

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN, REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 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: Mark Mishriky, Kate Armstrong, Kim Defilppis, Eddie Steele, Sean Eaton-Robb, Paula Meyers, Brett Gotler, Christopher Davey, Megan Piechowicz, Riley Gardner, Paco, Arin, Laurie, Deborah Livingston, Amanda Gordon, Paul T., Janice Koval, George Chakulski, Adam Jodin, Corey Peacock, Alyssa, Rose Morrow, Nick Lavigne (CVC), Leah Marie, Molly Martin, Will Dube, Sam Nyser, Madison Peacock, Claire Langton, Kathy, Caleb, Anne Decker, Brian Miller, Chris Duffy, Catlin, Alyssa McDonnell, Christine Langton, Deborah Livingston.

1. Call to Order:

By: Sandra Pierog

Time: 7:05 p.m.

Place: Virtual

2. Public Comment:

Pierog said speakers will be limited to 3 minutes each.

Mark Miskriky – Is speaking as the Bolton Track and Field Coach and a teacher. He feels this issue must be addressed. The capital budget does not address the need for a 21st century high school track and field facility. The athletes are running in parking lots and on the roads. Bolton must make the athletic complex safe. This would be a Town project with benefits to the residents-at-large by providing a safe outdoor environment for exercise. One-third of the students compete in track and field. An athletic complex will draw students to the schools from the towns of Bolton, Columbia, and Hartford. During the renovation to the soccer fields would be a good time to construct a track. An athletic complex is part of the NECASA Committee recommendation. This would be right and best for the town. Mr. Miskriky has sent a written proposal, that includes residents’ perspectives, to Pierog and he urged all BOS to review this.

Caleb Fox, 82 South Road – His son graduated from the high school last year and has younger children coming up through the schools. He feels it would be a wonderful thing for the community to have a track. This would allow people to exercise together.

Sandra Cheeta, 15 Steele's Crossing Road – Her son graduated from high school two years ago. He was on the track team and her daughter participated as team manager. Getting a track field will be an advantage for the community. It would be uplifting for the athletes to have home field advantage. More friends and family can attend home meets. This would bring people together and show support for the athletes. This is very important for the children. Ms. Cheeta feels that running in the streets is a problem as well. She supports a track and field facility at the school.

Claire Langton, 18 Fiano Road - She graduated from Bolton and was on the track team. She is now a jumper at ECSU. Ms. Langton had a great experience at Bolton and was captain for two years. The team would have benefited from having a track of their own. Track practice took place in the parking lots that caused a lot of injuries from running on the pavement. The jumping pit runway is pavement. She feels the high school team would improve greatly from having a track and field facility.

Eddie Steele, 21 Williams Road – He agrees that Bolton needs a track. He is a junior at the high school and is on the cross country team. He sees how crazy people drive and running on the roads is not safe in his eyes. Mr. Steele is also a jumper and there is no facility for pole vaulting, which is his favorite event. Not having a facility restricts how the team practices. Every few weeks Mr. Miskriky takes his own time to go with Steele to Coventry High School to practice pole vaulting; this is the best as they can do for this event.

Alyssa McDonald, 18 Deer Run Road – She graduated in 2014 and ran cross country. She walks and runs a lot in town on busy roads without sidewalks. A track would help the track team and she would use it all the time as being a safe place to run.

Debbie Livingston, 59 Maple Valley Road – She is an avid runner. She would not stop using the roads to run but it would benefit the community to have a track. Beginner walkers or runners would have a place to exercise that is safe and lit up. Some people are afraid to walk alone or walk through the woods on the Rail Trail. Other sports teams could use the track to train. This would be a huge community builder. Family events could be held for the community. It would be a health and wellness builder for the community and students.

George Chakulski, Columbia, Ct – He is a student at Bolton High School. Students at Porter really like the thought of going to Bolton but Porter students deciding where to attend high school see the limitation of Bolton not having a track. He supports having a track for the reasons stated previously also. A track would benefit the community as a whole.

Megan Piechowicz, 4 Tolland Road – She was a member of the Class of 2019 and was a member of the track team and captain in her junior and senior years. She had injuries from running in the parking lot and on the roads. And there is danger in running in either place during busy traffic times. The team provided her with camaraderie that is beneficial during the high school years.

