

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023
NOTCH ROAD MUNICIPAL CENTER, ROOM A
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

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

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

Board of Selectmen Member Absent: Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert, Executive Assistant Kathy McCavanagh

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Others Present Via Zoom: Nick Lavigne (Community Voice Channel), Amanda Gordon, Jamie Freeman

Others Present In-Person: Resident State Trooper Brian Contenta, Bruce Hall, Cliff Massey, Jim Loersch, Dorothy Hall, Bob Neil, Betsey Sheehan, Michael Sheehan, Bill Rady, Carol Rady, Bill Freeman, Jason Norris, Trish Brudz, Elizabeth Thornton, Darlene Wolliston, Harold Wolliston, Rodney Fournier

1. **Call to Order:** P. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Public Comment:** Jim Loersch of Brookfield Road expressed his concern with the condition of the Town Hall and this is not being addressed by the Town. He said the town should initiate a project to tear down the old school at the site of the current Notch Municipal Center and build a new town hall. He noted all the amenities are already there.
3. **Public Comment to Discuss Removal of Stop Signs at the Hebron and Webster Intersection:**

P. Sawyer noted correspondence was received from Jamie and Bill Freeman, Carol and Bill Rady and Michael and Betsey Sheehan dated June 20, 2023 favoring removal of the stops signs and correspondence was received from Jenny Norris dated July 5, 2023, Peyton LaPorte dated July 6, 2023, Devin Beauregard and Rachel Harrison dated July 7, 2023 and Robert Galle' dated July 7, 2023 favoring keeping the stop signs.

The content of these correspondence may be found on the Board of Selectmen's page on the Town's website.

Harold Wolliston of 7 Daria Drive commented that he and his wife moved to Bolton five years ago for the scenery and tranquility. He said they have been affected by the additional noise at the intersection from motor vehicles, motorcycles and larger trucks. He has noticed acceleration noise during the day since the signs were installed. He said they want to be part of the solution to come up with a compromise and suggested, in lieu of the stop signs, having digital signage.

Darlene Wolliston of 7 Daria Drive agreed there should be some compromise for safety and reducing the noise level of the vehicles.

Jason Norris of 34 Castlerock Lane said he moved to Bolton sixteen years ago. He commented he appreciates all the perspectives on the stop signs, both for removal and keeping them in place. He stated he is here to support keeping the stop signs in place, particularly the stop sign on the northbound lane on Hebron Road. His reasons are that Hebron Road curves sharply to the right and it is difficult to see far down (only about 60 yards as he measured) from the stop sign on Webster. He said it would be difficult for the town to cut down more trees and to create a better sightline down to the right with the way the road curves. He said the only way to control the speed of the cars coming through from Hebron into Bolton is to have that stop sign and advocates leaving the stop signs in place.

Cliff Massey of 235 Hebron Road said he has lived in town for over seventy years on Hebron Road and also hears the loud vehicle noise coming away from the stop signs at the intersection. He agrees the stop sign at the northbound lane is a benefit to the people coming out of Webster Lane. He said he does not see a lot of need for the other two stop signs. There is a good line of sight in both directions coming out of School Road and a great line of sight on Loomis Road.

Bruce Hall of 13 Webster Lane said he has lived there almost forty years. He said he supports keeping the stop sign coming out of Webster Lane and concurs with the loud traffic noise.

Jamie Freeman of 3 Daria Drive said stop signs are not for speed control by state statute and would recommend digital monitors to solve that issue. Her concern is that the stop sign at Webster creates apprehension which increases the risk of an accident from someone pulling out of Webster Lane.

Bill Freeman of 3 Daria Lane shared two videos showing a law enforcement vehicle going through the stop sign and two vehicles at the stop sign with the screeching of brakes.

Carol Rady of 282 Hebron Road said she counted 100 cars going through the intersection and observed that almost all of the people coming from Webster Lane almost always stopped to check the right-hand side. Her findings showed unpredictability of whether vehicles would stop or slow down coming through the intersection, with many rolling through. She said she observed sixty people travelling straight through the intersection north or southbound with many slowing to a medium roll or barely slowing and only four stopping. She said the noise can be really obnoxious.

Bill Rady of 282 Hebron Road said the stop signs are right in front of his house and that nobody ever stops at the right hand turn out of Webster Lane. His observation is that the stop sign going northbound is rarely observed.

