



Town of Bolton
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway
Bolton VT 05676
Select Board Hybrid Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2021

Board members present: Mica Cassara, Lynda DesLauriers (virtual), Paula Gervia, Janet Metz, Andrew Pond

Board members absent: None

Also present: Adam Miller; FOWF, Christian Skalka: CRAGVT, Joss Besse; CPC, Mike Gervia; BVFD, Craig Deyo; HD

Clerk: Amy Grover

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by the Chair, Mica Cassara with a quorum of 5 members present.
2. **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:**
Additions: None.
Deletions: None.
3. **Public Comment:** None.
4. **Communications:**
 - UVM's Democracy Internship. Brief discussion on limited opportunities in Bolton for an internship, suggestions from the community were appreciated. Suggestions seemed to be beyond the general internship capabilities outlined.
 - Andrew Pond noted the MMUUSD Board had received email information regarding the creation of a Community Well Being Coordinator for Richmond, Huntington, and Bolton, and that he would forward the email. Brief discussion on the impetus for creation of the position (likely pandemic related) and funding for the position.
5. **Recurring Business:**
 - Minutes November 1, 2021: Janet Metz made the motion "to approve the meeting minutes of November 1, 2021, as presented." Paula Gervia seconded. There was no further discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed (5-0).
 - Warrants: Reviewed and signed.
 - Financial Reports: Legal expenses, delinquent and late tax reports were dispersed. Amy Grover noted she would provide expense and revenue reports ASAP.
6. **Business & Action Items:**
 - Bid Opening Solar RFP (No Award – to be Forwarded to the Energy Committee): Two bids were received, reviewed, and briefly discussed: Suncommon \$89,250 net investment, and Green Mountain Solar \$54,958 net cost. Noted: Both bid expiration dates were prior to Town Meeting 2022, at which any decision to proceed with town solar would be made by voters. Bids to be forwarded to the Energy Committee.
 - Update: FEMA Buyout, ARPA Funds, O'Brien Petition, BSB Meeting Schedule.
 - FEMW Buyout: David Rugh, town attorney's office, has generated the closing documents and they have been forwarded by Stephanie Smith, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, to FEMA for review. No response from FEMA to date. Still at issue, the encumbrances on the lot which are not extinguishable. In the event

FEMA does not approve the closing/closing documents, Stephanie Smith has applied for funding under the “Flood Resilient Communities Fund.”

- ARPA Funds: As previously noted, Bolton is to receive \$352,776K in funding. Funds have extremely strict parameters for use and must be utilized by December 2024. The Economic Resource Committee will be attending a future BSB meeting to request funding for increasing broadband in Bolton. Noted: Other communities are having a very public process/opening applications to the community for the use of the funds, and the BSB needs to determine the town’s ARPA funds use process. Group consensus that due to lack of available bandwidth, the BSB will determine the town’s ARPA funds use process after FY 22/23 budgeting and the 2022 Town Meeting warning have been completed – likely February 2022.
- O’Brien petition: The group reviewed the petition process and noted the potential for the hearing to be continued. Amy Grover to follow up with the town attorney on process questions.
- BSB Meeting Schedule: FY 22/23 Budget/Town Warning - 12/6, 12/20, 1/3, 1/18. First day to post Town Meeting warning is 1/20/21, last date is 1/30/21. Printer schedule undetermined at this time which may impact schedule. BSB should plan ideally to have the warning and budget completed by 1/3/21.
- Curb Cut Application O’Brien Notch Road – Vote: The application has been approved by the Highway Superintendent and the Fire Chief. Noted: The applicant has not paid the application fee of \$50. BSB consensus to table review of the application until payment is made, not approved.
- CRAG Vermont Letter of Support Bolton Dome Trails Grant Funding – Vote:
 - Christian Skalka provided a brief overview of the restoration project, estimated at \$29K, the draft letter of support, and that there was no cost to the town (ERSA grant application through VT Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation).
 - As an aside, Christian Skalka noted that CRAGVT would be plowing access to the CRAGVT quarry off Green Mountain Road to alleviate residents’ and Smilie School’s concerns/issues regarding winter parking.
 - Paula Gervia made the motion “to approve signing the letter of support for CRAGVT’s Bolton Dome Trails restoration grant application.” Janet Metz seconded. There was no further discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed (5-0). With thanks to Christian Skalka for attending the meeting.

7. **Appointments:**

1. 6:20 – 6:30 p.m. Adam Miller, FOWF, Wheeler Field Interim Management Plan – Vote.
 - Adam Miller noted that:
 - A basic interim plan is required by VHCB for the closing and is meant to stay in place for the first two years until a permanent management plan can be drafted and approved.
 - The interim plan was presented to the Conservation Commission, and the CC approved and recommended BSB approval.
 - Since that time, VHCB added additional language to the interim management plan; addressing environmentally sensitive areas if identified, and management. The BSB received the updated plan prior to the meeting.
 - The additions reflect the CC discussion on the interim management plan.

