

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025, 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL & ZOOM
MINUTES**

Board of Selectmen Present In-Person: First Selectman Rodney Fournier, Deputy First Selectman Gwen Marrion, Mather Clarke, David Cowles

Board of Selectman Present via Zoom: Robert DePietro, Bryce Aaronson

Board of Selectmen Absent: Tim Sadler

Staff Present Via Zoom: Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins

Staff Present Via Zoom: Recording Secretary Kacie Cannon

Others Present in Person: Finance Committee Chairman Ross Lally, Secretary of the Hop River Trail Alliance Sylvia Ounpuu, Planning and Zoning Commission Member Marilyn Manning

Others Present via Zoom: James Loersch

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Fournier led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comment

Hop River Trail Alliance Secretary Sylvia Ounpuu, 48 Stonehedge Lane, read a letter of appreciation on behalf of the Alliance to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for supporting the Bolton Notch tunnel lighting project. She noted that there were 87,000 passes through the tunnel in 2024. Ms. Ounpuu invited the BOS to a celebration marking the project's completion on December 4, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the tunnel.

Finance Committee Chairman Ross Lally, 41 Notch Road, requested that the CAPA Committee meeting schedule listed under Agenda Item No. 9 be removed from the agenda and transferred to the Finance Committee as outlined on Page 26 of the Town Charter. He stated that the Finance Committee will set the dates at its next meeting on December 18, 2025 and will post the schedule on the Finance Committee website.

Mr. Lally also asked that the full transition be postponed until next year due to upcoming deadlines. He and Superintendent of Schools David Caruso will schedule a meeting with R. Fournier and J. Rupert to discuss the transition. The Board agreed with the requests.

4. Consider and Possibly Act on Possible Changes to the Budget Worksheets

Chief Financial Officer Jill Collins outlined concerns with the requested worksheet changes, including the extensive time required to update the numerous budgets and the potential impact on formula calculations in Excel that coincide with the Town Proper and debt worksheets. She explained that adding the two prior year audited actuals would not be feasible because the 2025 audit will not be completed until December, and the numbers will not be available until then. J. Collins offered to add the percentage and value changes to the worksheets. R. Fournier noted that would be a fair compromise, and the Board concurred.

G. Marrion MOVED to modify the budget worksheets to show the value and percentage changes from the prior year adopted figures. R. DePietro SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

5. Appointments (All Full-Time Positions)

R. Fournier noted applications from Carole Franco, Pamela Sawyer, Robert Morra, and John Hambrook to serve on the Veterans Commission, and an application from Katelynn King for the Conservation Commission. He thanked the applicants for their willingness to serve.

R. DePietro MOVED to APPROVE all of the applications. D. Cowles SECONDED.

Discussion: G. Marrion recommended withholding approval of Carole Franco's application until a determination can be made on whether she intends to serve as a full-time member or as an alternate.

R. DePietro AMENDED his motion to approve all appointments except Ms. Franco's, pending further clarification. M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

6. Correspondence:

a. Letter from Morris Silverstein

R. Fournier read a letter commending Danielle Palazzini of the Land Use Department for her hard work and dedication and requesting the letter be placed in her personnel file.

b. BOE Bid Waiver (Information Only)

This item was information only, and there was no discussion.

7. Consider and Act on Disbanding the 1st BOE Roof Committee:

a. Discuss Makeup of Public Building Committee for School Roof. Recommend (2) BOE, (2) BOS, (3) At Large with Construction Experience

R. Fournier explained that significant repairs are needed for the middle school roof, and the Board of Education has authorized the Board of Selectmen to form a committee to oversee the project. D. Cowles suggested voting only on disbanding the current committee and determining the makeup of the committee at a future meeting.

D. Cowles MOVED to disband the 1st BOE Roof Committee based on discussions between J. Rupert and D. Caruso. R. DePietro SECONDED.

Discussion: B. Aaronson asked why the previous committee was unsuccessful in completing the project. R. Fournier stated that the committee had not met yet to address the repairs which were on the list of major projects to be completed by the Board of Education. Due to the roof being in such disrepair, R. Fournier and J. Rupert proposed that the BOS take over the project, which is expected to cost approximately \$5 Million.

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

8. Consider and Act on BOS Meeting Dates:

R. DePietro MOVED to APPROVE the 2026 BOS Meeting Dates as proposed. M. Clarke SECONDED.

Discussion: G. Marrion pointed out that the November 3, 2026 meeting falls on Election Day. D. Cowles proposed changing the meeting date to November 2, 2026.

B. Aaronson MOVED to ACCEPT the 2026 BOS Meeting Dates as proposed with the exception of changing the November meeting to November 2, 2026. D. Cowles SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

9. Consider and Act on BOS 2026 CAPA and Budget Workshop Dates:

D. Cowles MOVED TO APPROVE the Budget Workshop Dates and transfer the approval of the CAPA dates to the next Finance Committee Meeting. G. Marrion SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

10. Consider and Act on act the Hop River Trail Alliance Including Bolton in the Recreational Trails Application for Safe Road Crossings:

Sylvia Ounpuu explained that the group is requesting a letter of support from the BOS to apply for grants related to Safe Road Crossings. She explained that the purpose of the grant is to study the current condition of all road crossings across the Hop River State Park Trail to determine best practices for each of the crossings. Upon completion of the study, another grant will be requested to make the recommended improvements. Ms. Ounpuu noted that letters of support are being requested from all seven towns.

G. Marrion MOVED to authorize R. Fournier and/or J. Rupert to author a letter of support and to include Bolton in the application. D. Cowles SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

11. Consider and Act on a Committee for the FD Strategic Plan to Work with Manitou. J. Rupert's Recommendation is the Facilities and Public Safety Committee, 1 Person from the Fire Department, and 1 Person from the Fire Commission.

