

**BOLTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 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

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Linda H. McDonald

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Others Present Via Zoom: James Loersch

Others Present In-Person: Ross Lally, Charlie Danna

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Consider and possibly act on a Consultant for Tax Issues:

R. Fournier noted the board had a proposal for consulting services from Mary Huda before them. Charles Danna and Mary Terhune were contacted as well and each expressed interest in helping but did not want to lead the process.

R. Fournier, J. Rupert and R. Lally had a follow-up conversation with M. Huda, who they found very capable and confident. R. Lally added she estimated that for the first two phases (get to the grand list basis the town needs to use and to find out what had gone wrong) would involve 10 to 20 hours of her time at a cost of \$2,600 - \$5,200.

C. Danna offered his assistance to any analysis or review the town may be doing. His advice is for the town to take someone currently active in the field.

A. Gordon reported the Tax Issue subcommittee has received five reports from the Tax Collector since their last meeting. A. Gordon suggested a meeting with the Tax Collector, Assessor and possibly the Chief Financial Officer to try to understand the reports and possibly some of the legwork could be completed by the subcommittee on this issue before bringing in a paid consultant. A. Gordon said she has concern going into this knowing the town has already spent \$2,000 - \$4,000 only to spend more for a paid consultant. She agrees that the town needs outside eyes to look at a final product.

R. Lally said this is an option he feels comfortable presenting to the BOS for consideration, that the committee do some of the legwork, getting input from C. Danna and possibly M. Terhune and then formally have M. Huda take a look at it at the end of the process as a third-party.

Discussion followed on the types of tax issue work the subcommittee could perform in-house, including doing a spot check on the assessment letters that went out to the 557 taxpayers affected

and reviewing the five different views of the grand list over time in the reports provided by the Tax Collector. R. Lally added this is also an educational process for the subcommittee.

The next steps are for the tax issue subcommittee to meet with C. Danna, the Assessor, the Tax Collector and possibly the Chief Financial Officer. J. Rupert and R. Lally will work on a date for the meeting.

R. Fournier requested this process be fast-tracked as he is concerned that a lot of elderly and lower-income people could really use the money. R. Lally said the subcommittee could reasonably shoot for the end of September for resolution.

3. Discussion on Retreat and Goals:

The Selectmen referred to the work plan created by A. Gordon. They discussed and reported on the status of the following tasks for the items/projects prioritized at their retreat this past April:

- Establish major board joint meetings
- Get livestreaming of Town meetings
- Integrate Town of Bolton and BOE websites
- Enhance use of Bolton Bulletin
- Establish regular meetings between BOS and BOE
- Finish Herrick Park plan
- Partner with Bolton Land Trust on land acquisition
- Dialogue with State regarding security and graffiti issues and Freja/Notch/Steeles Crossing
- Explore lighting an energy efficiencies opportunities with Eversource
- Improve Route 6 and Route 44 intersection safety
- Extend public water up Route 44
- Develop new Town Hall with Community space
- Develop more affordable/attainable housing
- Expand grant writing capacity/formalize grant processes
- Simplify zoning regulations and streamline approval processes
- Identify staff person whose job it is to bring in economic development to Bolton
- Plan to address sustainability of school system
- Establish plan for future of the fire department structure
- Future of police structure in Bolton
- Reducing solid waste costs

4. Adjournment: R. Morra MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

The next A/P meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

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.