



Bolton Conservation Commission
Statement of Support for Bike-Walk Bolton Trail Access
7.2.2024

The Bolton Conservation Commission supports any safe remedy for the residents in the Bolton Lakes area to access the Hop River Trail and the East Coast Greenway.

We feel that an open connection will help restore and guide safe movement for bicycle and pedestrian traffic between the Notch and various parts of town.

We further encourage a study by qualified professionals to determine and resolve, satisfactorily, access and safety concerns for the residents of Bolton and towns to our east.

Respectfully,

Bolton Conservation Commission

Rod Parlee, Chair



5b.

McCavanagh, Kathleen

From: Rodney Fournier
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 11:04 AM
To: McCavanagh, Kathleen
Subject: Fwd: Invitation to PZC Meeting of August 14, 2024

Internal (rfournier@boltonct.gov)

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From: tmanning818@sbcglobal.net <tmanning818@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, July 26, 2024 8:56:41 AM
To: Rodney Fournier <rfournier@boltonct.gov>
Cc: Rupert, Jim <jrupert@boltonct.gov>; Carson, Patrice <pcarson@boltonct.gov>
Subject: Invitation to PZC Meeting of August 14, 2024

Rodney, you and the members of the Board of Selectmen are invited to a discussion about property development and affordable housing with the Planning and Zoning Commission at its regular meeting on August 14, 2024, starting at 7:30 p.m. in person at Bolton Town Hall and virtually on Zoom. Our Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations are currently being codified with a view to simplification for the users, our staff and property owners. I also understand that there has been some recent discussion with staff about a couple of large properties.

Thomas A Manning

18 School Road
Bolton CT 06043-7814
(860) 990-4698 cell

6 a.

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, JULY 2, 2024
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Mather Clarke, Amanda Gordon

Board of Selectmen Members Absent: Tim Sadler, Gwen Marrison, Pamela Sawyer

Staff Present In-Person: Town Attorney Richard Barger

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

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

Others Present In-Person: Lauren Lalancette, Barbara Amodio, Alan Bicknell, Kristen Moore, Craig Moore, Priscilla Ward, Kyle Paggioli, Kim Welch

1. **Call to Order:** R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. **Public Comment:**

Lauren Lalancette of 1 Lakeside Circle said she has concern that she is selling her house and moving in September and is required by August 1st to pay the taxes on it for the full year. She asked why Bolton makes people pay the full year's taxes when other towns only require 6 months' payment. R. Fournier said the board would take this up at their next meeting.

Barbara Amodio of 50 Volpi Road read the following statement:

"I am speaking for Bike Walk Bolton.

It has been more than 50 years through no fault of the Town of Bolton since the people of Bolton have been able to travel safely from one side of town to the other except by car through the Rte 6/44/384 interchange. This has meant the children could not walk or ride a bike to school. They could not walk or ride a bike to a friends house on the other side of the divide. Adults could not get to the municipal offices, restaurants, parks, schools – any place that was on the other side of the divide, unless they had a car. 50 years!!!! That's a long time.

We ask that the Town of Bolton insist that Connecticut DOT corrects this problem area that was created by their own design over 50 years ago before a pedestrian or cyclist is killed or injured. We know that people pass through that area every day at their own peril!!!! We also know that as drivers are more distracted and speeds are faster pedestrian and cyclist injuries and deaths are on the rise.

A feasibility study and a plan for a safe path for peds and cyclists has already been submitted on 2017. We feel the path can be constructed in such a way that it could fit into the design of the complete reconstruction of the corridor which is also badly needed and we fully support. But because of the size and cost of the project it could take many years to come to fruition.

The pedestrian/ bike lane needs to be constructed NOW. We ask that the town of Bolton move forward with the separated lane for the safety of people who travel that dangerous section by foot or by bike - every day - at their own peril.”

Craig Moore of 45 Enrico Road made the following statement accompanied by photos regarding the Enrico Road right-of-way:

“I’m here to speak on 3 points I would really like the Board to be aware of before making the important decision on the Enrico Road ROW driveway permit discussed last week.

