

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN, REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021, 7:00 P.M. VIRTUAL
MINUTES**

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

Also present: Nick Lavigne, Arlene Fiano

1. Call to Order:

By: Sandra Pierog

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Virtual

2. Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

3. Approval of Minutes:

December 1, 2020, Regular Meeting

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020, regular meeting.

By: Morra

Seconded: Eremita

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

4. Appointments:

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen appoint Joshua Kelly, Patrice Carson, and Sandra Pierog to the Four Town Economic Vitality Steering Committee, term ending 6/30/2022.

By: Eremita

Seconded: Miller

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita
 Against: None
 Abstain: None

5. Correspondence:

None

6. Reports & Updates:

A. Subcommittee Reports

Minutes are included in the packet from the Facilities & Public Safety, Finance & Administration, and Human Resources meetings. The next Human Resources meeting is this Friday at noon.

B. Properties and Facilities Report

The meeting included a review of the initial designs for Town Hall by UConn students and discussion of speed-sensing signs.

C. Open Space Management & Acquisition

The Heritage Farm Commission has approved another Eagle project for the farm by Joseph Griffin. The Scout is proposing to put 6 - 8 wooden kiosks at various locations on the farm to identify the flora and fauna and historical areas of the farm. This work will be done under supervision by John Buttrymovich. Pierog has seen the plans. This project is continuing a long list of Eagle projects that have benefitted the property.

D. FY 21 Budget Report

Kelly reported tax collections continue to tick upwards. The 11-30-2020 report shows 98.3% collected.

Pierog said the Governor issued a supplemental Executive Order in late December that unless we took action to opt out motor vehicles bill would have a 3-month deferral. Interest and fees on the supplemental bills will be waived. Tax collector not concern that the tax receipts were coming in well and the interest on \$175k is rather a small amount.

Kelly shared the Expenditures report as of 12.31.2020. There are a couple of small overages as we are halfway through the fiscal year. We are moving projects forward staying conscious of expenses in case we need more money for COVID-19 expenses.

7. Ongoing Business

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

Proposed FY 2021 Transfers - January 5, 2021					
\$	127.91	To	Tax Collector - Advertising	From	\$ 127.91 Tax Collector - Professional/Educational Training
<i>Rationale: Due to the COVID-19 Executive Orders regarding tax deferrals, the Tax Department has advertised due dates more heavily than usual.</i>					

Motion: I move that the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the budget transfer as requested of \$127.91 from Tax Collector – Professional/Educational Training to Tax Collector – Advertising.

By: Morra

Seconded: Eremita

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

B. Other

None

9. New Business:

Consider and possibly act on the following:

A. The creation of an ad hoc Diversity Council

Pierog said this came about following the demonstrations for the George Floyd killing and the rally on the Green. Pierog has had Facebook Live sessions on this and one of the discussions was about the establishment of a committee for diversity and inclusion. The Sustainable Committee is in support. A recommendation from the December meeting is to create a committee similar to the town of Ellington to trial it for one year. If it is productive the committee can be continued. Kelly provided information on what other area towns are doing.

Morra asked what the ultimate goal of this is? What are we looking to do? As a town government I think we are bound by law and ethics to be conscious of all these factors. Is this committee going to set up a bunch of rules for citizens to go by or suggesting rules? Morra has a problem with this on an individual side.

Pierog agreed we are bound by State and Federal laws on certain items. She has heard from community members that we are not aware or focused on our unidentified biases. Having undergoing some diversity training she realized she has some personal, unconscious bias from her upbringing and social status. This is not about looking for a committee to say Bolton needs to adopt rules or regulations. It is to help us to understand as a community some of the steps we can take as individuals to make us a more inclusive community.

Morra said on a community basis organizations such as religious ones should be doing this, not the government's. There is no one that does not have prejudices. How each of us deals with our fellow man is the important part. When he read the resolution he felt it is too broad and open-ended and is not in favor of adopting this as is. It should be mirrored to address government rather can be open-ended. It calls for with the membership of the group that can be 5-50 people to include religious leaders and social clubs, women's clubs, Knights of Columbus which is part of their calling. He does not see that number of people volunteering in Bolton.

Pierog said people have already volunteered who are from what the state would say is a minority. She thinks if we focus on the government side we are missing an opportunity for community education. We carry biases every day. Education can include making people understand they have them and how to deal with them so I don't offend others by my actions by habit or character, and help to find a better way to deal with my presentation with others. Pierog said such a committee would report to the BOS bringing ideas for approval and implementation. Miller said the focus should be on the Bolton community

and finding creative idea to come up with things we may not have thought of. There has been some situations that have happened in Bolton that points them in the right direction.