R. Fournier presented J. Rupert's committee recommendations for the Fire Department Strategic Plan. G. Marrion clarified that the members of the Facilities and Public Safety Committee include R. Fournier, G. Marrion, T. Sadler, and R. DePietro.

The Board discussed the makeup of the committee, whether specific individuals need to be appointed at this time, and what type of committee to create. G. Marrion reviewed Section 5.1(b) of the Town Charter and noted that a temporary committee may be formed.

R. Fournier MOVED to create a temporary committee for the Fire Department Strategic Plan to work with Manitou which will consist of the Facilities and Public Safety Committee, one person from the Fire Department, and one person from the Fire Commission. D. Cowles SECONDED.

Discussion: R. DePietro asked who will initiate the committee to get started. R. Fournier stated that Kathy McCavanaugh will coordinate a meeting between the members. G. Marrion noted that the Fire Department must appoint two members before a meeting can be set.

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent)

12. Finance Reports:

The BOS reviewed the Finance Report and asked about the percentage changes from year to year. J. Collins noted various factors that affect the percentages including payroll timing, the Highway Department's use of its own funds instead of Town Aid Road funds, new hires not yet up to their full salary levels, and staffing changes, including hiring a new building inspector. G. Marrion asked about zeroes in the auditing line item. J. Collins explained that they are the result of the auditor billing after fiscal year-end.

The BOS also reviewed the Tax Collector Report. D. Cowles stated that the Finance Committee recently discussed the rate and determined that the percentage is lower than previous years due to the timing of when bills went out during budget approval. J. Collins added that the budget was based on a rate of 98% collection and does not include motor vehicles because those bills were not due until the first.

13. Consider and Act on A/P:

M. Clarke MOVED to APPROVE THE 2025-2026 A/P Report in the amount of \$104,996.64. G. Marrion SECONDED.

Discussion: G. Marrion asked where the rental e-bikes will be stored. R. Fournier stated that they will be stored in the shed near Town Hall, and the Recreation Department will oversee the rental program. M. Clarke asked about the status of providing kayak rentals. R. Fournier stated that the idea is still under consideration as a revenue source.

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

14. Consider and Act on Budget Transfers:

D. Cowles MOVED to APPROVE a Budget Request Transfer from Town Building Operations in the amount of \$2,820.24 from the category of Season Payroll to the category of Payroll. M. Clarke SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

15. Town Administrator's Report:

G. Marrion thanked J. Rupert for including updates on the meetings with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Board of Education regarding the school roof.

Planning and Zoning Commission Member Marilee Manning asked if there were any updates in the report on the lighting request near the Dollar Store on Route 44. She stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission solicited a study from the State of Connecticut; however, they did not recommend installing lights. M. Manning shared concerns about the public safety issues created by the lack of lighting. R. Fournier recommended she send a letter to J. Rupert and BOS regarding the concerns. He also asked that any issues be addressed under Public Comment in the future.

R. DePietro asked about the status of Department Head reviews. R. Fournier stated that J. Rupert is in the process of conducting the reviews and will provide a summary to the BOS upon completion. R. DePietro asked about J. Rupert's review. R. Fournier explained that the Board agreed to postpone his review until after the new members have had the opportunity to become more familiar with him and his performance. G. Marrion added that the subcommittee agreed to postpone his review until July when his contract renews so that his salary can be discussed at the same time.

B. Aaronson asked what the summary of the department head reviews will entail. R. Fournier stated that it will be a one-page summary highlighting each review.

16. Approval of Minutes

a. November 18, 2025 – A/P Meeting

M. Clarke MOVED to APPROVE the November 18, 2025 A/P Meeting Minutes as presented. G. Marrion SECONDED.

Discussion: D. Cowles noted that it was he, rather than B. Aaronson, who noted that the Charter requires the appointment of a Deputy First Selectman to be made during the first meeting with new members.

MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

b. Roundtable Meeting

M. Clarke MOVED to APPROVE the Roundtable Meeting Minutes as presented. D. Cowles SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler Absent).

17. Adjourn

M. Clarke MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:32 p.m. D. Cowles SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (T. Sadler 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.



Bolton Board of Selectmen
Bolton, CT

December 2, 2025

Dear Board of Selectmen Members,

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Bolton Board of Selectmen for supporting the recently completed Bolton Notch tunnel lighting project.

The tunnel lighting will make a significant impact on the safety, accessibility, and overall experience for all who use the Hop River State Park Trail. The added lighting enhances visibility, encourages greater community use, and supports the long-term enjoyment of this beautiful recreational asset by the residents of Bolton and surrounding communities.

Your critical support at the initiation and throughout this project is truly appreciated. Tens of thousands of trail users will benefit greatly from this significant trail enhancement.

With appreciation,

Hop River Trail Alliance

John Bolduc – President

John Hankins – Vice President

Sylvia Ounpuu – Secretary

Jim Adams - Treasurer

Proposed CAPA Process

Purpose: To bring the process into compliance with the town charter.

1. Finance Committee kicks off the process in October.
2. Town Administrator compiles requests for BOS.
3. Superintendent of Schools compiles requests for BOE.
4. Town Administrator and Superintendent of Schools submit requests to CFO and Finance Committee Chair by November Finance Committee meeting.
5. Finance Committee schedules review for December and January.
6. Finance Committee submits proposed CAPA budget to BOS by January 31.
7. BOS then produces the final budget.

For this year, the only change I recommend is that the Finance Committee schedule the January review meetings to ensure attendance. We will do so at our December meeting.

Other than that no changes for this year because the process of compiling requests is almost done.

Ross Lally

Chair, Finance Committee