1. I don’t think a decision regarding this specific ROW would create a precedent for all other ROW in Bolton. I have taken pictures of the 4 discussed at the meeting last week. All have wide open spaces with no involvement of any driveway. I don’t know if any other ROW in town that has this issue where abutting driveways enter the potential road space as mine does.
2. I don’t know of any other driveway permit being brought to this Board since I have lived here. It seems it is being brought to you for a more favorable decision as the Town lawyer has already clearly made a no decision based on Town rules.
3. I also don’t understand why the use of our deeds was used to favors allowing the gravel driveway to be placed. The deed is a legal document that needs to identify the boundaries of the property. If the road is extended to provide for a future subdivision it would be a continuance of the current Enrico Road. That then also explains why the cul de sac remains “temporary” 35 years after this subdivision was “approved” by the Town.”

He said somewhere somehow someone made a mistake with the right-of-way. He asked that the town own the mistake, learn from it and not continue the mistake 30 years later.

Alan Bicknell of the Conservation Commission made the following statement in support of Bike Walk Bolton movement.

“The Bolton Conservation Commission supports the safe remedy for the residents in the Bolton Lakes area to access the Hop River Trail in the East Coast Greenway. We feel that an open connection will help restore free movement for pedestrian and bicycle traffic between the various parts of town. We further encourage a professional study by qualified persons to determine and resolve satisfactorily access and safety concerns for the residents of Bolton and the towns to the east.”

Kim Welch of 51 Vernon Road commented she is here to support B. Amodio’s request for Bike Walk Bolton’s missing link to be addressed by the board. She suggested the board separate this request rather than trying to tie it with the re-alignment of the entire intersection at Rt 6, 44 and the end of 384 so that pedestrians and cyclists can get through that intersection safely. She said she supports L. Lalancette’s request that the town revisit why the residents cannot pay their taxes in two pieces.

3. Correspondence: No correspondence.

4. Approval of Minutes:

a. June 4, 2024 regular meeting minutes:

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen approve the June 4 2024 regular meeting minutes as presented. M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

b. June 18, 2024 special meeting minutes:

R. Morra MOVED the Board of Selectmen approve the June 18, 2024 special meeting minutes as presented. A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:0:1 with M. Clarke abstaining.

5. Appointments/ Re-appointments and Resignations:

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation of Sean Bailey as Highway Foreman. M. Clarke SECONDED. R. Morra thanked Mr. Bailey for his service to the town. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation of Ernest Richardson from the Veterans Commission. M. Clarke SECONDED. R. Morra thanked Mr. Richardson for his service to the town. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

A. Gordon MOVED that the Board of Selectmen make the following appointments and re-appointments:

- Re-appoint Gregory Carini as Alternate to the Veterans Commission
- Re-appoint Rodney Parlee as full member to the Conservation Commission
- Appoint Brenda Cataldo as full member to the Conservation Commission
- Re-appoint Cara Wraight as full member to the Heritage Farm Commission
- Appoint Leslie Shea as full (or re-appoint as Alternate) member to the Heritage Farm Commission (town staff will check appointment/re-appointment status)
- Re-appoint Helen Winkler as full member to the Senior Citizen Commission

R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

6. Ongoing Business:

6.a Deliberations regarding Paggioli Driveway Application:

R. Morra said with only four members present, he does not think it fair to either party to make a rendering tonight.

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen postpone deliberations on the Paggioli driveway application to a meeting to be announced. A. Gordon recommended changing the wording of the agenda item to "Deliberations and Act on the Paggioli Driveway Application" for that meeting agenda. R. Morra agreed. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7. New Business

7.a Consider and Act on Non-Union Pay Raises:

Regarding the pay table provided, A. Gordon said she was not clear with the section labeled "Contract followed/Suggested Increase." R. Morra clarified that where it says "Supervisor's Contact" that means the suggested increase is based on the same structure as the supervisor's contract even though they are not part of that contract. A. Gordon has concerns with how much the town is paying the Deputy Registrars as compared to the normal Registrars and other staff. Concerned discussion followed on the difficulty filling the positions of Registrar and Deputy Registrar, given the demands and complexities of the positions, with the general feeling the town should do more to make the positions more appealing to people. R. Morra commented, in the past, the BOS has adjusted the rates later on in the fiscal year because of the

additional workload. He suggested the board accept the pay increases as presented and revisit a couple of the positions afterward.

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the Non-Union pay raises as presented.
M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.b Consider and Act Budget Reductions:

A. Gordon explained this is a result of cuts made by the Finance Committee, which is \$25,000 to the Board of Selectmen's budget.

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen make the following FY24/25 budget reductions:
Fifteen thousand (\$15,000) from Workman's Compensation.
Ten thousand (\$10,000) from Liability Insurance.

