

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN, REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2020, 7:00 P.M. - VIRTUAL
MINUTES**

		Present	Absent
First Selectman	Sandra Pierog	X	
Selectman	Robert Morra	X	
Selectman	Mike Eremita		X
Deputy First Selectman	Kim Miller		X
Selectman	Robert DePietro	X	
Administrative Officer (Staff)	Joshua Kelly	X	
Members of the Public			

Also present: Gary Silver, Jim Rupert, Nick Lavigne (CVC), Pam Sawyer, Kyle & Lori Paggioli, John Butrymovich, Bessy Reyna

1. Call to Order:

By: Sandra Pierog

Time: 7:01 p.m.

Place: Virtual

2. Public Comment:

Kyle and Lori Paggioli – have registered public comments inquiring about the hay ground at Heritage Farm and were present at the meeting. They have beef cows on Birch Mountain and want to expand the herd requiring them to secure a bit more feed for the cows. Pierog said the hay field at the Farm currently has a lease on it that can be renewed annually unless one of the parties notifies the other by November 1 to end the lease. This will be discussed in the Facilities committee about the possibility of going out to bid for the hay field. Pierog will have an answer for the Paggiolis by mid-September.

Response from Brett Gotler – wrote about increasing the recycling pickup to weekly. Pierog said until the Town is in a position to renegotiate the contract this is off the table.

3. Approval of Minutes:

June 2, 2020 Regular Meeting

Correction:

- Page 1, item 2 – add “Meyers, Country Club Road” after “Paula”.

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of the June 2, 2020 regular meeting as corrected.

By: Morra

Seconded: Pierog

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

4. Appointments:

Name	Type	Office	(New) Term Ending
Arlene Fiano	Reappointment	Heritage Farm Commission	7/1/2023
Beth A Harney	Reappointment	Heritage Farm Commission	7/1/2023
Ross Lally	Reappointment	Inland Wetlands Commission	7/1/2023
Carrie Concatelli	Reappointment	Senior Social Services Municipal Agent	7/1/2022
Craig Segar	Reappointment	Animal Control Officer	7/1/2021
Jerold Casida	Reappointment	Animal Control Officer	7/1/2021
Eric Boucher	Reappointment	Animal Control Officer	7/1/2021
Helen Totz	Reappointment	Assessor	7/1/2021
Jim Rupert	Reappointment	Building Inspector	7/1/2023
Milton Hathaway	Reappointment	Economic Development Commission	7/1/2023
Cheryl Udin	Reappointment	Senior Citizens Commission	7/1/2024

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the reappointments as listed above.

By: Pierog

Seconded: Morra

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

5. Correspondence:

None

6. Reports & Updates:

A. Subcommittee Reports

Pierog said the minutes were shared orally at the last meeting. The BOS should consider whether or not Bolton get involved with the net metering this month or wait until next year; she is not sure it will be offered next year. Pierog feels Bolton should sit this round out. The solar project is continuing for the high school. Pierog is hesitant about putting the Town into an agreement without vetting the entire agreement.

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen table the matter of net metering.

By: DePietro

Seconded: Morra

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

B. Properties and Facilities Report

Jim Rupert reported the Town Garage has gone through the semi-final inspection from a code perspective. He is working on issuing a Certificate of Occupancy.

C. Open Space Management & Acquisition

Pierog spoke to the landowner of the property we've been discussing and conveyed the offer. His reply was that was nowhere near his expectation.

D. Lower Bolton Lake Report

There was a weed treatment last week but there has been no report if it was successful. Solitude has two more treatments planned for this year.

E. FY 20 Budget Report

Gary Silver, new Media Coordinator for Bolton, gave a quick introduction. He graduated from UCONN in May. He has been doing a great job and has been responsive.

The report does show a large number at the bottom that appear to be left over funds. However, not all of the bills have been paid for FY 20. Most of the requested transfers have been factored in. Pierog said it is felt we will be well within our ability to deliver back to the Board of Finance the amount that was promised. The FEMA funds have not yet been applied for. When received that will help our surplus.

F. Other

None

7. Ongoing Business

A. Consider and possibly act on Budget Transfers and/or Appropriation Requests

Pierog said there are no transfers that require BOS action. A copy of the transfers approved by Pierog and Staff are in the meeting packet.

