

**TOWN OF BOLTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Tuesday, March 03, 2026, at 6:30 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
	Andrea Vassallo, Recording Secretary

Members of the Public:

1.0 Call to Order:

First Selectman Rodney Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance:

The BOS stated the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 Public Comment: None.

4.0 Update from Amplify:

Ashley Perreira, life-long Bolton citizen, licensed clinical psychologist (LCP), and Bolton Prevention Council volunteer, partners with Amplify. Ms. Perreira provided an overview of coalition partnership between both organizations:

- **Coalition Background:**
 - Entering 4th year; focuses on mental health and substance use prevention for all age groups in Bolton.
 - Has received over \$20,000 in state and federal grants.

- **Initiatives & Achievements:**
 - Narcan training, suicide prevention (QPR) training, and resource distribution.
 - **Youth Voices Count Survey:**
 - 90% response rate (grades 6–12) – highest ever for this survey.
 - Key findings:
 - 18% felt anxious most of the time in the past year.
 - 15% considered self-harm; 10% considered suicide.

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- High concerns around social media, gaming, and substance use.
- **Adult Survey (115 responses):**
 - Priorities: Mental health, opioids, youth mental health, first responder support, social media safety.
 - Community expressed interest in medication disposal location boxes and more education on marijuana post legalization.
- Distribution of lockable bags for cannabis and medication lock boxes to prevent youth access.
- **Upcoming Projects:**
 - Hartford Foundation grant award (\$7,500) to fund a wellness fair to coincide w/
 - Farmers Market – August 22, 2026, Bolton Town Green
 - Scholarships for mental health careers, and
 - Continue the Lock Box program.
 - Increased visibility efforts (67% of surveyed adults aware of the Prevention Council).

5.0 Correspondence:

a. Resignation – K. McCavanagh - EMD

- **Resignation:** Kathy McCavanagh resigned as Emergency Management Director.
- **Interim Coverage:** First Selectman R. Fournier and Town Administrator James Rupert will fill role until a replacement is found.

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to ACCEPT the resignation.**

Selectman T. Sadler **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:1**

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

6.0 New Business:

a. Veteran’s Commission Representative to Discuss Veteran’s Tax Exemption.

Bob Morra, Chairman, of the Bolton Veteran’s Commission spoke in support of the town adopting a Veteran’s Property Tax Exemption for fully disabled veterans and surviving spouses of a service member killed in action while performing active military duty as authorized under Public Act 25-168. Currently the state of Connecticut allows for municipal options to opt-in to the program and adopt the Tax Exemption for the 2025 Grand List year (by Ordinance).

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The BOS reviewed information provided by Bolton Assessor Kara Fishman.

- Fishman, Kara. Town of Bolton Assessor’s Office, June 25, 2025, ***Changes in Legislation Affecting Veterans under Public Act 25-168.***

b. Consider and Possibly Act on Changes in Legislation Affecting Veterans Under Public Act 25-168 and the Tax Exemption for R. Clark.

The BOS discussed the next steps in the process:

- Town attorney would need to write a draft ordinance language,
- Present the draft ordinance to the BOS to review, and
- Hold a public hearing, for potential adoption, per town charter.

Consensus. **MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

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

c. Consider and Possibly Act on Veterans Tax Exemption for R. Clark.

This agenda item is contingent on Agenda Items 6b and 6a, see above.

d. Discuss Referenda Locations(s) and Consider and Possibly Act on Recommendation from Registrar of Voters on Referenda Dates and Time Change.

The following memos were provided to the BOS:

- Bushnell, Lori. Town of Bolton Tax Collector, February 12, 2026, ***Budget Referendum Dates.***
- Lally, Ross and Pierog, Sandra. Town of Bolton Registrar of Voters, February 10, 2026, ***2026 Referenda Proposal for Primary & General Elections.***

Sandra Pierog, Democratic Registrar of Voters, and Ross Lally, Republican Registrar of Voters were present for the discussion with the BOS.

Voting Hours:

- Town ordinance specifies 12 noon–8 PM for referendums (unless extended).
- Past practice has been 6 AM–8 PM; cost and worker fatigue cited as reasons to revert to ordinance hours.
- Potential savings: \$1,200 - \$2,400 per referendum by opening at noon.