Morra said his concern is a philosophical one. Who's job is that? Is it government's or not? We should always step back and reexamine ourselves.

Eremita said you can't legislate common sense. One of the best ways that we can show the community what it is about is to set an example. This community might be able to assist us in realizations or in the government. A lot of laws already to exist for the community. Our job is to show the better side of mankind and be a better example for our community. Morra thanked Eremita for clarifying his scrambled thoughts.

Some language was changed in the resolution during discussion. Pierog said this is for a one year trial to allow the committee to determine what they see in the community, if there is anything lacking, or needs to improve in. There may be some issues that are within town government, within resident interactions, within BOE, and within businesses located in Bolton, and with Public Safety.

Eremita asked if there have been specific problems with Public Safety. Pierog replied there have been allegations and they are being dealt with by the supervisors of those involved. That shocks Eremita that we have not moved beyond this in this community. Pierog said she think it's not necessarily targeted in our community but from a large perspective there is a lot of baggage that travels with some of the minorities and they may come to a community expecting treatment based on their background and they may react differently than she would. Eremita said he would never have expected that in Bolton. This floors him.

Morra said the overall concept is good. His concerns are based on his understanding of racism and how we deal with the difference in people. People are insulted if you use the wrong pronoun. He might be considered a pig because he does not the right pronoun. That is him. How far this goes is what scares him. Living in a community were people have respect for each other is where he wants to be. Pierog said some people don't feel we have that type of community. Eremita said it bothers him that people feel that way. If it's true we have to fix it; he is in favor of doing things better.

Morra said the committee or members going off on a tangent and dealing with personal issues is his concerns.

Pierog already has had 10 volunteers. After discussion it was agreed to use the number of 15 in the resolution. Eremita would like to hear from the volunteers personally initially as it bothers him that we need this.

Miller said the ending statement about if they make recommendations that we choose not to do that puts us in awkward situation. That gave her a step back a moment to think. Our actions on the recommendations could become a hot button in the community. Eremita agrees with Miller but he tried to think what they could come up with that wouldn't be okay with the BOS. If it bothers someone in our community and it is something they should not have to deal with on their own then we should know about it and fix it. He is sure there are people in the community that actions play into their past. In some cases we may have to say get over it – that is in your background, not ours. The commission should

be cohesive enough to tell each other they are wrong. Morra said he has no problem saying no if he doesn't like it. He has and can take some heat.

Motion: I move that the Bolton Board of Selectmen accept the Resolution For the Creation of an Ad Hoc Commission on Diversity & Inclusion as amended.

Draft Resolution 2
For the Creation of an Ad Hoc Commission
On Diversity & Inclusion

Whereas a number of residents of the Town of Bolton have called for the creation of a commission to address issues of diversity and inclusion; and

Whereas national events in 2020 brought issues of systemic racism and bigotry to the forefront of the minds of all and was the cause of a demonstration in support of diversity and inclusion being held in Bolton; and

Whereas the Board of Selectmen recognizes that the Town can do more to address issues of diversity and inclusion in town; and

Whereas the Town recognizes that it may not fully aware of all issues of diversity and inclusion that may arise within Bolton in any given year and may require resident help in input in order to be able to address issues as they arise; and

Whereas the Board of Selectmen's Subcommittee on Finance & Administration recommended at their meeting on December 21, 2020, that an ad hoc Commission on Diversity & Inclusion be created in order to better address issues of diversity and inclusion that may arise within the town government and the community-at-large; therefore it be

Resolved that the Bolton Board of Selectmen; under the authority of Section 5.1, subsection C.2 of the Town Charter; creates a temporary ("ad hoc") Commission on Diversity & Inclusion, which shall consist of up to 15 members as are appointed to it by the Board, who shall be empaneled for a term of one year following the first meeting of the Commission, and which shall be empowered to create its own agenda as it seeks to address issues pertaining to town government and community diversity and inclusion with the caveat that it shall be an advisory body reporting to the Board of Selectmen.

By: Eremita

Seconded: Miller

Discussion: Morra said he'd like to hear DePietro's thoughts on this matter. DePietro said he taught in a Hartford neighborhood for many years. He did a ton of research and it boils down to nothing. This is all rhetoric. He'd be surprised if anything concrete and/or positive comes out of this. This starts at home with families, kids, and schools are an important part. Morra said his first year of teaching was in a black and Hispanic area in the worst school in Hartford and he survived.