A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.c Consider and Act on Delegation of Authority to approve Driveway Permits:

A. Gordon MOVED that the Board of Selectmen delegate the review and approval of driveway permits to the Highway Foreman. The Highway Foreman shall seek advice from the local traffic authority or town engineer, as necessary. In the absence of the Highway Foreman such authority is given to the Town Administrator who is also the local traffic authority. M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

7.d Consider and Act on authorization to submit the Homeland Cybersecurity Grant:

R. Morra explained this is an annual grant submitted by the town.

A. Gordon MOVED to authorize the Town Administrator to submit the Homeland Cybersecurity grant on behalf of the Town of Bolton. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

8. Reports and Updates:

8.a FY 24 Budget Report: R. Fournier noted everything looks in line.

8.b Consider and Act on A/P Report:

A. Gordon MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented for the 24/25 FY in the amount of \$15,516.57 R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

A. Gordon MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$327,222.88 . M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

8.c Budget Transfers:

R. Morra MOVED that the Board of Selectmen approve the transfer of \$10,000 from category Payroll to category Professional & Technical in the Administration budget. A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0.

8.d Report on Nathan Hale potential Parking Sites: R. Fournier reported Gwen Marrion has drafted a letter to be sent to all the neighbors on the trail regarding the proposed parking area off Stony Road to provide access to the Nathan Hale Greenway. She met with Buildings and Grounds Supervisor John Butrymovich and he said the old house lot site looks doable for the

parking area. Discussion followed on getting from that location to the trail would require a road crossing. R. Fournier commented that the site has significant possibilities.

8.e Town Administrator's Report: R. Fournier commented on the highlight report from the Town Administrator.

- 10. Adjournment:** A. Gordon MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. R. Morra 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.

BOS Sign In 7/2/24

Name	Address
Priscilla Ward Kristen + Craig Moeck	44 Emerald Rd. Bolton 45 Emerald rd Bolton
Barbara Amodio Kim Welch	50 Volpi Rd. 51 Vernon Rd. Bolton
Lauren Lafonette Kyle Paggiou	1 Lakeside Circle Bolton 51 Birch Mountain

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FINANCE COMMITTEE
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
7:00 PM, MONDAY, JULY 8, 2024
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Mather Clarke, Gwen Marrion, Amanda Gordon, Pamela Sawyer

Board of Selectmen Members Present Via Zoom: Tim Sadler

Finance Committee Members Present In-Person: Rhea Klein, Ashley Phelan

Finance Committee Members Present Via Zoom: Chairman Ross Lally, Christopher Connelly (7:12 p.m.)

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald, Tax Assessor Kara Fishman, Finance Director Jill Collins

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert, Tax Collector Lori Bushnell

Others Present Via Zoom: Sandra Pierog, Holly MacDonald

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Discussion on Assessment and Tax Collection for 2024 Tax Season:

R. Fournier explained there was an issue that happened with the transfer of data from the Assessor's office through a bridge into the Tax Collector's office, which are two different programs. He said 556 accounts were moved over wrong, resulting in the town collecting an additional one million dollars in tax assessment.

A. Gordon asked why there is additional revenue since the town has the grand list and is the grand list posted on the town website wrong, and, if so, why?

Assessor K. Fishman explained the reports she ran for the town and the state were based on what was in QDS, which was the terminal that did not bridge correctly. The last bridge took place in February and the reason there is more revenue for all those accounts is they were not increased to the revalued amounts.

Tax Collector L. Bushnell explained there are two QDS accounts, one for the Assessor and one for the town. She said the one K. Fishman referred to is the one going from the CAMA system Vision Government Solutions to the Assessor's system.

To clarify, A. Gordon said Vision, the company the town contracted with to do the revaluation, gave the town the wrong data. L. Bushnell said the data were right in Vision, in the CAMA system, but something happened in the bridge of the transfer to the QDS software in the Assessor's office.

R. Lally asked if the information that the town's assessing company did was correct. K. Fishman responded yes. She said, ultimately, she should have looked at the totals in the two systems and

compared them. She noted she never had a problem in the 12 years that she has used the system. She said the bridge is part of Vision's software. She explained what is being done in a bridge is you are exporting from CAMA and importing to the Vision system. K. Fishman said Vision has offered to go back and look through all their source coding to figure out if it is wrong there.

