



Town of Bolton  
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway  
Bolton VT 05676

TOWN MEETING MINUTES  
Smilie Memorial School  
March 4, 2019  
7 p.m.

- Announcements prior to calling Town Meeting 2019 to order:
  1. Welcome to all, especially new residents and voters.
  2. Representatives Theresa Wood and Tom Stevens:

Theresa Wood:

    - Our legislative report is available in the foyer.
    - It was a fast start in Montpelier with 40 new members and new committee assignments.
    - We are working on a critical childcare bill; this is a critical issue for our workforce, and for family quality. Childcare needs to be accessible and affordable. We are working with the Governor and expect this to be out of committee in “passover” after Town Meeting.
    - The Health Commissioner has stated that e-cigarette use among teen agers has increased 78%, which is reversing the progress we have made on nicotine addiction among our youth. This information on increase was self-reported on behavior risks surveys. The Governor has proposed a tax on e-cigarettes comparable to tobacco tax. Youth are purchasing e-cigarettes through the internet, and the bill would ban sales over the internet unless the buyer is a wholesale vendor.
    - Over 40 bills regarding climate change have been introduced, including increases to the weatherization program, and charging stations, but no carbon tax for this year.
    - I am accessible to hear your questions and concerns: [twood@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:twood@leg.state.vt.us)

Tom Stevens:

    - The first weeks of the biennium have been high test!
    - I want to note that when bills pass through committees, there is still a way to go from there.
    - Bill H.3 addresses racial equity in educational programs, providing another tool and information to bring in a broader education.
    - I am the Chair of the General, Housing and Military Affairs committee and we have been working H. 107, a Family and Medical Leave insurance program that has equitable funding for employees and employers, allowing for up to 12 weeks of leave at 100% wages.
    - We are also considering a minimum wage bill, which was vetoed last year, and a cannabis bill, however control of sales is a question.
    - Other issues have remained the same as years past, including a tough budget situation. The commitment to pay for pensions for teachers and state workers is being addressed. Previous legislatures chose not to put in contributions. Beth Pearce (State Treasurer) has set up schedule to address the funding, and we are on schedule to pay this off in 2038. This is a large expense from the general fund, reducing funding for other items such as clean water and childcare.
    - Vermont is the only state in the nation that elects our Adjutant General with the general assembly. We are unique in this and it presents an interesting situation. My question is; is this something we really need to be “unique” about? Should the Adjutant General be chosen by legislatures? This is

an interesting dilemma. In other states the AG is chosen by the Governor. Colonel Greg Knight was elected, and has promised to change the culture.

- Please stay in touch, my contact information is in our report: [tstevens@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:tstevens@leg.state.vt.us)
3. Andrew Pond, Bolton's MMMUSD representative and Board Chair, MMMUSD update:
- With respect to taxes; this is the first school budget without the merger incentive. The current projection is for a slight decrease in taxes.
  - Current budget includes \$525K for capital expenditures. This is one of the advantages of a merged district; being able to keep up with capital expenses.
  - John Alberghini, MMMUSD Superintendent was honored as the Vermont Superintendent of the Year.
  - The Huntington school district has not merged, and there is a pending lawsuit (forced merger).
  - The Underhill ID school is being repurposed; used for preschool, a possible birth to 3 care space, and the administrative offices in Richmond are expected to move there.
  - The foreign language immersion program is very popular. It started in the Jericho kindergarten (1/2 day in Spanish, ½ day in English) with 18 slots available and 31 applications. We are discussing creating a second immersion program in Richmond.