Resident State Trooper (RST) Brian Contenta said he works the day shift in Bolton. He explained, after this issue with the stop sign on Webster Lane was brought to his attention about 6 weeks ago, he and his partner went there and observed traffic for ten to fifteen minutes during morning traffic and afternoon traffic. Their observations were that about 50% came to a complete stop and 50% rolled through at about 5 mph. He acknowledged that their observations were different from the observations of the residents in the area who see it every

day. RST Contenta said computer records show, within the past ten years, there has been one minor motor vehicle accident in September 2013 at the intersection of Webster Lane and Hebron Road. He noted over the past 13 years there have been horrible accidents with serious injury at School and Loomis Roads. He noted he does about 100 hours per week and since the stops signs were put up at School Road and Loomis Road, he has not been to one accident at those locations.

4. Discuss and Possibly Act on Removal of Stop Signs at the Hebron and Webster Intersection:

P. Sawyer asked the board to table discussion to next meeting where all members are present.

A. Teller MOVED the Board of Selectmen table discussion and action on the removal of stop signs at the Hebron and Webster Intersection to the next meeting and request the Town Engineer review this intersection and offer any alternatives for the stop signs controlling the north and southbound local traffic.

A. Teller modified his motion as follows:

I MOVE that the Board of Selectmen table discussion and action on the removal of stop signs at the Hebron and Webster Intersection to the next meeting and request someone with traffic experience review this intersection and offer any alternatives for the stop signs controlling the north and southbound local traffic. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

P. Sawyer asked for and received board consent to move item 9.a.1 up on the agenda at this time.

5. Approval of Minutes:

5.a June 6, 2023 –Regular Meeting: The June 6, 2023 regular meeting minutes were amended as follows:

First Selectmen’s Report: P. Sawyer reported on correspondence from the Department of Transportation regarding a notice of hearing on Route 6 at 255 Hop River Road on June 21st at 10:00 a.m. Halo Transportation, pursuant to Section 13.b-103 and 4-177 through 182 of the CT General Statutes, is seeking to operate three motor vehicles having a passenger seating capacity of less than eleven adults in general livery service between all points in Connecticut from a headquarters in Bolton.

P. Sawyer reported on information from FEMA, Department of Homeland Security that the Effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Tolland County have been updated and the community has been invited to review the works maps on June 20th at a virtual meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Adam Teller MOVED to approve the June 6, 2023 regular meeting minutes as amended. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

5.b June 20, 2023 – Special A/P Meeting:

A. Teller MOVED to approve the June 20, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:0:1 with M. Eremita abstaining.

5.c July 5, 2023 – Special A/P Meeting:

R. DePietro MOVED to approve the July 5, 2023 special meeting minutes as presented. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:0:1 with A. Teller abstaining.

6. Appointments:

6.a Michael McDonnell – Alternate to Inland Wetlands Commission

R. DePietro MOVED that the Board of Selectmen appoint Michael McDonnell as an Alternate to the Inland Wetlands Commission for the term July 1, 2023 to July 1, 2024. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

6.b Ross Lally– Re-appointment to the Inland Wetlands Commission:

M. Eremita MOVED that the Board of Selectmen re-appoint Ross Lally as a Regular member to the Inland Wetlands Commission. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7. New Business

7.a Consider and Act on Insurance Fund:

J. Rupert explained there is an insurance fund of approximately \$173,000 that has been collected from town and Board of Education employees during the time when the town was self-insured for vision and dental insurance. He said the fund was discussed at a recent Personnel sub-committee meeting and members in attendance agreed these funds should stay intact until such a time when there has been a decision that the town will continue to stay with the State healthcare plan. The town is only in the second year of that plan. He said, if the town went back to a self-funded plan, there would be seed money to start if the money was left intact. He said there is an ordinance that the Board of Selectmen are in control of this fund and if they decided to dissolve this fund, the money would go into the general fund.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen to leave the insurance fund intact. A. Teller SECONDED. During discussion, members expressed concern that this money has not been invested in a fund like a CD with a higher interest return.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen have the Finance Director and, if necessary, the Town's financial advisor to come before a special sub-committee meeting of the Board of Selectmen to explain where and how the town's money is invested and what monies are invested. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.b Consider and Act on Opioid Grant – Pam Phillips

J. Rupert explained Pam Phillips presented him with a completed application for a \$5,000 opioid grant to help combat opioid abuse in the town of Bolton. There are no matching funds required. Although the deadline for application has passed, there is a chance that the application period will be held open until this meeting. J. Rupert said this is P. Phillips' area of expertise and she would help the town find ways and opportunities to use this money to benefit the Bolton community within the grant guidelines through education and prevention.