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

B. Amendments to the Financial Policy Manual

Kelly said the amendments are housekeeping items. Based on the current procedures purchase orders of exactly \$700 are not covered by policy. The recommendation is to change the language to indicate purchase orders of \$700 or less can be approved by the Finance department. Anything over \$700 must go to the Kelly for authorization.

Morra and Eremita expressed concern about the process if emergency purchase orders are needed. Kelly said he believes emergent situations are covered. Pierog added there is some sort of emergency purchasing order authorization procedure. But this can be revisited with the subcommittee to be sure it is adequate.

Miller asked about the recent Enrico Road issue which was of significant expense. This issue was on the side of the road but what if the road had been unpassable. Do we have a plan for something like that? Pierog said there are road crews on call that can stuff the hole and put a temporary patch over it.

Motion: I move that the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve these changes to the Finance Manual.

By: Eremita

Seconded: Miller

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

C. Fielding a request for proposals for banking services

Kelly said this has been worked on for some time. We now have a draft request based on CRCOG document. Kelly, the Finance Director Jill, and the Finance & Administration subcommittee have reviewed the document. We have addressed a few items to be improved upon or fixed from the current state. Attention and detail was given to the Background and Overview sections. The subcommittee changed the distance to 25 miles, from 15, to enable collection of as many proposals as possible. The proposals must include background information, users and references, current clients, scope of services, a transition timeline, and disaster recovery.

The due date for the responses will have to be set. A short rubric for selection and weighting was developed based on the example from CRCOG. The request is ready to go out once a due date is set.

Pierog said we can expect our current banking relationships to re-propose. We currently have two banking relationships – one for deposits and one for investment accounts. We are aware of two other banks who have reached out to us. We are hoping for three, perhaps 4, responses. Kelly, Pierog, and Jill think there are significant opportunities for service improvements.

It was agreed by consensus of the BOS to give Kelly the authority to issue the RFP setting the response time with Jill and being aware we are going to be in budget season very quickly and we do not want to have the cutover at the end of the fiscal year.

D. Fielding a request for proposals for cemetery care services

Kelly said this item is similar to the banking services RFP. Some language was added to strengthen the requirements needed. We are looking for two types of proposals to come in. The first four requirements are tailored for sexton services and the second set of five to seven requirements are aimed at landscaping services. Kelly has spoken to John Buttrymovich about having an opportunity with members of the Buildings and Grounds crew keeping up with the landscaping at these two sites. During the summer they would have to hustle and pick up the pace to add in this detailed work. This is to be carefully done and done with respect. We are asking respondents to suggest both kinds of services as this will give us more options.

Eremita said that Buttrymovich mentioned needing a smaller zero turn mower, estimating

to cost between \$10k - \$15k, if the landscaping work is done by the Town. Morra added trim work is time consuming. Perhaps a part-time summer person can be hired for this. It would cost less than a full-time service and we would have more control over the quality of work. Pierog pointed out that bidders will be asked to submit bids for both sets of requirements; we will not accept proposals for just the landscaping portion.

It was agreed by consensus of the BOS to give Kelly the authority to issue the RFP setting the response time and coming back to the Subcommittee for approval of the response vendor chosen.

E. Town Hall facility expansion project concepts from UConn

Sklyar wrote an excellent article about this project.

Kelly said the four engineering students chose this project to work on from dozens of ideas suggested by the professors. This is a one year project for the students. It began with reviewing the existing footprint of Town Hall and talking to Kelly, Patrice Carson, and Jim Rupert about the needs of challenges the employees face in the building. The first semester work focused on developing three ideas for expansion; the second semester will focus on providing specific schematics of the expansion option chosen by the Town. This could then be a springboard to take the idea to an architect.

Some parameters given to the students was that new space be walkable to the current Town Hall and include the added costs for parking and septic system expansion. This project does give a more realistic idea of the square footage needed to operate the functions of Town Hall.

Kelly presented the three alternative ideas. Alternative #1, called The Retrofit, is the least disruptive to the wetlands on the Town Hall property by adding space to the back of the existing building. The septic systems is at peak capacity now and a community system has to be considered. Alternative #2, called The Seclusion, is an independent building with a courtyard or green space between the two buildings. This would be fully built in the wetlands requiring Army Corps of Engineers involvement. Alternative #3, called The Expansion, is adding on to the left of the building with a bridge to travel between the two buildings and enabling cars to drive underneath the bridge. This option would also require the Army Corps of Engineers.