Paul Smith – He has been a teacher in Bolton for 21 years and has been in education for 30 years. He has coached the cross-country team since 2002 and is the assistant track coach.

The team runs every day along Brandy Street. The students run single file and are wearing vests and it is still scary with the traffic. There are not a lot of good roads to run on. It is not safe with the danger and the possibility of shin splint injuries. This is a safety issue. There are ~70 students in the track programs. Extracurricular activities are important for physical and mental health. He thinks Bolton could attract more children to participate in this sports program if the town had a track. He lives it every day with having fifteen students running practice on the roads which is far from ideal.

Sean Easton-Robb, Philadelphia – He ran for the track team from 2012-2015. He feels safer running in the city of Philadelphia than he did in Bolton. A track would greatly help the team.

Corey Peacock, 23 Corey Road – He is currently throwing 150' which is 10' off the Nationals record. The coaches and the team are amazing. The team is hindered greatly in its facilities. The team cannot throw on the main soccer field and the side one is often flooded out. He is proud to have the coaches backing him. Mr. Peacock wants to continue track through his college years.

Leah Seften, 74 Country Club Road – She is a 2014 grad and ran track for 4 years. A track would continue to build on the well-known programs that the coaches have built up and it would provide for a safe environment for distance running. It would also benefit other sports and younger kids. Some people commute to Coventry to have a safe place for to walk around. A track will allow people to be outside where they feel safe.

Chris Duffy, Stonehedge Lane – Agrees with many of the comments. School is not just about math and English. Students are looking at schools outside of Bolton that have better opportunity for extracurricular activities. A track would be beneficial for the town.

Sam Nyser, Brookfield Road – She is a 2014 graduate of the high school. She ran track and cross-country and received a track scholarship for college. Track has impacted everything in her life. She has lived in other towns and one good thing about that was being able to utilize the track facility.

Janice Koval, 11 Greenhills Drive – When her kids were coming up through the school system both wanted to run but that was difficult in the middle school years as there wasn't anywhere safe to bring them and be able to supervise them. A track would be a great addition.

Paco – He is a teacher at the high school and he supports the coaches request for the track. He has coached the girls varsity soccer team for 23 years. He remembers them running on the roads and the complaints from people. If they used the Rail-Trail that kills the day of practice. A track could benefit the soccer program with being able to do endurance runs or sprints. And shin splint injuries would lessen.

Carrie Lyon, 31 Luxe Way – She is a Bolton track parent. She sees the benefits of a track. Ms. Lyon has ideas on it becoming a way of generating revenue if we lend out the track as Manchester does in the summer time. In the cost of putting the track project together grants could be looked at, benefactors found, or folks that can help out. The coaches in the track program are amazing. They have little to nothing and they make the program work; she commends them.

Selectman Morra thanked the residents for their comments on this important subject. He found the input interesting with good points and other things for the BOS to consider. He asked residents to continue providing information.

Selectman Eremita understands this dilemma. When he attended EO Smith that school did not have a track. The team practiced at UConn and were running on the roads. He understands the difficulties with running on the roads. Eremita can sympathize with the coaches and teams of not having a track.

Deputy First Selectman Miller looks forward to reviewing the proposal. She is a life-long runner.

Selectman DePietro is very impressed with the input from all the speakers. The information was well presented and organized.

First Selectman Pierog thanked those present for all of the participation. She knows a virtual meeting is not the best method to come to a meeting to get a point across. The CAPA Committee approved the capital improvement request for fiscal year 22. That included \$1.4 million for potential bonded money for improvements to the soccer field, but does not include a track at this time. Pierog suggests the citizens work with the BOE to ask them to have the representatives to the CAPA Committee bring forward a suggestion to reconvene the Committee to further discuss if a track should or should not be included on a bonding package for fiscal year 22 or 23.

**3. Approval of Minutes:
January 5, 2021, Regular Meeting**

Motion: I move the Bolton Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of the January 5, 2021, regular meeting with corrections that will be provided by DePietro to Kelly.

By: DePietro

Seconded: Eremita

Discussion: Morra said it was a long meeting with lengthy Minutes. The substance of the Minutes were correct in his recollection as DePietro also noted. DePietro will provide the misspelling and grammar errors to Kelly to correct the Minutes.

Voting:

For: Pierog, Morra, DePietro, Miller, Eremita

Against: None

Abstain: None

4. Appointments:

Kelly reported he is starting to collect names of interested persons for the Ad Hoc Diversity Commission. Right now the number of people is too low to meet the threshold of the commission.