#### Smilie News:

- The garden out in back is wonderful, and enrollment is creeping up, requiring the addition of a teacher next year. Classes are returning to "straight" (not mixed grade) classes next year.
  - Capital projects at Smilie include repairing the sidewalk and replacing one or both boilers.
  - MMMUSD is taking over the maintenance of the Smilie parking lot from the town next fiscal year.
  - The Vermont River Conservancy has purchased the 3.2 acres which includes the "Potholes." The District has concerns about the VRC's plans to house port-o-lets, install signs, and create steps to access the brook, all on the town property behind the school. MMMUSD has not yet officially expressed those concerns to the Bolton Select Board.
4. Good Citizen of the Year 2019 presentation by Brenda McKeown to Paula Gervia.
5. Mica Cassara recognized outgoing Select Board member Sharon Murray. Sharon Murray noted her thanks, being honored to serve, her appreciation to town staff and volunteers, noting opportunities to serve on various boards.
6. Rod Wheelock noted that there are activities available through the Community Senior Center, emphasizing the new monthly coffee time at the Bolton Fire Station.
7. Wendy McGee and Mark Forkey from the Waterbury Senior Center Board noted that the WSC provides "Meals on Wheels" to 2- 3 residents in Bolton; 1,100 meals per year. Federal funds provide \$3.63 per meal, which cost \$10.80 prepared and delivered. They have requested a \$1,000 appropriation in the budget. They also have daily activities, and encourage you to see their flyer in the foyer.
8. Leslie Pelch as the Bolton Community Network representative noted the BCN organizes the "Holiday Crates of Cheer" (holiday basket) with the help of a lot of volunteers, organized a harvest dinner last fall, which will be in concert with the Economic Resource Committee's 2019 Community Fair in November, and is organizing a fun town/community picnic July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Kilpeck's farm on Duxbury Road. Comments on the picnic are welcome.
9. Information on Bolton's seven BOLLs was provided by Rosa Ricketson and Willa Pelshoen.
10. Moderator Leslie Pelch recognized and introduced of all candidates running for office in 2019.
11. Sharon Murray gave an update on the Notch Road Tunnel project:

- There was an advisory vote at the last Town Meeting asking the town to follow up with the state on this project, and request that it be removed from the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- We did take that advisory vote seriously. The BSB met with CCRPC (they have control over the TIP) to become informed on the process and to discuss the options.
- The BSB, with the help of Senator Chris Pearson, held a meeting with Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. Our concerns were “heard and taken under advisement,” and the plan going forward was for updated traffic counts and a revised scope of work that we hoped would address more safety concerns. It was noted by the state that if the project was removed from the TIP, funding would be pulled from another area.
- The project remained on the TIP, and the December preliminary plans did include safety items; repair the base and walls, pave the surface, paint the interior white, add lighting, address the approaches with a stop sign on Route 2 and a yield sign on the uphill side of the tunnel. The existing pedestrian signal, installed, maintained and owned by the Green Mountain Club as part of their DRB approval, is under discussion. CCRPC reviewed the preliminary plans and had suggestions. We are trying to make the existing arrangement as safe as possible.
- The issue here is the difference in costs: \$500K for a culvert rehabilitation versus 5 million dollars for a bridge.
- MMMUSD is now dropping students on uphill side of the tunnel.
- We are expecting final plans next week, and there is a comment period until March 27<sup>th</sup>. VTrans expects to contract in July, with construction from August 1 - October 15, all night work from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. They will always be able to accommodate emergency vehicles and pedestrians, but the tunnel will be closed at night, for pre-scheduled periods.
- VTrans is trying to make this the least disruptive as possible, and we’ve done the best we can as a small town.
- We have one more opportunity for comments, please let us know if you have any feedback.

Jen Dudley-Gaillard: Did we get the pedestrian count back?

Sharon Murray: Not yet, it was a camera count and VTrans hasn’t had the staff to get the count, they have to actually look at the camera footage and get the count.

Roseann Cohen: Will cars back up onto Route 2 if there is a stop sign there?

Sharon Murray: VTrans assures us that based on the vehicle count, there will not be any issues with vehicles queuing up onto Route 2.

Roseann Cohen: Will there be information provided to the community on closures?

Sharon Murray: Yes.

The Moderator asked if there were any other questions or comments, there were none.

Moderator Leslie Pelch announced the informational meeting on Article 10.

**Article 10: Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton authorize the purchase or lease of a class 4 or 5 (medium duty) work truck, for the Highway Department, price not to exceed \$83,000, to be financed over a period not to exceed five years?**

Tony Barbagallo:

- This question is on replacing the 2013 Dodge, maintenance costs are high, and it is referred to as “the lemon.”
- The Dodge is a little lighter duty than our performance needs here in Bolton.
- The replacement would a heavier duty truck, 15,000-pound rear axle, and funding would be 50% from reserves, and 50% financed for a five-year term, and we would be trading in the Dodge.

John Devine: Would this be a diesel engine?

Tony Barbagallo: Yes.

Jeffrey Leete: I can attest as an employee that drives the Dodge that the truck is undersized. We need that truck to plow and open up the Notch Road first, so that the big trucks can get up there. It definitely gets put through its paces, and it is under sized for what the town needs it to do. This is also the case up on Wentworth and Thacher Roads. I strongly urge the town to approve the purchase of a larger vehicle.