B. Other

None

8. New Business:

A. Consider and possibly act on the following:

1. The opening of Indian Notch Park

Pierog said the State Police trooper was at the park on this past Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. On Friday a large number of people were parking at the boat launch and walking over. The Trooper shooed them away. Bolton asked that the police not to issue tickets. Saturday was quiet. On Sunday, a car drove. The driver was told they were trespassing and escorted the car out of the park. It was discovered that someone smashed the lock on the gate. The Trooper reported this to

Pierog and they went to the park to secure the gate. The lock was replaced on Monday morning.

Staff provided documentation that summarizes the status of the park. This underscores that not much has changed since this matter was discussed at the June meeting. The virus is on a downward trend in Connecticut but this does put the BOS in a difficult position to help keep the state on the right track as the Governor pulls back on reopening. CT DEEP has made the intonation that the inland beaches will remain closed for the rest of the season. Staff outlined three options. Rough estimated costs were also provided along with the pros and cons of each option.

Pierog prefers option 3 – not opening the park. At a bare minimum we would need to put rangers or a security force at the park seven days a week during daylight hours. Jim Rupert feels an authoritative presence would be a positive impact. John Butrymovich is leaning more to option 3. Quotes from professional security firms are expected this week.

Motion: I move that the Bolton Board of Selectmen adopt Option 3 - Total Closure of Indian Notch Park for the remainder of the summer – and authorize Pierog and Staff to hire security to control access.

By: Pierog

Seconded: DePietro

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

2. Selecting a Bolton Poet Laureate

A brief video of Bessy (Magdalena) Reyna’s accomplishments was viewed. Reyna meets and exceeds each characteristic outlined in the draft resolution for establishing a Bolton Poet Laureate.

Motion: I move that the Bolton Board of Selectmen adopt the resolution entitled “Resolution Establishing a Bolton Poet Laureate” and appoint Magdalena Reyna immediately as the first honorary Bolton Poet Laureate of Bolton with the term ending June 30, 2022. Reappointment is possible.

By: Pierog

Seconded: DePietro

Reyna said she is honored that the BOS thought of her for this position. Pierog added every town in CT is being encouraged to name a Poet Laureate. Bolton will have the first Hispanic Poet Laureate in the State. Pierog knows that Reyna will share her love of poetry with the townspeople.

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

3. 300th Anniversary Event Postponement

Pam Sawyer was present.

Pierog said the Emergency Operations Committee recommends consideration of cancelling all future events due to the health crisis with the exception of the Farmer's Market. This is to set to be held outside in August. Instead Bolton would declare 2021 as the official celebration year instead.

Morra said a discussion was had about cancelling the parade. It would be difficult for the band to practice and how can a marching band have social distance. Not to mention social distancing of the people viewing the parade. The concurrence was that the parade be postponed until October 2021.

Pam Sawyer reported the two chairmen met today and concurred this is not the year to do it. The one ongoing event is the passport program sponsored by the Land Trust. This is a private group running a private event. Sawyer asked the BOS to consider keeping the encampment as scheduled as this is an outdoor event.

Pierog read a communication from Arlene Fiano of the Heritage Farm Commission. The Commission would like to do the encampment and feel it would be a welcome relief to what has been a disappointing year. A question was asked if the event is cancelled how may the grant from the National Park Service be affected. Staff does not have a concrete answer from the NPS. Although the NPS was told there is a serious possibility the event would be cancelled they did not indicate the grant would be withheld. Morra suggested not making a decision on the matter until the August or September meeting so we can see what the state of the virus is then. Morra would hate to see this event be cancelled if it can be held safely and within the social distancing parameters. He concurs all other events should be moved to 2021. Sawyer said to make the encampment a success requires a lot of publicity and outreach. She asked the BOS to make the decision tonight so outreach can happen if the event is to be held. Pierog noted it is hoped to get 150 reenactors to the event. That would mean that now the public cannot attend if the same gathering parameter remains in place. Pierog said let's go to 300 + 1.

Sawyer asked that the Farmer's Market still be allowed to occur. It is considered a 300th event even though it is an ongoing one. People come and go from the Farmer's Market so it should never be over the 100 person parameter for outdoor gatherings. The vendor space will be spaced farther apart creating almost mandatory social distancing.

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen postpone all the remaining town sponsored events, excluding the Farmer's Market, until 2021 to be able to truly celebrate the 300th anniversary.

By: Morra

Seconded: Pierog

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

Pierog gave heartfelt thanks to Sawyer and the Committee for the work they have been doing. Pierog looks forward to continue working with the committee.