- Ultimately the town will be the owner and the property will be used at the direction of the BSB, with the CC and FOWF drafting a long-term management plan within two years of purchase.
 - Virginia Haviland noted that as Chair of the CC, the additions were in the spirit of what the CC had approved.
 - Janet Metz asked who determine approved activities.
 - Adam Miller noted it would be a BSB decision, through laying out guiding principles, and that the FOWF offered help in management and use.
 - Virginia Haviland noted it would be a public process to identify what uses Bolton residents desired, which would then guide the use/draft plan, to be presented to the BSB for approval.
 - Janet Metz noted fireworks were not included in the interim plan and that folks wanted to have fireworks return to Wheeler Field.
 - Brief group discussion on fireworks, not included in interim plan, potential negative impact to wetlands/toxicity, governance inclusion (governance noted under VI).
 - Adam Miller noted the management plan is broad, the CC would be working with FOWF subject to BSB direction.
 - Andrew Pond questioned if the CC could oversee the scheduling of events during the interim management plan period.
 - Virginia Haviland noted that would not be under the CC's purview, that recommendations to the BSB would encompass use details emerging from the public process.
 - Andrew Pond made the motion "to approve the draft Wheeler Field Interim Management Plan as presented." Lynda DesLauriers seconded. There was no further discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed (5-0).
2. 6:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. Joss Bess Capital Planning Committee, FY 22-23 Budget Recommendations, Equipment Recommendations Town Meeting 2022.
- Joss Besse noted:
 - Since 2016, the CPC's efforts have been to address the "peaks and valleys" the town has experienced; huge swings in the budget/tax rates, by planning for an even demand with respect to debt service and reserve allocations.
 - The general formula is a total annual amount of \$160K allocated to debt/reserves, utilizing a 50/50 equation for equipment purchases (50% loan, 50% reserves) and a 60/40 split for reserves between highway equipment and fire equipment
 - The CPC provided tentative recommendations for highway and fire equipment reserve allocations for FY 22/23, So the BSB had a rough sense for these numbers as they start work on the town budget. Final recommendations should be available after several discrepancies are addressed. The CPC recommended that other reserve allocations be level funded.
 - The CPC was not making a recommendation pro or con on an excavator purchase as the CPC had more questions than answers around rates, rental costs, sizes of buckets, operation time, sufficient staff resources, and FEMA reimbursement rates, noting a complicated discussion.

- Brief group discussion: overview of reserve funds, that more discussion will be needed around future fire equipment purchases – if the BSB decides that a new pumper will need to be purchased in 10 years, the proposed contributions to the fire equipment reserve fund will not be adequate. need to adjust reserve allocations.
 - Chris Dubin will be attending the 12/6/21 BSB meeting to review his 17-page report to the CPC which may help to guide the Highway Department’s FY22/23 budget resurfacing/culvert line items.
3. 6:45 – 7:15 p.m. Mike Gervia, FY 22-23 BVFD Draft Budget, Capital Plan Equipment.
- Discussion included:
 - Line items were held to the previous year’s budget numbers as much as possible.
 - Training stipends and the formula used for allotment, (number of training sessions and calls attended equating to \$10/meeting) the replacement cycle and requirements for turnout gear (firefighting gear).
 - Currently utilizing automatic mutual aid with Richmond from 6 am – 6 p.m.
 - Membership is currently 3 junior members and 12 regular members.
 - The parking lot needs to be paved, and dry wells need to be re-opened.
 - Thermal camera is budgeted from reserves FY21/22.
4. 7:15 p.m. Craig Deyo, Highway Department: FY 22-23 Highway Department Draft Budget, Grader Lease as a Town Meeting 2022 Ballot Item, Excavator as a Town Meeting 2022 Ballot Item, Radio Repeater.
- Discussion included:
 - Grader purchase: process, legality/necessity of the purchase on the Town Meeting warning as a separately warned item, consequences of a no vote, warning is not reflected in the BSB meeting minutes for that lease approval. Extensive discussion on article vs. budget and funding. Consensus to not be an article at Town Meeting.
 - Excavator purchase: Extensive discussion included costs, excavator lifespan (30 years), trailer costs \$28K, additional maintenance and insurance costs, storage concerns (would be stored outside), contractor costs, CPC unable to provide any recommendation due to unanswered questions/lack of information, difficult to compare due to unit sizes, type of work accomplished, lease to purchase CAT option of a \$10K/10 year lease, monthly rental costs of \$8,200/month, which line items are reduced if purchase is put on the ballot.
 - Lynda DesLauriers made the motion “to approve placing the purchase of an excavator on the 2022 Town Meeting warning.” Janet Metz seconded. There was additional discussion regarding the purchase cost, concerns regarding how to purchase an unbudgeted trailer in addition to the excavator, concerns regarding town use of personal trailer equipment/other towns’ trailers to transport Bolton equipment, prices of different lease options in hand, if current prices are good through March 2022, the need to go out to bid if approved by voters. Consensus the subject needs further discussion.

- Lynda DesLauriers withdrew the motion, Janet Metz noted her acceptance of the withdrawal. Tabled until the next BSB meeting.
- Radio repeater: No longer pursuing.
- FY 22/23 draft budget.
Discussion included:
 - Review resurfacing and culvert line items with respect to Chris Dubin's report. Amy Grover to forward to the BSB ASAP.
 - Increased equipment rental costs in FY 21/22 to date due to lack of contractor availability, increases to the equipment rental vs. contracted services line items covering the same thing in two separate line items.
 - Tools line item increased due to lack of ongoing replacement and lack of tools, identify a replacement schedule.
 - Gravel line item cut in FY 21-22, poor decision by previous staff member, line item restored in FY 22/23. Craig Deyo stated gravel could be reduced to \$40K.
 - Lack of a machine for the town to apply chloride, \$6K cost for machine added to chloride line item to address residents' complaints regarding lack of chloride application.
 - Noted: Significant draft budget increases may need to be reduced, especially if an excavator purchase is put on the ballot, review to continue as the budget evolves.

8. **Adjournment:** Janet Metz the motion "to adjourn the meeting." Paula Gervia seconded. There was no further discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed (5-0) at 8:37 p.m.

Attest: Amy Grover, Clerk

Minutes are unofficial until approved. These minutes were read and approved by the Bolton Select Board on December 6, 2021.