Mica Cassara: The repair costs have been high, \$7,200 this year, and maintenance is over budget by \$4,000.

Amy Grover: No, that was \$7,200 just this week (laughter)!

Tony Barbagallo: I have the repair costs. It has been over \$34,800 on repairs since inception.

Ron Lafreniere: This vehicle has had to plow Duxbury Road, it is not made to snow plow 4 miles each way. It is undersized, a larger truck is definitely needed.

The Moderator asked if there were any other questions or comments, there were none.

Call to Order

- Moderator Leslie Pelch called Town Meeting to order at 8:02 p.m.

**Article 1 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton accept the FY 2017 – 2018 Town Report?**

**Motion: Bernie Moore**

**Second: Debbie Andrews**

Rodney Pingree: On page 36 of the report, on the tax rate information, there is an error on top right, that is not a number.

Leslie Pelch: That should be annual taxes per “\$1,000” of value.

Amy Grover: Per \$100,000.

Leslie Pelch: That’s per \$100,000 of assessed value.

Duncan Galbraith: On page 5, of officials, you are missing the town's representative to the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) which is me.

No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. All were in favor. Article 1 passed.

**Article 2 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton vote a budget of \$1,035,859 to meet the expenses and liabilities of the town and authorize the Select Board to set a tax rate sufficient to provide the same?**

**Motion: John Devine**

**Second: Henry Corse**

Melissa Champney: On line 84, what is the Road Commissioner's \$2,000 stipend for, we have never had one.

Mica Cassara: We have not had a Road Commissioner, and at this time we have had member of the Bolton Select Board acting as one. This would entail acting as a liaison between the Highway Department and the Bolton Select Board to convey information. That way the Highway Department is not hearing from multiple people; all of the information is channeled through the Road Commissioner, and there are statutory duties for that position. We are trying to smooth things out between us, with less confusion for all.

Melissa Champney: So, hiring?

Mica Cassara: It would be an appointment, but it would probably be an additional person, not a Select Board member.

Sharon Murray: This is also partly because we are now under the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) and we are now required to maintain more records, and inventories. Our road crew is not set up to do the reporting work. There also is a job description the Select Board drafted for this position. It does involve being a liaison, and also the potential to be liaison to state agencies. The small stipend is similar to that of the fire chief, and we recognize that the responsibilities may exceed the stipend. We want to reinstitute this position as an appointed position to deal with the administrative work.

Melissa Champney: Is this why the tech support is up?

Tony Barbagallo: No, that was to address the need for managed services; security and cloud back up.

Sharon Murray: That is also for a computer and internet for the town garage. MRGP maps are computer based and the highway needs to have access.

Deb Shelby: I noticed that legal services have increased greatly over the last three years.

Tony Barbagallo: We have been addressing a couple of significant legal issues; the Antley access litigation on Mill Brook Road at over \$39K, which is resolving, and tax appeals from James Geddes on the Bolton Valley Access Road, which is over \$35K to date. The Superior Court upheld the town's assessment for Mr. Geddes' property, and it is now under appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court by Mr. Geddes. Mr. Geddes has also appealed his lots across the road, and we anticipate that this will be continuing. These are the reasons for the budget increases.

Pamela Gude: What can we do to reinstate library card reimbursement? All of our neighboring towns have library services in their budgets. Can I ask to amend the budget? I see that the costs averaged \$778 per year. This is a service that people were actually using; the more pinched people are, the more we need this reimbursement.

Lelsie Pelch: You can propose an amendment.

**Motion: Pamela Gude: I make the motion to amend the budget to include \$815 for library card reimbursement.**

**Second: Megan Fitzpatrick**

Jen Dudley-Gaillard: One possibility is to reduce the Waterbury Senior Center allocation down from \$1,000; the most we have given is \$200. I'm wondering if people are nervous about that total amount. We could shift those funds toward the library card reimbursement. The other possibility is to allocate those funds to the Community Senior Center, they facilitate a lot of events as well.

Janet Metz: Why was the reimbursement cut out?

Amy Grover: The funds were shifted to a recreation line item with the thought that it would serve more of the community such as Green Up Day, the Harvest dinner and upcoming town picnic.

Lynda DesLauriers: The fee for the Waterbury Library is \$10 per person, and the Richmond Library is \$35, and gives access to libraries throughout the state.

Judith Bergeron: Richmond Library also includes Williston, and a network of other towns.

Brief discussion between Leslie Pelch and Mica Cassara to pause additional budget information while there is a motion on the floor.