4. Setting the First Selectman, Deputy First Selectman, and Selectmen Salaries

Pierog said the FY 2020 adopted salaries are what went into effect in 2017. Since that time Town Staff have received a cumulative increase of 7.93% while the BOS salaries have held steady. Pierog feels it is time the BOS received an increase and she proposes a 2.75% increase. That will bring the BOS in line with what most of the union town employees are getting this year.

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the proposed 2.75% salary increase for the First Selectman, Deputy First Selectman, and the Selectman.

By: Pierog

Seconded: Morra

Discussion: Morra said this is a modest increase for the BOS. Look at the work the Board has done keeping a sharp eye on expenditures and the resulting surplus. Morra feels increasing the salaries is appropriate. And having been in the position of First Selectman is gives some recognition of the work that is carried out in that position. DePietro feels there is not enough of a salary difference between the First Selectman and the other positions. Morra added this year's discussion about salaries should include an appropriate compensation for the First Selectman position based on what the position entails which is far greater than the other BOS positions. Pierog said the Charter Revision Commission is considering other forms of government.

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

B. Other

None

9. **First Selectman's Report:**

A. COVID-19 Preparations

Pierog will have Staff report on this matter.

B. Sustainable CT

The appointment of a Poet Laureate is one of the items that gets recognition in the program. Bolton is in good shape to qualify. Patrice Carson is working on a couple of more items for the application. The application is due in August.

C. Other

Pierog said Dave Piel, the daytime Resident Trooper, retired as of July 1, 2020. The CT State Police (CSP) are interviewing for the position. Douglas Bernier, Badge 941, has been placed in the position temporarily. CSP hopes to have the new full-time Trooper on board for August 1, 2020.

Pierog held a listening session a week ago having invited some folks who were the organizers of the peaceful protest on Black Lives Matter. About twenty people participated on the call. They spoke to her about their concerns were and what those concerns were specific to Bolton. During the call Pierog encouraged the participants to reach out to her privately with their concerns; she has heard from about ten people. She is looking at a couple of things to address concerns raised. Another listening session will be held at the end of the month and the Members are welcome to join. In the meantime, what subcommittee would be appropriate to discuss Diversity & Racism in Bolton? Morra said these are complex issues and hopes future dialogues that occur become a two-way dialogue. That is the only way we will solve these issues. DePietro said this topic may best be held in Personnel although it crosses all categories.

10. Administrative Officer's Report:

A. COVID-19 Preparations

Staff reported:

- Fields and playscapes have been opened up.
- The tennis courts will not be open between now and until the maintenance work to begin in the immediate future is completed.
- Herrick Park will open July 20, 2020 for private use rentals. Renting parties will sign a form that states they agree with and understand the Governor's orders for gathering. This remains at twenty-five people indoors with social distancing.
- The summer camp is off to a good start.
- The library will begin having in-building appointments on July 20 for those who need to browse the books or use the computer terminal.
- Town Hall continues to be of some concern. Staff has had conversations with other area administrators and town managers. It does not make sense to have 100% of Town Hall staff return to working in the building. The system we have now is working effectively. The Week A/Week B scheduling will stay in place until July 20 and then be reevaluated every two weeks.
- Town Hall is open by appointment for individuals who need to pay cash. Pierog said communication to the townspeople should indicate a minimum of 24 hours is needed to schedule an appointment.
- Rupert said one reason for using the alternating week schedule is if someone brings sickness into Town Hall not all of the staff has the potential of getting sick at once. The scheduling allows Bolton to maintain some staffing if people become sick.

B. Administrator's Goals

Staff is trying to tie up the twelve goals he set last year. Of those, the BOS highlighted three:

- The survey was the number one item. The survey results are on the website.
- Number two was policy updates – The BOS already approved the enactment of new financial policies; the Board will have the final draft of personnel policies soon.
- Bolster web presence and social media was the third highlighted goal. Staff thanked Gary Silver for joining the call. He is the embodiment of improving our communications and he will be an effective community building tool.

C. Other

Pierog heard from the Secretary of State's office that every town is getting a ballot box.

Kathy said we did get it and John took it and put it somewhere. Pierog said it will need to be bolted down in a location that is handicapped accessible and can be driven up to. These requirements somewhat limits its location. This is intended for absentee ballots and needs to be secure.

12. Adjournment:

Motion: I move to adjourn at 8:44 p.m.

By: Morra

Seconded: DePietro

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro

Against: None

Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne B. Filip

Yvonne B. Filip, Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for corrections to these minutes and any corrections hereto.