

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Pamela Sawyer, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Adam Teller

Board of Selectmen Members Present Via Zoom: Michael Eremita, Robert DePietro

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Others Present Via Zoom: Nick Lavigne (Community Voice Channel)

1. **Call to Order:** P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Public Comment:** Jim Loersch commented he is concerned about the replacement of the Town Hall and asked if the board could update him. P. Sawyer arranged to call him tomorrow.
3. **Appointments**
- 3.a **Richard McKinnon – Chief Building Official/Land Use Department Head:**

R. Morra MOVED to hire Richard McKinnon as Chief Building Official/Land Use Department Head for the Town of Bolton. R. DePietro SECONDED.

J. Rupert said R. McKinnon was previously the Building Official for the Town of Avon and is a great fit for the Town of Bolton. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

- 3.b **Cheryl Udin – BLRWPCA:**
J. Rupert said C. Udin had not yet submitted her volunteer interest form. R. Morra MOVED to table the appointment of Cheryl Udin to the BLRWPCA. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

4.a **February 2, 2023 – Budget Workshop**

4.b **February 7, 2023 – Regular Meeting:**

The following amendment was made to the February 7, 2023 regular meeting minutes:

Under New Business 4.a:

“A. Teller MOVED the town establish a process where requests for student projects be referred to the Town Administrator and refer them to the appropriate town departments for recommendation **and should be presented to the BOS** only with the recommendation of the Town Administrator. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.”

4.c **February 9, 2023 – Special Meeting and Budget Workshop**

- 4.d **February 21, 2023 –Budget Workshop:** The following amendments were made to the February 21, 2023 budget workshop meeting minutes:

Police Protection – “With information received from the State, J. Collins suggested reducing this budget by ~~\$100,00~~ **\$100,000** based on the percentage of cut in benefits.”

Grant Match – Reduce from \$100,000 to zero dollars.

“Board consensus was to take the \$100,000 to a town meeting this year to move the \$100,000 in ~~FY2024~~ **FY2023** and roll it into the grant match appropriation for this year.”

4.e February 23, 2023 – Special Meeting and Budget Workshop

R. Morra MOVED to approve the minutes for February 2, February 7, February 9, February 21, and February 23 with noted amendments. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4.f February 28, 2023 –Budget Workshop:

R. Morra MOVED to table approval of the February 28, 2023 budget workshop meeting minutes. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5. New Business

5.a Consider and Possible Action on D.A.R. Plaque – Bolton Center Cemetery:

P. Sawyer reported on a request from the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the D.A.R. to erect a plaque at the gravestone of Abigail Phelps Strong who is interred in the Bolton Center Cemetery. The sign would be approximately 8”x10”, supported by a metal rod and would go between David’s and Abigail’s stones.

R. Morra MOVED to allow the Abigail Phelps Chapter of the D.A.R. to place the placard as described. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 with A. Teller abstaining.

5.b Consider and Possible Action on 2024 Bolton Road Race scheduled for March 10, 2024:

M. Eremita MOVED to approve the 2024 Bolton Road Race scheduled for March 10, 2024. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.c Consider and Possible Action on CT Cycling Advancement Program Breakaway Benefit:

This event is scheduled for Saturday, June 3, 2023 and the group is requesting written clearance for the town roads outlined in the map and proposal they provided. J. Rupert said his only concern is the crossing of Camp Meeting Road (state road). The group will need a state highway permit.

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve the CT Cycling Advancement Program Breakaway Benefit subject to the organization coming before the Traffic Authority (Town Administrator) with a plan to make sure there are safety measures at any appropriate intersections. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

5.d Consider and Possible Action on Bond Counsel Proposal:

P. Sawyer explained the town’s bond counsel person is retiring. She said the Town Attorney’s recommendation is to wait until the town needs a specific type of bond work done and then go out for bids for that specific type of bonding work to be able to get the best value for its money and to get competitive bids.

Discussion followed on going out for bid for new bond counsel now or waiting. Short-term financing for the new fire truck will be coming up soon.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen go with the existing bond counsel firm for the short-term financing on the fire truck. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:1:0 with R. DePietro opposed.

5.e Consider and Possible Action on Building Safety Month in May:

J. Rupert explained that Building Official R. McKinnon has requested the BOS issue a proclamation for the month of May 2023 as Building Safety Month in Bolton. He submitted a draft proclamation to the board.

R. DePietro MOVED the Board of Selectmen proclaim the month of May 2023 as Building Safety Month in Bolton. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

6. Ongoing Business:

6.a Diversity Training Dates: J. Rupert said the dates for the diversity training have been changed to May 2 and May 3.