T. Sadler asked if residents received incorrect bills or correct bills. L. Bushnell responded there are about 500 accounts that went out with incorrect tax information.

R. Fournier said the important thing right now is to figure out how to redistribute this money.

R. Lally responded the members need to understand what happened so they know how much money is being talked about and what the committee needs to do to adjust the mil rate in order to properly give money back.

3. Consider and Possibly Act on Action to Resolve the Issue:

P. Sawyer read the following letter from K. Fishman dated July 8, 2024 labeled "numbers to work with" into the record:

"There are 556 accounts that had the wrong assessment. Of these, 161 are accounts paid through CoreLogic (the banks) and received the correct bill amount. An additional 38 accounts were adjusted through walk-ins and phone calls. An additional 357 accounts have not been rebilled.

The additional net assessment from the tax bills already corrected is \$13,894,230, with additional revenue of \$454,897.01.

The additional gross assessment from the accounts that have not been rebilled is \$19,545,260. The net assessment is estimated at 86% of the gross (based on the current ratio of net to gross real estate), or \$16,808,924. The additional tax revenue would be an estimated \$550,324.17.

In total, the additional assessment is \$30,703,164, producing additional revenue of approximately \$1,005,221.18."

A. Gordon noted, it is not just the tax bill that went out wrong, it is also the grand list the town uses to calculate the mil rate was wrong. That is why this would not normally be considered additional revenue if the grand list the town based the mil rate was correct. It would be revenue the town normally expected. But because those assessments were not in that grand list, it is additional revenue the town was not expecting.

To help the members better understand who and how this has affected the taxpayers, L. Bushnell provided an explanation how they have taken care of the problem so far. She has started changing the assessments to what they were supposed to be, setting priority to all the banks so they could go through their customers and pay the right amount. The office has also been addressing taxpayer calls and concerns.

Members discussed options, once the final amount of additional revenue overage is determined, of how to either refund or rebate the money to those affected, as well as the costs associated with this process.

With the consensus of the members, J. Collins said she will contact the auditor to explain the situation and see what he suggests.

P. Sawyer MOVED that the Board of Selectmen form a three-member panel consisting of Ross Lally, Amanda Gordon and Robert Morra to make discussion about the rebate/refund with the town attorney to be the priority versus the cause of the problem and to review and look at the contracts and that part of that issue and that they work with the Town Administrator and go forward and talk with the Town Attorney for clarification on state statute and town ordinances. This will be a subcommittee of the BOS and include members of the Finance Committee. R. Morra SECONDED. G. Marrion pointed out that the issue of getting the determination of rebate/refund is the priority question as opposed to the one of what the underlying problem was. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

L. Bushnell said, as far as she knows, she will have the corrected bills at the currently adopted mil rate out to the 357 accounts that have not yet been rebilled by the end of the week. K. Fishman said, once those bills have been corrected and go out, she will have net assessment and then the final grand list number. She credited QDS staff for all their help.

The consensus was to direct the Town Administrator to create the first press release to the public as soon as possible saying where the town is of this meeting. P. Sawyer said, as elected leaders, they need to be upfront and open as possible. The Town Administrator will work with the First Selectman on this press release.

4. Adjournment: P. Sawyer MOVED to adjourn the joint special meeting at 8:13 p.m. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

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.

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2024
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Mather Clarke, Gwen Marrion, Amanda Gordon

Board of Selectmen Members Absent: Tim Sadler, Pamela Sawyer

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Others Present Via Zoom: James Loersch

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Discussion on Retreat Results:

A. Gordon shared a strategic planning work plan she created from discussion and facilitator comments at the retreat to help the members figure out what they want to do. She said what the group needs to establish are:

- what is the general goal,
- what are the next steps,
- who are they assigned to,
- what is the deadline,
- and what additional resources or groups/entities does the group need to accomplish.

R. Morra noted some of the projects can be considered extremely long-term, for example, improvement of the Rt 66 and 44 intersection for safety. After discussion, the members decided to have the Town Administrator work with the town’s representatives from the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CROG) to get a meeting with the new BOS and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) in September to see what DOT’s plan is and what the town of Bolton’s vision is.

The selectmen discussed having R. Fournier invite the Chairs of the land use boards to a joint meeting with the BOS for late May or early June. They discussed scheduling a separate meeting with the Board of Education and the Finance Committee prior to the start of the next budget season, possibly late September or early October. The consensus of the board was to have R. Fournier reach out to the BOE Chair to find out his board’s availability to participate in a joint meeting with the BOS and Finance Committee to set up a meeting to discuss the future of the schools.

