

Select Board
February 29th, 2024

Via Zoom

Robert Czekanski, Chair
Stanley Wysocki
Brian Boyle

Don Lowe, Town Administrator
Jenny Jacobsen, Administrative Assistant

Ms. Czekanski called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

BOLTON YOUTH BASEBALL/SOFTBALL/SOCCER OPENING DAY

Danielle Bradbury of Bolton Youth Baseball was present to request approval to hold the annual opening day parade on April 27th, 2024 at 12:00 pm beginning at Florence Sawyer and ending at Memorial Field. This year the parade will include Bolton Youth Soccer for the first time. At the time of the meeting, the requestor had not reached out to the police department for approval.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Select Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the event as requested contingent upon the approval from the police department. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

UPDATE FROM HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Human Resources Manager Kristen Noel appeared before the Board with an update on the Insurance Advisory Committee. On January 11th, 2024 the Insurance Advisory Committee voted to move forward with MIIA after the Minuteman Nashoba Health Group would be dissolving at the end of the fiscal year. The Health Benefits Trust Agreement needs to be signed by the Board. The rates and the Business Associate Contract needs to be signed by the Town Administrator at the direction of the Board. The rates are incorporated in the FY25 budget.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Select Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to execute the Business Associate Contract between the Town of Bolton and the Massachusetts Interlocal Health Benefits Trust and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the documents including the MIIA Health Benefits Agreement. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

TITLE

Ms. Noel requested a change to the title of the Administrative Assistant to the Town Administrator to Executive Assistant. In the prior year's compensation study the position was moved from a level 2 to level 3 based on the current responsibilities of the role. Surrounding towns are using the title Executive Assistant for comparable positions. The Board was supportive.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Select Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the title change from Administrative Assistant to the Town Administrator to Executive Assistant. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

BOLTON ACCESS TELEVISION

Nicki McGachey was in attendance to update the Board on winter concert season and to request the release of funds for operating expenses for quarter four operating expenses. Bolton Access gets 5% of Comcast profits each quarter. 4.5% is for operations and .5% is for capital. Bolton Access also receives \$12K annually for capital expenses.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Select Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to release the Q4 operating funds to Bolton Access Television in the amount of \$24,627.81. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

711-713 MAIN STREET

Tim Hess of Studio InSitu was in attendance on behalf of the property owner Craig Bovaird. Mr. Bovaird was joined by Jay Murray from Minuteman Building Preservation who is the general contractor on the project. Mr. Bovaird

followed up with additional requests related to the previous approval for tree removal. Mr. Hess requested permission to bring in and store the necessary equipment for the tree removal. Mr. Hess spoke with DPW director Randy Heglin and Police Chief Nelson and is prepared to accept and incorporate their advice. Tree Warden Mark Caisse make recommendations for the best locations to store the equipment. Mr. Hess identified the locations for the crane, chipper and lumber to be stored until removed for an estimated period of two weeks. Mr. Hess spoke with Lisa Shepple, Parks and Recreation Coordinator who requested the donation of some of the materials for use on their natural playground. The entrance to the Common will remain open with a police detail present. Mr. Hess was unsure if the materials would be his to donate but was amenable to the concept.

Mr. Lowe requested an insurance binder be presented to the Town prior to work beginning. Mr. Hess offered assurance that evidence of the contractor's insurance would be submitted to the Town. Mr. Hess agreed to repair or compensate for any damage to the roadway or grassy areas affected. The activity will occur as soon as possible and would be complete prior to Parks and Recreation Summer Programming.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the request from Studio Insitu to park equipment on Community Way during the tree removal as previously approved by the Board on December 14th 2023. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Communication will go out to the public prior to the work commencing.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Transfer Station Regulation

The Board reviewed the amended rules and regulation for the transfer station submitted by Department of Public Works. Mr. Czekanski questioned unanimous vote requirement in Section 8, Prohibition of Use noting a preference to replace it with majority vote. The Board agreed. Mr. Boyle suggested a couple of revisions and suggested that Town Counsel review the regulations. Mr. Lowe suggested that the Board vote on the regulations conditional upon Town Counsel Review.

Mr. Wysocki addressed the "creative" methods that residents are utilizing to dispose of excess trash.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the transfer station regulations with the changes as discussed. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Article Review

Mr. Heglin presented a draft article to address the section of the Code of the Town of Bolton under the noncriminal disposition bylaw that contains a reference to transfer station stickers. The Board had no issues with the changes.

FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Fire Apparatus Updates

Chief Legendre was in attendance and reported that the mini pumper was delivered. The department was able to conduct a training session with the vehicle to extract a park bench from Little Pond that had been dragged onto the ice and subsequently melted into the pond. The Seagrave engine and the tanker are still on target for delivery in the spring. The department has increased its pumping and water carrying capacities. Chief Legendre is currently working with Verisk, the company that sets the homeowners' insurance ratings. It has been a number of years and the Town will earn additional points for joining the regional dispatch, the 24-hour coverage of the fire station. Bolton is currently at a 9. The department is hoping for a rating of 8 which could translate to savings in resident's homeowners' insurance policies. Chief Legendre will make the letter available to the public once the rating is established.

Billing Update

The Chief sat down with Coastal Billing to understand what was throwing off the numbers. Some of the ALS intercept bills that the Town was getting credit for were not coming off the totals. Coastal Billing reports that the Town for FY23 has a 84.9% collection rate which is on par with neighboring towns. The Town does a bundle bill to improve collections. 35% is from the ALS intercept from the communities that the department serves. 13.7% is from direct billing and 7.1% is from secondary party payments and MVAs account for 2.1% of the collection rate.

REVOLVING ACCOUNTS

Advance Life Support

Chief Legendre requested an increase to the spending limit for the ALS Revolving Account from \$250 to \$275K. Mr. Czekanski asked for clarification on the amount that requires a cosignature from the Town Administer. Chief Legendre stated that the amount is \$25K single purchase. Mr. Lowe will confirm and report back to the Board.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the request for the increase to the spending limit for the Advanced Life Support revolving account to \$275K (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Lisa Sheppple was in attendance to request an increase from \$25K spending limit to \$80K. The limit was exceeded in the current fiscal year. Mr. Lowe explained that as it was the first year the Town had to guess at a number and due to the explosive growth of the programs, the funds taken in far exceeded expectations. The payroll for the program counselors and lifeguards comes from the revolving account and is directly proportional to the success of the programing.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the request for the increase to the spending limit for the Parks and Recreation revolving account to \$80K (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Capital Plan

Mr. Lowe reviewed capital plan with the Board and presented two options. Mr. Lowe recommended the conservative option to stop at item #4 and utilizing any additional ARPA funds to balance the budget in an extremely tight budget year. There will be \$116K remaining in uncommitted ARPA money with the conservative approach. The flooring at Florence Sawyer School will be deferred to FY26. If excess ARPA funds remain they could be applied to painting the Houghton Building or to the space needs study for Town Hall.

Unexpended Articles

Mr. Lowe presented a recommendation to utilize the funds in unexpended articles in the amount of \$78,779 to be applied towards the Fortbush Mill bridge replacement article.

SELECT BOARD BUSINESS

Public Service Announcement

Mr. Boyle reminded the public that the Caucus will be held on Monday March 4th at 7pm at the Bolton Public Library. The primary election will be held at the Nashoba Regional High School auditorium on March 5th, 2024 from 7am – 8pm.

Future Agenda Items

Mr. Wysocki would like a discussion of options for collections for ALS billing.

Annual Report

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to accept the Select Board annual report for 2023 with the changes as presented. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Town Administrator Search

The Board determined to hold the interviews at the Houghton Building on Tuesday April 23rd as a first choice and Wednesday April 24th as a second choice. The third choice would be April 30th. The meetings will take place at the Houghton Building. Mr. Czekanski invited the public to submit any questions that they would like asked to the applicants to the Town Administrator's Office. The interviews will be recorded and live streamed if possible. There will be no public comment.

Town Administrator Review

The Board will not be conducting a Town Administrator Review as the Town Administrator is leaving on June 30th so there is little to be gained from the review process. Mr. Wysocki would like to have a conversation about what the current Town Administrator feels are the important qualities in the next Town Administrator and what the priorities will be. Mr. Lowe is planning to complete an exit memo that will include those items.

Bills and Payroll Warrants

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve bills/payroll warrants W24-17 & W24-17A (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Minutes

There were no minutes.

Executive Session

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to enter executive session pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A Section 21A purpose 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation with the Teamster's Union Local 170 if an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares for purpose 2 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for contract negotiations with non-union personnel, Jeffrey Legendre, for the Fire Chief contract. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

The Board returned from executive session.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote approve the employment agreement between the Town of Bolton and Jeffrey Legendre with two amendments:

Section 7- Heath Insurance Item B-remove "beginning in fiscal year 22"

Section 5-Fire Chief Evaluations- Item B-add a sentence that the goals shall and can be reviewed by the Select Board. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn at 9:40pm. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Respectfully submitted by J. Jacobsen.