6.b Consider and Possible Action on Veterans Tax Credit:

R. Morra said he would like a further discussion with the Assessor before bringing recommendations to the board.

R. Morra MOVED to table discussion and possible action on the Veterans tax credit to the next meeting. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

At this time, M. Eremita MOVED to add 6.c: Discussion on Police Safety to the agenda. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

6.c Discussion on Police Safety:

M. Eremita spoke to coordinating police services with surrounding towns to be able to provide coverage 24 hours a day. He said the board has discussed, in the past, checking with Manchester and Vernon to take Bolton on as a service. He expressed concern that Bolton is paying \$200,000 to \$300,000 to just cover a small portion of the time. M. Eremita said it bothers him that, nights and weekends when there is no coverage in the town and the town is most vulnerable, the town may have to wait a while before a state trooper can be sent from elsewhere in the State.

P. Sawyer suggested the Public Safety Subcommittee investigate this further.

M. Eremita MOVED the Public Safety Subcommittee explore other options to the way the town provides police protection to the citizens and the hopes of getting a much closer response 24 hours a day. R. DePietro SECONDED.

R. DePietro said his brothers are retired police officers and his father was a police commissioner. He has a lot of interest in this area and would be happy to help the subcommittee.

A. Teller said he supports the idea of exploring an alternative to what the town is getting from the State Police Resident Trooper Program, not demeaning of any specific state troopers. He said the design of the program as a whole and the cost of it is not really effective for small towns like Bolton. A. Teller said he has a little concern that Bolton is on the edge of the Tolland Judicial

District and Manchester is in the Hartford Judicial District. Manchester officers deal with Manchester prosecutors, not Tolland prosecutors where Bolton cases go. He said there is some question on how workable some kind of regionalized or multi-town services would be.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

7. Reports and Updates:

7.a Properties and Facilities Report

7.a.1 Consider and Possible Action on Bypassing the Temporary Building Bid Process:

J. Rupert reported the town is still finalizing some details regarding the temporary building. The board passed on this item. No action taken.

7.b FY 22 Budget Report: J. Rupert reported the highlighted items in the budget report are the ones the town has been watching.

7.c Budget Transfers and Tax Collector's Report:

R. Morra MOVED to approve a \$1,200 transfer within the Fire Commission budget to the Other Supplies category for training supplies and annual awards to promote volunteerism within the department. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

7.d Consider and Possible Action on Increasing Budget Transfers the Town Administrator can Approve up to \$5,000:

M. Eremita MOVED to permanently increase the amount for budget transfers the Town Administrator can approve to up to \$5,000. R. Morra SECONDED.

The motion was amended by R. Morra to add the stipulation that the transfers be reported to the Board of Selectmen as part of the Town Administrator's report.

R. DePietro said he has reservations about this idea. He said he does not know how it would reflect on the business of the board and expressed concern about the taxpayers' perception.

A. Teller said he tended to agree with R. DePietro's comments and believes that giving that overall authority is the wrong message and not be well-received by the voters. He noted the board does not spend a lot of time during the meetings to approve the transfers and this process forces the people asking for transfers to submit something they know the board is going to see and sign. A. Teller said he believes the board or the department heads, not the Town Administrator, should take the heat when the public asks about the fluffiness of transfers at the end of the budget.

J. Rupert said he does not have strong feelings one way or another.

M. Eremita commented that when the board approves transfers with a particular budget it is not like the board is making a philosophical change to the budget. He noted he relies on the Town Administrator to make recommendations to the board when the board spends hundreds of thousands of dollars and would have the same trust in him approving transfers of up to

\$5,000 from one part of a budget to another part of the same budget and report back to the board.

R. Morra WITHDREW his second of the motion on the table.

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen allow the Town Administrator to approve budget transfers up to \$5,000 for the remainder of this fiscal year and report back to the Board of Selectmen with the transfers A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:1:0 with M. Eremita opposed.

7.e A/P Report:

R. Morra MOVED to approve the A/P Report as presented. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

8. First Selectman's Report:

P. Sawyer reported she met with the Veterans subcommittee of the upcoming Memorial Day parade. She issued a special thank you to Parade Chairman Kathy Walsh for her amazing work.

P. Sawyer said she toured the ATV damage to Freja Park. She reported there is no physical damage to the kiosk and seating area.

9. Administrative Officer's Report

8.a Monthly Report:

A. Teller inquired on the status of litigation at 65 Shoddy Mill Road. J. Rupert said the trust is moving forward to foreclosure and the town has a lien on the property.

R. DePietro asked how the budget presentation at the senior center went. J. Rupert responded Kristin Heckt and Ross Lally did a great job presenting the budget and there were excellent questions from the audience. He said he thought it was well-received and appreciated.

J. Rupert commented the Town of Tolland is considering sponsorship of a two-year regional micro transit grant, with no match, using Ace transportation to provide transportation and is looking for other towns in the county to join the grant. Consensus of the board is for the Town Administrator to provide additional information to the BOS regarding this possible grant.

8.b Other: No other report.

By consensus, the next A/P meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on April 18, 2023.

10. Adjournment: R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

Respectfully submitted by Linda H. McDonald

Linda H. McDonald

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