The selectmen discussed getting live streaming of town meetings. The Town Administrator will check with the Community Voice Channel to find out if they live stream through their Youtube channel in addition to broadcasting the meetings.

G. Marrion listed topics she would like to tackle at this meeting:

- Establish Town Hall and community space task force:

J. Rupert said a few years ago, students from UCONN did a design plan for a free-standing town hall, including a 3D computer model that could be built anywhere in the town. He said they had a good start on the space necessary for the employees. J. Rupert believes this design plan would be good for a committee as a starting point. A. Gordon commented that the town does not want to put itself on a track to build a new town hall and then make the decision that having a high school is not sustainable and the town is going to go regional and not use the high school building. She said that would be irresponsible and believes the board needs to make these big decisions together rather than sequentially. A. Gordon said the two boards need to come together to lay out all the options. The members selected a committee comprised of R. Fournier, M. Clarke and G. Marrion and possibly other staff and community members to look at the UCONN design plan and produce a list of what the board would want to include for community space. G. Marrion will ask James Loersch if he would like to serve on this committee as well. J. Rupert will provide the committee with the UCONN plan, when located.

- Route 6 and 44 intersection (already discussed)

- Identify staff person whose job it is to bring economic development and business to Bolton: G. Marrion said she would like to have a discussion about the contract of the town's Director of Community Development. J. Rupert said her contract is pretty broad in its scope and will go for a few more years. A. Gordon suggested the board needs to have a better understanding of how she is currently spending her hours allotted and then the board needs to assess if her time is best spent there or elsewhere or if she is willing to take on more hours. J. Rupert noted, in some ways, the zoning regulations continue to be an obstacle to businesses moving to town. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission is currently working with Patrice Carson and Michael D'Amato on simplifying the zoning and subdivision regulations. The selectmen asked if P. Carson could track interest in town properties including how many businesses were interested in what property and a bulleted list of these were the barriers and report back to the board quarterly. J. Rupert also said property development is going to be limited without city water. Discussion followed on the difficulties associated with bringing multi-unit housing to town.

- Meet with area town police departments on the possibility of having a combined police force:

J. Rupert suggested having one or two Resident State Troopers and contract with another town, like Coventry or Vernon, to provide in-town coverage during those times when the State Troopers are not on duty. He said there is no mutual aid for the police department unless the situation is severe. Consensus of the board was to have the Town Administrator reach out to various town leadership to see if there is the opportunity to share services, starting with Vernon and Tolland and report back to the board by the end of the year.

The board discussed the issue of extending public water up Route 44. R. Fournier said he has spoken with Manchester Town Manager Steve Stephanou and he would be happy to have a sit-down at some point. J. Rupert explained, under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, (CWSRF), the U.S. EPA provides grants to capitalize state CWSRF programs. Communities apply for CWSRF assistance to plan, design, and construct water quality projects. The program aims to protect public health, preserve aquatic resources, and meet environmental standards. The states contribute an additional 20% to match the federal grants. J. Rupert said a Manchester Water Company engineer (Bolton resident) worked with the

UConn School of Engineering to design a water system coming into Bolton from Manchester to Bolton Notch. That project had a price tag of \$3-\$5 million dollars. A subcommittee was formed including R. Fournier, J. Rupert, R. Morra (representing the BLRWPCA) and P. Carson (to help develop public/private partnerships to possibly cover part of the town's 20% of the grant) to continue the conversation with Manchester.

J. Rupert said the board needs to keep talking about the solid waste issue and how to keep organics out of the waste stream. He said he asked Rod Parlee, Chair of the Conservation Commission and Bentley Memorial Library Director Elizabeth Thornton to help develop a new educational program to include composting but the initiative fizzled after an initial meeting with the educator who is part of the town's contract with All American Waste. Discussion followed on the complexities of setting up a composting program. A subcommittee was formed including R. Parlee, E. Thornton, and A. Gordon.

A. Gordon said she will distribute her spreadsheets to the selectmen with the notes included from tonight's meeting.

3. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m. by unanimous vote.

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.

**TOWN OF BOLTON
AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2024
IN PERSON - TOWN HALL AT 5:00 P.M.**

The Town of Bolton Ad Hoc Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, July 16th with the following committee members in attendance: Ross Lally, Amanda Gordon, and Robert Morra.

