

**TOWN OF BOLTON
NEW BOARD ROUNDTABLE MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025, IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
TOWN HALL & ZOOM
MINUTES**

Board of Selectmen Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Gwen Marrion, Tim Sadler, Mather Clarke, David Cowles, Bryce Aaronson

Board of Selectman Present via Zoom: Robert DePietro

Former Board of Selectmen Present In-Person: Former Deputy First Selectman Robert Morra, Amanda Gordon

Staff Present In-Person: Town Administrator James Rupert

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Kacie Cannon

Others Present Via Zoom: James Loersch

1. Call to Order: R. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:53 p.m.

2. Discussion on Board Goals

R. Fournier invited Former Deputy Selectman R. Morra and Former Member Amanda Gordon to join the discussion. He explained that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the goals and priorities that were created by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) during a retreat led by Former Town Manager of Coventry John Elsesser. The members were provided with copies of the goals for review.

Before discussing the goals, R. Fournier and J. Rupert provided an overview of the following requirements and guidelines for incoming members:

- Information on cybersecurity training and phishing tests
- Information on what constitutes a quorum and an admonition to be careful of how many members are meeting together at one time. Caucus meetings within a specific party are allowed at any time.
- Copying all board members in an e-mail, text, or other online communications constitutes a meeting and is prohibited. Guidelines were provided on how to copy communications without creating a quorum.
- Using caution in electronic communications and utilizing designated Town of Bolton e-mail addresses as board member communications are subject to FOIA requests.
- Recording or documenting Executive Session discussions in any form is strictly prohibited; no notes or materials may be used to record the meetings.

R. Fournier highlighted the main priorities and goals of the Board of Selectmen as follows:

Infrastructure:

Water and Sewer Improvements on Route 44: R. Fournier reported that the Town has been coordinating with the Town of Manchester and the Manchester Water and Sewer Department to bring water to Route 44. The latest discussion included challenges in obtaining sufficient water capacity from the existing wells. R. Fournier explained that efforts are underway to improve the capacity through fracking to expanding well production. He noted that water service to the Shady Glen area will require costly infrastructure, including a pump station and a water tower. The Town plans to seek grants and assistance from local businesses and developers to assist with funding the project.

R. Morra added that businesses interested in developing the area have offered funding contributions between \$300,000 to \$500,000. He also noted that the sewer and natural gas are sufficient for significant development. A. Gordon mentioned that grant opportunities through the State will become available in 2028, including funding for water infrastructure.

J. Rupert reported that meetings with Manchester and the Water and Sewer Authority the Town are ongoing as well as meetings with residential developers and businesses interested in investing in the infrastructure. Staff is proposing that the work be conducted in phases beginning with extending water to the Cider Mill property, then up the hill, and ending in Coventry. The Board discussed the potential need for zoning changes, the impact of increased traffic, and the importance of including affordable housing units in any future development plans.

Route 6 and 44 Intersection: R. Fournier explained that the original plan was to reconstruct the entire intersection at a cost of approximately \$100M. However, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CROG) has recently developed an alternative plan to add an interchange at the intersection, at half the cost, that they will present to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) on behalf of the Town. Staff is meeting with CROG tomorrow to finalize the plans.

A. Gordon asked if input from the public should be solicited prior to presenting the plan to CTDOT. R. Morra replied that it would be best to wait until the plans have the support of CTDOT since they will likely make numerous changes before the plan is finalized. B. Aaronson asked if the water infrastructure improvements could take place simultaneously with the intersection improvements. The Board agreed that it would make sense to do them at the same time.

Facility Needs:

R. Fournier noted that one of the goals is to increase town and community space and highlighted current expansion efforts to Rooms A and B at the Notch Road Municipal Center for voting, meetings, and other events. J. Rupert added that a preliminary design has been created with input from the Registrar of Voters, the Recreation Department, and the Senior Center to incorporate their needs into the design. The plan is to create a large, open space that can be divided with partitions to create two smaller spaces as needed.

R. Fournier reported that a Facilities Study is underway that will address maintenance needs in existing buildings and provide an outline of Town assets that will be helpful in securing funding opportunities.

Economic Development:

J. Rupert explained that the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) has been working on updating zoning regulations, and he is working on scheduling the annual meeting between the BOS and Land Use employees. A. Gordon asked for a summary outlining the regulation changes, particularly those intended to be more business-friendly. J. Rupert will request a summary from Patrice Carson and provide it to the Board.

Governance:

In discussing improvements to grant funding capability, A. Gordon recommended hiring an individual to assist with finding grants for the Town, whether on a part-time, full-time, contracted or shared basis with another town. J. Rupert explained that grants require significant paperwork and maintenance and shared concerns about taking on more grants. R. Fournier agreed and noted the limited capacity of the Town to take on additional projects and provide matching funds. A. Gordon acknowledged the challenges but expressed concern about missing out on important grant funding opportunities. J. Rupert noted that he been utilizing staff to write grants and reported that they have been successful in securing funding.

Community Communications:

R. Fournier highlighted the Bolton Bulletin and Connecticut's Countryside website as the current channels of communication with residents. The Board discussed surveying residents on additional methods of communication that should be implemented to increase more effective engagement with the community. The Board agreed to assign the initiative to a subcommittee. R. Fournier noted that the BOS will continue to hold Coffee and Conversation meetings one hour before Finance Committee meetings when the budget review process begins. The Board also discussed quarterly supervisor meetings and meetings with the Board of Education. G. Marrion asked J. Rupert to keep the Board apprised of discussions with the Board of Education.

Schools:

R. Fournier reported that collaboration has increased between the School and Town Administrations as outlined in the goals.

Public Safety:

R. Fournier noted that a public safety study is in progress and is currently under review by the Town Attorney. Once approved, a subcommittee will be formed to work with the consultant. J. Rupert recommended forming a Facilities and Public Safety subcommittee with representation from both the police and fire departments. The study will address the strategic plan for the fire department, facilities, personnel, and equipment to determine future fire department needs and will begin in December. R. Fournier highlighted the work of volunteer firefighters and thanked them for their service to the Town.

R. Fournier reported positive administration changes that recently occurred within the Connecticut State Police. G. Marrion asked about the efforts to join police services with other towns. J. Rupert explained that statutory and contractual limitations prevent shared policing models, except in very serious instances such as a trooper under fire.

G. Marrion recommended that members utilize the work plan that A. Gordon created after the retreat which outlines tasks, next steps, board member assignments, and deadlines for achieving the Town's goals. New members were also advised on submitting agenda items and the agenda approval process.

The discussion concluded at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon

Kacie Cannon

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