

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING w/ A/P
Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Town Hall & Zoom Meeting
MEETING MINUTES**

	ROSTER	IN-PERSON	ZOOM	ABSENT
FIRST SELECTMAN:	Rodney Fournier	X		
SELECTMEN:	Bryce Aaronson	X		
	Mather Clarke	X		
	David Cowles	X		
	Robert DePietro		X	
	Gwen Marrion	X		
	Tim Sadler			X

STAFF:	James Rupert, Town Administrator
	Jill Collins, Finance Director
	Andrea Vassallo, Recording Secretary

Members of the Public:

1.0 Call to Order:

First Selectman Rodney Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2.0 Consider and Act on A/P:

Selectwoman G. Marrion **MOVED to APPROVE** the A/P in the amount of \$131,503.27.

Selectman D. Cowles **SECONDED**;

Discussions:

BOS: Reoccurring Late Fees – The BOS discussed the reoccurring late fees for several retail accounts (e.g., Frontier, Lowe’s).

- **Current issues discussed included:**
 - Slow internal approval processes (up to 28 days for payment cycle).
 - Reliance on paper invoices and delayed meeting minutes.
 - Delays in meeting minute posting can push check issuance from Friday to Monday, exacerbating late payments.

- **Potential solutions discussed included:**
 - Electronic invoice processing and a dedicated invoice email account were suggested.
 - Policy changes to allow check release upon recorded motion, not waiting for posted minutes.

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- Discussion among the BOS and Bolton Finance Director Jill Collins of implementing a signed approval form by selectmen as an alternative, but state statute requires written majority approval.
- J. Collins recommends eliminating the Lowe’s credit card and account and increase the purchasing capacity of the Building & Grounds Operation Supervisor.

B. Aaronson: Page 17, Control Valve Costs – Questioned the increased cost of control valves. Town Administrator James Rupert stated that the energy management system identified additional control valves that were compromised and needed to be replaced or repaired.

M. Clarke: Town Road Salt Supply – Inquired with Town Administrator J. Rupert how the town was doing with maintaining their road salt supply. J. Rupert stated that upon discussions with Bolton’s Highway Department Supervisor salt shipments are delayed at the ports in New Haven, however, efforts have been made to reach out to neighboring municipalities and expressed a potential need.

D. Cowles: Page 19, Modular Building Leak Repair Status – Inquired with J. Rupert about the ongoing leaking in the rented modular building, currently storing several departments vital records. The town has placed its third call to the company which has been responsive to addressing the ongoing issues.

MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrison
Nay	0
Abstain	0

3.0 Consider and Act on Budget Transfers:

Selectman B. Aaronson **MOVED to APPROVE** the transfer of \$7,000.00 from regular payroll account to overtime account. Selectman D. Cowles **SECONDED**;

Discussion:

Additional funds were recognized as needed due to snowstorm-related work, Finance Director J. Collins stated that actual costs already exceeded this transfer – more money will need to be transferred at a future A/P meeting.

Appreciation: BOS stated that residents praised the highway department’s performance during recent storms, with Bolton’s roads outperforming neighboring towns.

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MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:0

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion
Nay	0
Abstain	0

Selectwoman G. Marrion **MOVED to APPROVE** the transfer of \$5,000.00 from the Heating Fuel account to the Repairs & Maintenance account within the Building Operations budget.
Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:0**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrion
Nay	0
Abstain	0

4.0 Budget Deliberations:

The BOS, Town Administrator J. Rupert, and Finance Director J. Collins re-reviewed the proposed FY26-27 department budgets and highlighted any budgets that proposed any additional changes than previously presented to the BOS during their scheduled budget workshops.

Administrative Budget:

- Adjustments:
 - First Selectman salary increase.
 - Added \$3,000 for potential overtime.
 - Overall, there was a 5% decrease in Administrative Budget.

Board of Finance Budget:

- Adjustments:
 - Added \$1,800.00 for communication outreach.

Finance Department Budget:

- Adjustments:
 - Overall, 37% increase in Finance Department Budget related to succession planning for a new assistant finance director for cross training prior to the retirement of the finance director. \$85,000 budgeted.
 - Existing administrative assistant roles (Admin Assistants 1 & 2) are union positions; the assistant director would be a new role.

EMS Budget, Voice Protection:

- Adjustments: 10% increase. Voice Protection apart of the EMS Department.

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Personnel Services Budget:

- Adjustments:
 - Health Insurance – Increase for proposed new personnel and anticipation for family health insurance plans. Employee contributions are calculated into the proposed budgeted costs.

Town building operations:

- Adjustments:
 - Budget increase due to maintenance & repairs, and electricity costs.

Public Health Department:

- Adjustments:
 - Slight increase occurred due to the projected operating expenses by the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHDD).

Refuse Services:

- Adjustments:
 - Contracted Services: Multi-vendor, multi-year contracts for trash, recycling, and hazardous waste. Costs are projected based on CPI and tonnage.
 - Regional Solutions: Participation in regional waste management initiatives to control future costs.

Departments/Board & Commissions with No Additional Budgetary Changes:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| • Auditing Services | • Animal control |
| • Assessor | • Fire Marshall |
| • Tax Collector | • EMS |
| • Town Clerk | • Highway department |
| • Building & Land Use | • Public Building Committee |
| • Planning & Zoning Commission | • Veterans Services |
| • Zoning Board of Appeals – budget decrease | • Social Services |
| • Elections Commission | • Library |
| • Probate | • Recreation |
| • Inland & Wetlands Commission | • Conservation Commission |
| • Fire Commission | |

Capital Reserves & Improvements:

Projects are split between capital reserve and improvement funds based on expenditure thresholds.

- Reallocation: Unspent funds from completed projects (e.g., building demolition) reallocated to new priorities.

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Bond and Note Payments:

- Interest Rates: Current rates are just under 4%; hope for further reductions.

5.0 Possibly Consider and Act on Budget Deliberations:

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to TABLE** the Budget Deliberations discussion until March 3, 2026, BOS Regular Meeting. Selectman R. DePietro **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:0**

Yea	Fournier, Aaronson, Clarke, Cowles, DePietro, Marrison
Nay	0
Abstain	0

6.0 Adjourn:

Selectman B. Aaronson **MOVED to ADJOURN** the meeting at **8:30 PM**. Selectman D. Cowles **SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.**

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Vassallo, Recording Clerk

Andrea Vassallo

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

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