Also in attendance were First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Town Administrator Jim Rupert, Tax Collector Lori Bushnell, Assessor Kara Fishman and Town Attorney Rich Barger.

1. Call to Order.

R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Discussion and Possible Recommendations Regarding Taxes.

Discussion started with what the cause of what the tax issue was.

There was an issue with Real Estate (RE) taxes. The correct RE grand list data did not get into our billing system, which was used to create the mil rate and send out tax bills. Data from Vision (assessor's software – owned by CoreLogic) was undervalued by about \$30 million, thus the mil rate was set higher than it should have been because the grand list bottom line was too small.

There were 557 accounts that did not have their assessments correct on their tax bills, which were lower.

The town estimates they will collect approximately \$1 million in revenue beyond what was approved at referendum.

This appears to be a clerical mistake in the assessment. The bridge between the town's tax software, Quality Data Systems (QDS) and assessment software (Vision, CoreLogic) did not calculate the correct numbers.

This needs to be investigated thoroughly and we need a concise summary of what occurred so we can address this issue with the software company.

R. Morra stated that we pay CoreLogic a huge amount of money to provide us with the correct data- they should be at fault if they gave us the wrong data.

What is their liability in all of this?

Discussion then moved on to the options the town has to deal with this problem:

1. Halt collection of taxes, lower the mill rate to what it would have been had the grand list been correct, send out new updated bills, send out refunds to people who have already paid their bills

Pros/Cons:

- a. Too administratively complex
 - b. Would lose out on interest revenue and may not have enough in the bank to pay our bills
 - c. The Town Administrator has told people- the committee is looking at this option and no specific course has been decided.
2. Continue collection of taxes with due dates of 7/31 and 8/31, lower the mil rate to what it would have been had the grand list been correct, and send out refunds to everyone.

Questions that need to be answered about this option:

- a. What application is required to be sent out under this scenario?
 - b. Do we have to offer refund and credit?
3. Continue collection of taxes with due dates of 7/31 and 8/31, keep the mil rate as it is, then send rebates out to residents in the amount of the difference between what the mil rate was set at and what it WOULD have been set at with the new grand list information.
 - a. Administration seems to like this issue best.

Question to be considered:

- b. What happens if someone hasn't paid their tax bill yet? What happens to the rebate? They don't get it unless they pay, would we have to deduct interest owed from rebate, or credit to next year?

If the town were to lower the mil rate it would affect the car taxes because the rate would fall below the motor vehicle rate cap, which would obligate us to change the MV mil rate and then we would also have to issue all new car tax

bills. This is the least favorable option for us.

Attorney Barger stated the following:

- Legislature tries to anticipate such situations, but not sure this is covered
- Found 1 statute- Correction of Clerical Error in Assessment (Section 12-60)
 - Rebates vs refunds
 - Refund means an overpayment – this is not the issue as taxpayers paid according to the mil rate they were given
 - Rebates typically relate to disabilities, which has nothing to do with this situation
- Section 12-60 states that a clerical omission or mistake in the assessments may be corrected, tax shall be levied and collected according to such corrected assessment.
 - This is what we did by sending out corrected tax bills.
 - The town was made aware of the issue on June 27th by customer phone call
 - The town issued a press release on June 28th regarding the issue found
 - Revised tax bills were sent out on July 11, 2024
- The letters that went out this spring were correct (went out from the vision system)– resident’s do not have the right to aggrieve this again based on the wrong tax bill
 - It’s a townwide issue, and it’s a mistake, it has nothing to do with their individual assessments.

Attorney Barger also discussed the Statutory order of operations. We do the grand list, budget, mill rate....

The town is making an administrative decision based on good reasons, acting in good faith, making taxpayers whole.

Everyone would get money back unless they are under the \$5 threshold as specified in town ordinance.

The town is currently waiting for some minor discrepancies to be fixed to complete the finalization of the grand list to calculate the change.

\$541,509,000 is the estimated new grand list number which results in a .93 mil difference.

Martin Heft, Office of Policy Management (OPM) became aware of our issue and sent a letter to us, requesting that as we correct this issue there is a list of things we need to provide OPM with as we move forward in this situation. A copy of the letter sent to us by Mr. Heft has been requested for the committee to review.