Eremita said The Seclusion option keeps as is the historical Town Hall. There is really no efficient, viable office space for the 21st century in this historical building. It can be used as meeting space by moving everything else to the other building for efficient office space. Eremita likes this option the best. And that building could be built on the site of the Notch Road Center if we can't get through the red tape. We can check the soils on the Presido property to possibly accomplish the goal of a community septic system for the library, the State Troopers, the Town Hall, and the Heritage Farm.

Pierog said the subcommittee felt The Seclusion was likely the best option to increase the space with some potential expansion in the future by taking the C-shape and making it more of a square with a Yankee frugal exterior. We could probably do this option for a more acceptable price tag to the taxpayers. Morra said this seems the most economical way to move forward. Eremita said this is a good building that works but does not need to be fancy; it would be a plain Jane building.

Miller asked what the square footage is of Town Hall to which Kelly responded he does not have that file available right now. Morra said we must remember that we will be losing meeting and office space from the Notch Road Municipal Center. That building is probably in the 6,000 sq. foot range. Existing Town Hall has two vaults that could be used for off-site storage.

Pierog said the goal of this discussion is to recommend to the students which option would we like them to develop further. The subcommittee suggested alternative #2 and squaring it off. Morra asked if a full basement is proposed? Kelly will pass that question on to the students.

Miller asked how much of a problem would it be to building on the wetlands? Is that realistic? Morra said with a wetlands you can create a wetlands to offset a loss. In this area it is an intermittent watercourse with offset not an option. It is tough to work through the Army Corps of Engineers requirements and the process takes forever. Pierog said the watercourse is not close to this proposed location; the building might be able to be moved slightly to the north to get farther away from the watercourse. Miller does like the angles versus a box look. Morra said a rectangular building provides for more interior space. Pierog said her vision is that the C-shape would become flatter but not necessarily square.

It was agreed by consensus of the BOS to ask the students to proceed with alternative #3 with the input provided.

F. Placing speed-sensing signage on Town roads

Kelly said there is an agreement with the T-2 Center to provide to Bolton, at no cost, two speed sensing signs. Currently, T-2 Center is working on the initiative with some smaller towns in eastern Connecticut. The signs are placed underneath speed limit signs and record and transmit data to a database and reflects car speed back to the driver. This allows us to collect data to see where major speed issues occur. It also helps individuals in real time if they are above or below the posted speed limit. These signs are solar paneled. The signs are at the Town Garage ready to be mounted on town roads. State roads require a CTDOT permit and that process takes time.

Morra suggested these signs be moved around as they will have some effect for a short period of time. The Resident Trooper may have some suggestions on where to place them. Pierog asked if the T-2 Center suggested locations. Kelly said the top concern areas are at intersections with the state routes, such a Notch, Steele's Crossing, and Quarry roads although accidents in these locations are probably not speed related. Pierog suggested on Bolton Center Road past the fire house and going down the hill. She also said these signs can become a problem on a long straightaway if drivers decide to use them as a test my speedometer function.

Kelly said he can work with Lance to rotate the signs every couple of months. Kelly thinks at least a month in one location is needed to measure the impact and see how long that lasts. Pierog suggested posting on the website an option for residents to volunteer their neighborhood roads.

G. Other

None

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

A. **COVID-19**

Pierog said we are at 128 cases as of today. That is triple the case count since 10-30-2020. Most of the spread seems to be through community or workplace with workplace We encourage people to continue to use safety measures. If you do need assistance from Fire Department dial 911 but be honest if you think are showing symptoms.

B. **Other**

None

10. **Administrative Officer's Report:**

A. **Administrator's Goals**

Diversity training is scheduled for 01-19-2021 from 9:00 a.m. – noon via Zoom. Kelly hopes that all the BOS can attend if they have not already joined a training session. This will be hosted by KJR Consultants. BOS members will be joined by department Directors and some other people.

B. **Four- Town Economic Vitality Group**

Two meetings of the group have been held discussing high-level topics including considering an official name and timeline for a more regional area campaign.

C. **Other**

Morra asked about the budget meetings schedule. Kelly said he will have a preliminary budget document for the BOS to review by the end of the week. He will send this out along with a proposed virtual process and schedule for the meetings. The first meeting will be in the third week of January.

Eremita asked that an item be added to the agenda regarding the 5% match for the Assistance to Fire Fighters grant. The grant application is due 02-12-2021.

Motion: I move that the Board of Selectmen approve submitting the Assistance to Fire Fighters grant application acknowledging there could be up to \$15,000 for the grant match.

By: Eremita

Seconded: DePietro

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

11. **Adjournment:**

Motion: I move to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.

By: Morra

Seconded: Eremita

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita
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.