

**TOWN OF BOLTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP - #2  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M.  
TOWN HALL & ZOOM  
MINUTES**

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

**Board of Selectman Members Absent:** Mather Clarke

**Other Board Members Present In-Person:** Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Tom Manning, Inland Wetlands Chairman Ross Lally

**Staff Present In-Person:** Town Administrator James Rupert, Consulting Director of Community Development Patrice Carson, AICP, Buildings and Grounds Supervisor John Butrymovich, Assessor Kari Fishman

**Staff Present Via Zoom:** Recording Secretary Kacie Cannon

**Others Present Via Zoom:** Jim Loersch, Amanda Balboni

**1. Call to Order:** R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

P. Sawyer MOVED to change Item No. 7 on the Agenda to Item No. 1(a). R. MORRA SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (M. Clark Absent).

**a. Consider and Possibly Act on Diana Donald Scholarship-Internship Program**

P. Carson stated that the intern, Josh, has been working on the Connecticut Countryside’s website project, and she would like to apply for the scholarship to compensate him for his time and efforts. She stated that the scholarship provides \$3,500.00 in funding with half of the funds being provided up front and the rest when the project is completed. P. Carson added that no matching funds are required, and she expects the project to be completed by May or June. G. Marrion asked how the intern is currently compensated and whether the scholarship would provide compensation for the duration of the project. P. Carson replied that it would and noted that the intern is currently compensated through the Land Use Department.

J. Rupert commended the work Josh has done on the project and suggested having him or P. Carson provide a brief presentation to the BOS on the project. P. Carson stated that she would provide a presentation since the intern attends class in the evening and would not be available.

P. Sawyer MOVED to APPROVE the request to apply for the Diana Donald Scholarship-Internship Program. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1.

**2. Boards and Commissions:**

**• Planning and Zoning:**

PCZ Chairman Tom Manning stated that the request from the PZC is very small, and the budget needs are expected to stay the same as in the past.

- **Zoning Board of Appeals:**

There were no changes requested to the budget for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

- **Inland Wetlands:**

Inland Wetlands Chairman Ross Lally stated that the budget will stay the same as the past 10 years and noted that \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 of the budget is usually returned to the Town.

### **3. Town Building Operations:**

Buildings and Grounds Supervisor John Butrymovich highlighted some of the increases being requested in the budget as follows:

- Payroll: Includes negotiated raises, minimum wage increases, and longevity payments.
- Repairs and Maintenance Services: Increased maintenance costs associated with the copy machine
- Communications: Increased as a result of the contract with Frontier
- Postage: Increase in mail volume
- Electricity: Costs have increased by two cents per kilowatt to a total of nine cents per kilowatt
- Supplies: Increase in the cost of cleaning supplies as well as adding sand to the beach area at INP, which is done every few years.

A. Gordon mentioned that she was surprised at how much the Frontier contract went up and asked about the length of the contract. J. Butrymovich replied that it is a three-year contract. He added that the Communications category in the budget covers cell phones, internet, and the contract with Frontier and provided information on the number of phone lines used among all of the Town buildings. J. Butrymovich also noted that the fire and burglar alarm systems require phone lines. R. Fournier asked if there are any plans to convert to wireless alarm systems. J. Butrymovich replied that they are being converted as panels are replaced; however, there are some buildings, such as the library, that do not have a strong enough signal for a wireless system.

### **4. Assessor:**

Assessor Kari Fishman reported that there are not many changes to the Assessor budget. She noted that the increase in Dues and Fees from 2023-2024 is mainly due to renewals.

### **5. Discussion and Possible Action on RFP for Schematic Plan for New Town Hall:**

J. Rupert stated that there is \$148,000.00 in the budget for the new Town Hall. R. Fournier asked if the Board would like to use the funds to send out an RFP for a schematic to go out to bid. J. Rupert added that the first step would be to send out the RFP and then meetings would take place to review the space and discuss design ideas. T. Sadler asked what the deliverable would be from the RFP, and R. Fournier stated that it would provide a budget price.

T. Sadler asked if there were any ideas on the design. R. Morra noted that a report was done by interns approximately three years ago on potential designs. He added that determining space needs with the future in mind is important to consider. He suggested building on the report while keeping in mind the use of AI, the reduction in storage space needed, and floor plans and desk designs that will be most useful in the future.

T. Sadler asked if any of the departments provided input on space and design needs. J. Rupert explained that the students, who were from Yukon School of Engineering and worked on the plans as part of their capstone project, spoke with staff regarding needs and reviewed older reports on the project. He also agreed that it is important for the Board to consider a design concept that will last for the next 25 to 50 years.