Town Administrator J. Rupert is also concerned about what will happen if we don't lower the mil rate since the state normally reimburses the town for the difference between the mil rate and the motor vehicle cap. If we lower the mil rate we are entitled to nothing, if we leave it where it is, it's still over the MV mil rate cap and we still might be entitled to the payment to cover the gap.

There are a lot of pieces to this puzzle and

3. Adjourn.

R. Lally adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy McCavanagh



§ 12-60. Correction of clerical error in assessment

Any clerical omission or mistake in the assessment of taxes may be corrected according to the fact by the assessors or board of assessment appeals, not later than three years following the tax due date relative to which such omission or mistake occurred, and the tax shall be levied and collected according to such corrected assessment. In the event that the issuance of a certificate of correction results in an increase to the assessment list of any person, written notice of such increase shall be sent to such person's last-known address by the assessor or board of assessment appeals within ten days immediately following the date such correction is made. Such notice shall include, with respect to each assessment list corrected, the assessment prior to and after such increase and the reason for such increase. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by the action of the assessor under this section may appeal the doings of the assessor to the board of assessment appeals as otherwise provided in this chapter, provided such appeal shall be extended in time to the next succeeding board of assessment appeals if the meetings of such board for the grand list have passed. Any person intending to so appeal to the board of assessment appeals may indicate that taxes paid by him for any additional assessment added in accordance with this section, during the pendency of such appeal, are paid "under protest" and thereupon such person shall not be liable for any interest on the taxes based upon such additional assessment, provided (1) such person shall have paid not less than seventy-five per cent of the amount of such taxes within the time specified or (2) the board of assessment appeals reduces valuation or removes items of property from the list of such person so that there is no tax liability related to additional assessment.

Source:

(1949 Rev. S. 1735; P.A. 90-101, S. 1; P.A. 95-283, S. 35, 68.)

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING – A/P
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2024
BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD
In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid Format)**

MINUTES

Board of Selectmen Members Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Mather Clarke, Gwen Marrion, Tim Sadler, Amanda Gordon, Pamela Sawyer

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Others Present Via Zoom: James Loersch

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Consider and Act on A/P Report:

P. Sawyer MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report as presented. R. Morra SECONDED.

G. Marrion questioned the amount of the Stewart & Stevenson bill of \$13,616.83 for service work on an antifreeze leak on the Fire Department’s rescue truck 134. J. Rupert explained that is not a full description of the work done on the truck . He said the diesel fire trucks sit and idle a lot with high RPM’s because they are running to operate the movement of water. The new systems for reducing emissions are not really compatible with these fire trucks and this is the second truck that has had a problem with the EGR valve that creates this issue. R. Morra added there are only two or three companies regionally that can do this type of repair.

The consensus of the board was to split the motion into two motions based on fiscal year. P. Sawyer withdrew her motion.

P. Sawyer MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the portion of the A/P report for FY2324 as presented in the amount of \$74, 885.69 A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

P. Sawyer MOVED that the Board of Selectmen accept the A/P report for FY2425 as presented in the amount of \$101,963.67 R. Morra SECONDED.

G. Marrion asked for an explanation for the contract overage for copier maintenance. J. Rupert said the departments went over the number of copies made over what is in the contract.

G. Marrion asked about the \$770.00 monthly fee paid for insurance consulting services. J. Rupert said every year when the town has its insurance renewals or there are changes in the insurance, the company helps the town determine what decisions should be made and what decisions need to be made. R. Morra said the company helps with the complexity of the insurance and monitor and advise the town. Their expertise saves the town money. J. Rupert said they look at trends in insurance and also help educate the staff with changes in the town’s health insurance. G. Marrion

said the town needs to be proactive with these contracts to make sure the town is getting the value that it wants. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

3. **Consider and Act on Budget Transfers:** There were no budget transfers presented for consideration and action. G. Marrion noted there were 20 fire commission transfers in the last three months. She asked why the Fire Commission budget is not being more carefully constructed right from the beginning. J. Rupert explained this last batch of transfers was making adjustments and corrections and the prior transfers were trying to capitalize on available monies. G. Marrion said she would like there to be a little more oversight when the Fire Commission yearly budget is submitted to the Town Administrator in the fall and to ask them to be a little more precise.
4. **Consider and Act on Approving the Resolution for the Capitol Region Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:**
P. Sawyer MOVED that the Board of Selectmen adopt the Resolution for the Capitol Region Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024-2029 as presented. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

The next A/P meeting is scheduled for July 30, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

5. **Adjournment:** P. Sawyer MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

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.