5. Correspondence:

Pierog reported she received an email from a resident asking the BOS to consider a left-turn only light at Bolton Motors, Three J's and the Mobil Station. Pierog replied this is a

state road and gave the resident contact information for the CT DOT.

6. Reports & Updates:

A. Subcommittee Reports

The report from the Human Resources subcommittee were included in the Member's packet. This subcommittee is meeting again tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. to continue to discuss the positions for Highway Foreman and Treasurer and the personnel policy. There has been a request from the Supervisor's union to negotiate a new three-year contract.

B. Properties and Facilities Report

Kelly said we continue to work under COVID-19 guidelines. There are no major projects at this time except with the UConn students about design for a potential new Town Hall building.

C. Open Space Management & Acquisition

Bolton was contacted by the town of Andover about a parcel that straddles both towns. The owner of the parcel is going to donate the portion on the Andover side to the town. The portion on the Bolton side will be donated to the Bolton Land Trust.

D. FY 21 Budget Report

Kelly said the tax report shows 98.96% collected through December 31, 2020. Pierog added this collection rate is outstanding when compared to neighboring towns.

Expenses report has the Elections category highlighted as expensed at 33.12% as of January 31, 2021. Elections are highlighted due to the set of primaries and the presidential election held this year. Expenses are better than in past years at this same time. Kelly assured the BOS employees are continuing to pursue all projects given to them. Nothing is going unnoticed. Lack of expenses does not represent a lack of work. Staff is countering all of the hardships everyone is facing with the virus. Overall, expenses are at 45.80% of the budget.

Pierog added we don't know the format for the annual town meeting or the budget referendum – will these be remotely, no-excuse absentee balloting, or a vote in person events. These are some legal issues the Governor's team will have to handle with towns in March and April.

7. Ongoing Business

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

None

B. Other

None

9. New Business:

None

9. First Selectman's Report:

A. COVID-19

Pierog said as of 4:00 p.m. today the report says Bolton has 204 cumulative cases. We've had an increase of 90 cases in a month. The local spread is still happening. The

Governor's office has been sharing the information on how towns are doing with vaccinating residents. According to the Department of Public Health Bolton has 4,884 residents with 286 of those over the age of 75. This is from 2010 data. Our Social Services department has 400+ over the age of 75. Of that group 59.4% have received the first dose. Overall, 430 residents have received at least the first dose putting the rate at 8.8%.

Pierog reported the PZC proposal for 1 Notch Road has been withdrawn. The applicant needs some time to address the concerns of the nearby residents. We are hoping they come back with the application in the future.

There is a public hearing Thursday evening about the Charter change recommendations. Kelly will provide the Zoom link to all Members.

Each Member received a call from Kelly to inform them that he has submitted his resignation. Kelly has accepted the position of Town Manager for the town of Winchester, CT. Kelly will remain with Bolton for a few months. The Human Resources subcommittee will be on the search for a replacement. Pierog spoke to the Mayor of Winchester today and asked if Bolton can pester Kelly for a few months once in their employ. The Mayor was amenable to this. Kelly thanked the Members for receiving this news in a positive way. He will be in Bolton for a while and make sure they are set for the future.

B. Other

None

10. Administrative Officer's Report:

A. Administrator's Goals

Kelly was glad to report that all members of the Leadership team and some Selectmen attended the Diversity and Training session held on January 19th. The feedback received was that the session was informative and engaging. This will help him to get more sessions funded to further those conversations of inclusion, to speak up, and to develop themselves and respect others.

B. Four-Town Economic Vitality Group

Pierog, Kelly, and Patrice Carson attended the one meeting held. There is no name for the group yet. Progress is slow but steady. The attendees discussed how to work more collaboratively on regional events such as sending residents to other communities' events and to have other town's residents come to Bolton events.

Pierog added that Coventry is spear-heading the development of a Four-Town Event calendar.

Eremita said in regards to the diversity training session that it was well worth the time and almost fun. It was a good presentation and a good workshop. Kelly has all of the slides from the presentation that could be shared. Pierog said Eremita is correct. She went into the session with more than a little trepidation; it was a good use of her time.

11. Adjournment:

Motion: I move to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.

By: Morra

Seconded: Miller

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.