A. Teller MOVED the Board of Selectmen authorize the town administrator to sign a grant application for an opioid grant. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.c Consider and Act on Pay Increase for Non-Union Employees:

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve pay increases for the positions in the Fire Department, Building and Grounds Department and the Recreation Department as presented and listed below. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:0:1 with M. Eremita abstaining.

Fire Chief	\$15,205.89
Deputy Chief	\$9,078.42
Assistant Chief	\$6,607.45
Captain	\$3,181.67
Secretary	\$21.61 per hour
Camp Director	\$17.00 per hour
Head Camp Counselor	\$16.00 per hour
Camp Counselor I	\$15.00 per hour
Camp Counselor II	\$15.25 per hour
Head Lifeguard	\$18.00 per hour
Lifeguard	\$16.00 per hour
Lifeguard II	\$16.25 per hour
School Year Counselor	\$15.00 per hour
Basketball Coordinator	\$17.00 per hour
Lead Summer maintainer	\$20.25 per hour
Summer Maintainer with experience	\$16.00 per hour (please check with supervisor to see who is in this category)
Summer Maintainer	\$15.00 per hour
Ticket Taker	\$15.00 per hour

M. Eremita MOVED that the raises take effect retroactively to July 1, 2023. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTON CARRIED 4:0:0.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve a 2.75% pay increase to the non-union employees listed below, the same as was given to union people who negotiated the last raise. R. DePietro SECONDED.

- Board of Selectmen
- Board of Assessment Appeals
- Registrars
- Deputy Registrars
- Moderator
- Election workers
- Van drivers
- Deputy Fire Marshal
- Snowplow driver
- Snowplow driver CDL
- Library substitutes
- Library pages
- Executive Assistant to Town Administrator
- Administrative Assistant to Town Administrator
- Recreation Director
- Town Clerk

Tax Collector
Chief Financial Officer
Building Official

A. Teller asked that the question be divided so the Board of Selectmen's pay increase be voted on separately from the other non-union positions.

M. Eremita amended his prior motion and MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve a 2.75% pay increase to the non-union employees listed below, the same as was given to union people who negotiated the last raise. R. DePietro SECONDED the amended motion.

Board of Assessment Appeals
Registrars
Deputy Registrars
Moderator
Election workers
Van drivers
Deputy Fire Marshal
Snowplow driver
Snowplow driver CDL
Library substitutes
Library pages
Executive Assistant to Town Administrator
Administrative Assistant to Town Administrator
Recreation Director
Town Clerk
Tax Collector
Chief Financial Officer
Building Official

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen's pay be raised the same as the other non-union employees at 2.75%. There was no second.

M. Eremita MOVED the Board of Selectmen's pay be raised 2.75% beginning January 1, 2024 when the new board is already seated. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.d Consider and Act on Kayak Rental Agreement for INP:

The members reviewed and discussed the kayak rental agreement.

A. Teller MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve the Kayak Rental Agreement for INP with the addition that the participant must be over 18 years old to rent a kayak. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

8. Ongoing Business:

9. Reports and Updates:

9.a Properties and Facilities Report:

9.a.1 Library Patio:

J. Rupert reported he visited the site with the Town Engineer, Director of Building and Grounds, and Highway Foreman. The existing site plans of the library and septic system were looked at. Although the library would prefer to have the patio at the front of the building, based on the location of the septic system, the patio will have to go to the rear of the building. This would also help make a connection to the Connectivity Trail at the rear of the building.

Library Director Elizabeth Thornton thanked the Town Administrator for his due diligence investigating the possible location for the proposed patio and the BOS for their support to make this happen. She said they are excited about the project and believes it will be a wonderful plus for the town. She thanked Trish Brudz for her work in getting the grant from the Hartford Foundation for the project.

Library Assistant Trish Brudz said the library staff is really excited to take the additional space to make more opportunities for the community to use it as part of library programming as well as when the library is closed.