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- Concerns expressed by the Registrar’s about voter confusion and communication strategies were discussed if a change in time should occur (flyers, website, handouts at public locations).

Locations:

- Per the approval of the CT Secretary of State, S. Pierog explained, a change in voting locations can only occur for safety reasons.
- Spring referenda at St. Maurice Hall.
- After school year ends (June), referenda at Bolton High School Commons.
- Primary and General Election early voting (Registrars’ Office) and election day locations also set (District 1: Bolton Center School, and District 2: Bolton High School Commons).

State Mandate:

R. Lally stated the BOS, Town of Bolton, is required by state statute to pay for referenda and careful consideration should be considered by the BOS when budgeting for the number of potential referenda. The recommendation budget by the Registrar of Voters is six (6) referenda, and stated that was the number of referenda in 2025.

Scheduling:

Referendum dates are aligned with budget deadlines and tax bill requirements, refer to:

- Bushnell, Lori. Town of Bolton Tax Collector, February 12, 2026, ***Budget Referendum Dates.***

R. Lally stated that the Bolton Finance Committee would need to adopt the budget by March 26, 2026.

Selectman G. Marrion **MOVED to APPROVE** the Town of Bolton Referenda Schedule by May 10, 2026. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED**;

Discussion:

R. Lally stated that he has received voting location approval from the CT Secretary of State (CT SoS). Voting locations can only be changed due to emergency, health, and/or safety issues.

MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0

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

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Selectman G. Marrion **MOVED to ADOPT** the 2026 Referenda hours as stated in the Bolton Town Ordinance as 12 noon-8 pm. Selectman R. DePietro **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:1:0**

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

7.0 Old Business:

a. Budget Deliberations & Possible Action on Selectman’s Budget Tabled From 02/10/2026

Deliberations Reviewed:

- Department requests, salary adjustments, health insurance estimates.

Adjustments made:

- Mower purchase (deferred),
- Registrar’s budget (reduced based on referendum hours), and equipment needs.

Final proposed increase: 3.48%.

Robert DePietro left the meeting via technical difficulties via Zoom

Selectman M. Clarke **MOVED to APPROVE** the Bolton FY 26 Budget in the amount of \$9,811,497. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:0**

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

Robert DePietro rejoined the call via Zoom

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to ADD** the FY 26 Capital Improvement Plan Budget as Agenda Item 7b. Selectman T. Sadler **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

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

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b. Capital Improvement Plan Budget

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** the FY 26 Capital Improvement Plan Budget in the amount of \$764,447.66. Selectman M. Clarke **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

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

8.0 Finance Reports:

No major concerns or comments.

9.0 Consider and Act on Budget Transfer(s):

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to TRANSFER** \$4,700 within the Building and Operations Department from Operations to Overtime. Selectman T. Sadler **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 7:0:0**

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

10.0 Approval of Minutes:

a. February 3, 2026 – Regular Meeting.

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** February 3, 2026, BOS Regular Meeting Minutes. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED;**

Discussion:

Selectwoman G. Marrion stated on Page 4 of 4 the January 21 Meeting Minutes were not approved.

MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:2

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

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b. February 5, 2026 – Budget Workshop #4.

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** February 5, 2026, Budget Workshop #4 Meeting Minutes.
Selectman T. Sadler **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 6:0:1**

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

c. February 10, 2026 – BOS with A/P Meeting.

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** February 10, 2026, BOS Meeting with A/P Meeting Minutes.
Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:2**

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

d. February 10, 2026 – Budget Workshop #5

Selectman D. Cowles **MOVED to APPROVE** February 10, 2026, Budget Workshop #5 Meeting Minutes.
Selectman T. Sadler **SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED; 5:0:2**

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

11.0 Town Administrator’s Report:

Town Administrator J. Rupert reported to the BOS items not on the Administrator Report:

- Received demographic student population information from STV for the School Facility Study and will provide the results to the BOS as soon as possible.
- Fire department sold surplus equipment (UTV) for \$1,500.
- Emergency Operations Center was staffed during recent storm, with no major incidents.
- Sewer odor issue discussed; solutions include insulation, charcoal filters, and hydrogen sulfide monitoring.

12.0 Adjourn:

D. Cowles **MOVED to ADJOURN** the meeting at **8:41 PM**. Selectman B. Aaronson **SECONDED**.
MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.

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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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