

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP - #6
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HR SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
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

Board of Selectmen Members Absent: Tim Sadler, Mather Clarke

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Staff Present Via Zoom: Finance Director Jill Collins, Recording Secretary Kacie Cannon

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m.

2. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

3. Finance Department Continued

Finance Director Jill Collins shared the Finance Department budget and explained that Payroll consists of three FTE positions. She added that a 3% placeholder was included for two individuals that are under a union contract as a safeguard and noted minor increases in Professional and Technical Services and Office Supplies.

J. Collins explained that ADP costs are not included in the budget as discussions are still ongoing. J. Rupert stated that the cost of ADP's payroll services would be \$28,000 - \$30,000 for the first three years with an increase in the fourth year. He added that the Board of Education will share the costs, and he will be meeting with Superintendent Kristin Hecht in the coming weeks. A. Gordon requested an estimate of staff hours that will be saved by using ADP and asked how those hours will be re-allocated. The Board discussed the automated timeclock system that would be implemented with ADP's services.

J. Collins noted a 13% increase for medical and dental costs for all personnel in the Personnel budget. She explained the blended rate calculations and insurance administration fees, which cover an insurance consultant and third-party administrator for FSA. The Board reviewed the budgets for Bond & Note Expenditures, Redemption of Bonds, and Interest on Long Term Debt. J. Collins reported that the fire truck bond will begin in 2027 after the 10-year bond ends. No changes were made to the Bolton Lakes budget.

4. Discussion and Consider and Act on CAPA Budget

The Board reviewed the Town Capital Improvement Plan and discussed project priorities and potential reductions to the budget. R. Morra asked J. Rupert if any projects could be cut from the budget. J.

Rupert replied that all of the projects have merit, and it is a matter of determining which projects are most critical.

P. Sawyer asked for clarification on the Prior Funds column. J. Collins explained that the figures represent the amount appropriated in prior years and noted that some of the funds have already been spent. She pointed to the Assessor's Office Re-Evaluation as an example. P. Sawyer requested that a note be added to the bottom of the spreadsheet explaining what Prior Funds are and noting an "as of" date to indicate the most current amounts. J. Collins stated that she will add the note. A. Gordon also requested a column to track spent funds. J. Collins replied that she can add the information but noted that the figures will be difficult to maintain as they change constantly.

J. Rupert stated that the Lyman Road Bridge Project and school HVAC assessments are high priorities and need to remain in the budget. A. Gordon highlighted additional priorities that are non-negotiable such as the modular office lease and Bolton Heritage Trail Grant that requires a \$50,000 match.

5. Deliberations (All Departments/All Budgets)

J. Collins shared the total Town budget of \$7,444,442 which increased from last year by 5.12%, or \$362,684.00. A. Gordon asked for the detailed budgets that make up the total. The Board reviewed the Elections budget and agreed to remove \$17,238.00 from the payroll line item since it is unlikely that a primary election will be held this year. The budget was reduced from \$101,292.00 to \$84,054.00.

J. Rupert noted that the Registrar wage increases were significant compared to previous years. A. Gordon explained that necessary market adjustments were made to Elections staff salaries at percentages varying from 3% to 25.86%. She added that the salaries are still relatively low after the market adjustment. J. Collins pointed out that the Elections Department requested \$1,000.00 for advertising but noted that all of their advertising is done through the Town Clerk's budget. J. Rupert noted that there were no expenses on their budget for advertising in the previous year. The Board agreed to reduce the advertising budget from \$1000.00 to \$500.00 and move the funds to the Town Clerk's budget. A. Gordon suggested removing funds for potential audits and recounts. She stated that alternative funding can be found to cover those costs if an audit or recount is requested.

J. Collins explained that she changed the payroll figures for the library to ensure adequate funding for staff, pages, and subs. She also shared concerns that the library did not account for potential increases for Bibliation or the cost of copies, which are variable and based on demand. The Board agreed that alternative funds could be transferred if costs exceed the current budget.

J. Collins reported that she increased the Public Health budget by \$1,300 for a total of \$29,730. J. Rupert noted that the Buildings and Grounds budget needs further discussion as it is approximately \$40,000 higher than last year and totals \$866,019. J. Collins explained that another \$5,000 needs to be added. She stated that communications and overtime have increased and noted that costs for overtime are variable and increase significantly during storms. Postage expenses and electricity costs have also increased. J. Rupert noted that 5 FTE positions are included in the budget and salary increases are

contractual. The total Buildings and Grounds budget is \$10,057,746, reflecting an 8.42% increase from last year.

The Board discussed potential reductions in the overall budget and suggested consulting John Butrymovich for input on Capital Improvement items that can be removed or reduced. J. Rupert noted that the final budget needs to be provided to the Finance Committee by March 15th. A. Gordon asked J. Collins to provide a summary of the proposed changes the Board has made with totals to compare with the original budget requests she presented. R. Morra requested a prioritized list of Capital Improvement projects. A. Gordon replied that the following projects cannot be changed or removed:

- Lyman Road Bridge Construction
- Bolton Heritage Trail Grant
- Modular Office
- Fire Suppression Water Supply
- Highway Excavator

6. Consider and Act on All Department Budgets and All Others

The Board agreed to cancel the budget meeting scheduled for February 19, 2025 and noted that the budget will be finalized at the BOS Special A/P Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

7. Adjourn

A. Gordon MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:45 p.m. P. Sawyer SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5:0:2 (T. Sadler, M. Clarke Absent).

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon

Kacie Cannon

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