total Capital Improvements-\$692,448. M. Wielandt SECONDED the motion.

Yeas: Fournier, Egner, Wielandt, Cowles, Davies, Johnston

Nays: None

Abstained: Lally

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1

3c. Discuss and possibly set special meeting for after the second referendum

D. Cowles MOVED to set June 3, 2026, as a Special Meeting after the second referendum.

R. Fournier SECONDED the motion.

Yeas: Fournier, Egner, Wielandt, Cowles, Davies, Johnston
Nays: None
Abstained: Lally
MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1

3d. Consider and possible action on the ballot question

D. Cowles MOVED to approve the following ballot question “Shall the Annual Budget for the Town of Bolton, Connecticut for the fiscal year 2027 as recommended by the Finance Committee in the amount of \$26,796,962 be adopted?”. M. Wielandt SECONDED the motion.

Yeas: Fournier, Egner, Wielandt, Cowles, Davies, Johnston
Nays: None
Abstained: Lally
MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1

4. New Business

4a. Discuss and possibly act on communications

The Committee discussed communication methods for the referendum. S. Smigala said she will update the one-page budget document that shows the changes made after each referendum. The Committee discussed adding non-binding questions to the ballot. R. Lally said he will work on this for the next referendum. D. Cowles discussed the importance of absentee voting. R. Lally said the State passed no excuse absentee voting recently. R. Fournier said with taxes going up to have social services available for those who have difficulty paying taxes. R. Lally will add this to his list. The Committee discussed property value projections impact and the balance between commercial and residential. R. Fournier reminded the Committee they cannot advocate for the referendum.

5. Adjournment: M. Wielandt MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m. D. Cowles SECONDED the motion.

Yeas: Fournier, Egner, Wielandt, Cowles, Davies, Johnston
Nays: None
Abstained: Lally
MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1

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.