9.a.2 8-24 Referrals:

J. Rupert reported on the two following 8-24 referrals going before the Planning and Zoning Commission tomorrow night:

- Erect temporary office structure in front of Notch Road Municipal Center (104 Notch Road) for relocation of Town Hall Office Space
- Construct an outdoor patio at the Bentley Memorial Library Property (206 Bolton Center Road)

9.b Cyber Upgrades:

J. Rupert reported town has migrated from the bolton.org domain to the bolton.gov domain and cyber upgrades are well underway. He said the staff is pleased with the change in service.

9.c FY 24 Budget Report:

M. Eremita MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the budget report as presented. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

9.d Budget Transfers:

R. DePietro MOVED that the Board of Selectmen approve the transfer of \$7,500 in the Highway Department budget from category Repair and Maintenance Services to Road Repairs and the transfer of \$850 in the Highway Department budget from category Repair and Maintenance Services to Repair and Maintenance Supplies. M. Eremita SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

9.e A/P Report:

M. Eremita MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

10. First Selectman's Report: P. Sawyer reported on a road closure on July 1, 2023 due to unidentified truck clipping and breaking a telephone pole which took a great deal of time to remediate a PCP and mineral oil spill from the transformer onto a neighboring property. She reported on the diesel spill on Route 6. She said she had four meetings with DOT on a major plan for resurfacing seventeen bridges in Manchester and two bridges resurfacing on 384 in Bolton and has asked the DOT to look into painting the girders under the bridges.

11. Administrative Officer's Report

10.a Monthly Report:

J. Rupert reported the town is looking into how much it will take to get recertification of staff on SustainableCT and whether it has value of staff's time. He explained it demonstrates the town is using sustainable practices as a town in the things that it does. He said the town achieved bronze level when the certification was initiated under the previous administration. He noted one thing the town has to work on if it pursues recertification is a diversity statement. He said when the Diversity Commission concluded their work, they had a suggested statement that the BOS should consider and the BOS said they would take that up at a future date.

J. Rupert said he is looking for guidance for the board if they would like the town to pursue tis recertification and, if so, is a diversity statement something the board thinks can be put together working off the model presented by the Diversity Commission.

The members concurred SustainableCT recertification is something the town should pursue.

A. Teller MOVED that the Board of Selectmen direct the Town Administrator to pursue recertification of the town as a SustainableCT community and that include examination and completion of a diversity statement. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

J. Rupert reported the STEAP grant application process has opened up with an August 9th is due date. He discussed some options for using the grant money to open up and upgrade the meeting space at the Notch Center Municipal building to create a larger meeting space and polling place or to move forward some of the vision of the folks at Heritage Farm. He said he will come back to the board with suggestions for projects for the grant.

Other highlights of the Town Administrator's report included:

- The town had a successful shred day
- Work on the Connectivity Trail has started
- Summer staff is on board
- The care of the town cemeteries by town staff in the Buildings and Grounds Department has generated may positive comments
- J. Rupert received the Clifton Clark award for years of service and significant contributions to building safety in the State of Connecticut
- J. Rupert served as a panelist at the CMA conference to discuss sustainable hiring and employment practices
- J. Rupert attended CRCOG annual meeting
- All insurance renewals have been completed

- J. Rupert was appointed as a member of the Central CT Solid Waste Authority
- Working on the next EMPG grant which helps pay for the town's Emergency Management Director
- Met with Eversource twice over the past month. The Town's new Emergency Management Director learned to use their online system. She has completed all her FEMA classes in order to fulfill her role

10.b Other: J. Rupert reported the town has been working on a situation where there has been an application for a driveway to extend over a right-of-way on a town road. The application was denied once based on the advice of the town attorney. J. Rupert explained, typically driveway permits are approved at the staff level by the Highway Foreman with input from the town engineer when necessary. The highway foreman was part of the beginning of the discussion but left before the discussion concluded. A new highway foreman had not yet been hired, so, as the interim highway foreman, J. Rupert said he made the decision, based on advice from the town attorney, to deny the original application. The same application has been re-applied for and the legal opinion from the town attorney is that the town should continue on the same path and not approve the request. J. Rupert said he was looking for guidance from the board as to how to proceed and wanted the board to be aware that the decision could be appealed and there could be litigation.

A. Teller responded that staff, with the expertise and advice of the town attorney, makes the decision. He said it is a technical decision, not a management decision. If, and when, it is appealed, that is a point when it is appropriate for the town to direct the strategy or determination of whether to fight that appeal. The board members concurred with A. Teller's statements.

Consensus of the members was to hold the next A/P meeting on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

- 11. Adjournment:** R. DePietro MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. A. Teller SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

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.