A. Gordon stated that it appears the RFP is not just for a schematic but also for exploration. G. Marrion agreed that further discussion on the design is needed. She added that she does not agree with using the funds to conduct a study on how much space is needed as it would be a step backwards. She asked J. Rupert about the facility study RFP that was recently opened. J. Rupert stated that the RFP is designed as a general conditions study to help understand the condition of the building. G. Marrion asked if an architectural firm could provide advice on how to word the RFP so that it includes the space examination as well as a schematic. J. Rupert suggested that it might be better to start with a Request for Information (RFI) that would solicit information from architectural firms that may potentially bid on the project. Alternatively, the Town could engage the services of an architectural firm to help with an RFP, which would cost approximately \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00.

A. Gordon stated that several underlying decisions will need to be made such as whether the Town plans to digitize, the functionality of the space, and who should be included in conversations. She also recommended soliciting input from the public through a study or Town Hall Meeting. P. Sawyer agreed with soliciting public input and recommended coming up with a creative design that is fluid and changeable. T. Sadler suggested that the Board take time to brainstorm and determine the scope before the RFP goes out. He asked what the winning qualifications would be for the bid. J. Rupert stated that the most qualified bidder, rather than the lowest bidder, would likely be selected.

The Board discussed whether to put out an RFI or a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), the cost and content differences between the two, and the importance of narrowing the scope to attract bidders with specific qualifications. They also discussed further details that need to go into the design including ADA accessibility, preserving a historical look, and ensuring the building meets the needs of the community. J. Rupert will provide a draft RFI for the Board to review in March.

P. Sawyer MOVED to table Item No. 5 for future discussion. A. Gordon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1.

## **6. Consider and Possibly Act on STEAP Grant Application:**

J. Rupert stated that the Board has until February 20, 2025 to decide if they would like to apply for the STEAP Grant. He stated that a match is not required as long as the request is kept under \$500,000.00.

J. Rupert stated that when the Notch Road Municipal Center section comes down, the Town will be left with the Senior Center and Rooms A and B. He suggested using grant funds to consolidate the two rooms into a large, open space so that it can be utilized for various events including summer camp and voting. He added that consolidating the rooms would involve removing the walls and providing partitions to offer versatility in the utilization of the space. J. Rupert noted that he had a conversation with an architect in 2022 and was told that a ballpark figure for the project would be approximately \$400,000.00. He also spoke with Ross Lally who noted that the space could be used for various referendums and municipal elections depending on the layout and components. A. Gordon stated that ADA accessibility would need to be provided in the reconfiguration.

The Board discussed the current STEAP grants for Herrick Park and the community septic project. J. Rupert explained that the Herrick Park project is fully budgeted for \$602,000.00 which includes \$500,000 in STEAP grant money, and \$102,000.00 that is already in the capital budget. T. Sadler asked about improvements to the sports fields at the park. J. Rupert stated that the fields do not get enough use to warrant any major renovations. P. Sawyer mentioned that STEAP allows for projects to be completed in phases; however, depending on the volume of applications, the grant requests are not always approved. J. Rupert stated that he has spoken with Mike Ferrano who is willing to assist with the grant application at a cost of approximately \$4,000.00 that he can pay for out of the Town Administration budget.

A. Gordon asked if there has been any consideration to applying the grant funds to other projects such as improvements needed at Heritage Farm that could generate revenue. J. Rupert replied that a significant amount of money has already been put into renovations at the farm, and there is currently a greater need for space that the room expansion would provide. R. Morra agreed that there are more critical needs than improving the house at the farm. A. Gordon asked if the expanded room could be rented out to the public for various events to generate revenue, and J. Rupert replied that it could.

J. Rupert stated the RFP needs to go out soon for Herrick Park and noted that the Board needs to decide the best use for the field since it is no longer being utilized for baseball. He noted that there has been public interest in creating a space to play cricket. R. Fournier suggested providing a flat field that would have multiple uses. J. Rupert replied that he, John Butrymovich, and Joe Dillon have discussed this idea and agree that it would be best to provide a flat space with no clay to make the field more versatile for various uses. R. Fournier proposed forming a sub-committee to address the field design and uses at the next meeting.

P. Sawyer MOVED to direct the Town Administrator to apply for the STEAP Grant in February for the concept of expanding Rooms A and B into a facility that could be divided as needed. R. Morra SECONDED.

Discussion: T. Sadler stated that he would have preferred a proposal outlining a few specific options for the grant funds rather than using today's meeting to discuss various ideas. J. Rupert stated that he just recently became aware of the funds and did not have enough time to prepare a proposal. P. Sawyer agreed that there was not a lot of time to consider the best use of the funds and recommended that the Board begin discussing ideas for future STEAP grants that become available.

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1.

**7. Consider and Possibly Act on Diana Donald Scholarship-Internship Program**

Item No. 7 was changed to Item No. 1(a).

**8. Adjournment**

P. Sawyer MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:51 p.m. R. Morra SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1.

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon

*Kacie Cannon*

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