Rodney Pingree: I heard that funds could be shifted, but I'm hearing that this motion is to increase the budget.

Leslie Pelch: We need to vote on the amendment first, and then go to a second amendment if needed. The motion is to increase the town budget by \$815 for library card reimbursement for citizens.

**No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. All were in favor, and \$815 was added to the budget for library card reimbursement.**

Melissa Champney: On page 31 there is an increase in the wages for the Highway Department. Did we hire another person, and if not, where did that money go?

Tony Barbagallo: We did not hire another person, we carried that cost and we have not spent those funds.

Megan Fitzpatrick: It looks like the Zoning Administrator wages are going up significantly, why?

Sharon Murray: That position has been combined with the Development Review Board planning assistant; that expense line was zeroed out.

Mica Cassara: I want to point out a few budget items. We are increasing Highway Department and Fire Department line items due to new equipment. We kept the total budget increase to 2.6 %, between the CPI and Social Security percentages of 2.4% and 2.8 %. I don't think that an additional \$815 will change that significantly. I think that's a reasonable increase for a town our size.

Jen Dudley-Gaillard: I want to commend the board on their hard work and to all of the other folks that contributed to drafting the budget. It's not an easy process, and you've done a great job keeping it to 2.6%. I saw an earlier draft (as a member of the Capital Planning Committee) which was much higher, and I was nervous for you (laughter), but you've done a great job (applause).

Brenda McKeown: I'm feeling that there is a bit of unfinished business here with moving or shifting monies. The \$1,000 allocated to the Waterbury Community Center; shifting \$815 of that, to be recognized as money moved? Jen?

Jen Dudley-Gaillard: I don't feel like \$815 will make or break a budget. I feel surprised that the Waterbury Senior Center allocation went up so much, there are other deserving organizations. But I don't want to be voting to take money from seniors (laughter), I'm fine leaving it in.

Sharon Murray: The Waterbury Senior Center is specifically for "Meals on Wheels." Those costs are really in the \$3K – 4K range, they are asking for supplement to this. That is why the Select Board agreed to the \$1K, but this is open to discussion.

Ron Lafreniere: On line 66, speed control services, I know some people feel we shouldn't contract out for this. As a Duxbury Road resident, I can tell you that this is very necessary. I would like the Select Board to shift the monitoring times. The 4 – 6 p.m. time frame is very dangerous, and police are never there on a weekend. We need to look at those times and get coverage for that. There is a lot of out of state traffic on the weekends, they do not know that road, and we have farm animals and little children. We need to be more proactive be sure something doesn't happen to someone over there.

Ralph DesLauriers: There was a ton of work done last year on erosion control on Thacher and Wentworth Roads, is that in the budget?

Sharon Murray: We will get to that under Article 5.

Kim Kilpeck: We have the Lafreniere farm on Duxbury Road, we never did hear about the results of the studies that were done, never got any answers to that and I am curious. With us having horses and cows – I have to step back away from the road; there are erratic drivers, a lot of traffic, the bridge, the walking trail, and many out of state cars. We put pylons out in the road when we are doing work, and we would buy speed bumps if that is what it would take to slow things down before somebody gets hurt. Why can't we get a reduction in speed?

Sharon Murray: We did get a speed study done, it was required for the traffic ordinance. The lowest limit that road can be is 35 mph, the lowest it can go legally for a class two road which connects different towns.

Tony Barbagallo: I attended a traffic calming workshop. The speed limit is too fast for speed bumps, better signage and fog lines were discussed as calming options, but we did cut fog lines from the budget.

Sharon Murray: We authorized installation of "Share the Road" signs, but at 35 mph we can't install speed bumps or speed tables.

Steve Barner: I want to challenge that. Skunk Hollow Road is 35 mph, and connects towns. It has 3 speed tables on it, I'm not sure that information about speed bumps/tables is correct.

Duncan Galbraith: Is the town receiving any money from traffic tickets?

Sharon: Yes, we do. We reduced coverage this year because Bolton Valley folks said they felt they were being targeted. We've shifted to patrolling vs. stationary speed enforcement.

Ralph DesLauriers: I understand that the police to do patrolling because of issues on Duxbury Road. People coming to work are getting tickets. One person has received \$400 in fines, I think she's learned (laughter). People that are coming to work in the morning are getting tickets, a lot of Bolton Valley staff are being stopped. I thought

the purpose for patrolling was for Duxbury Road, but obviously it's easier picking on the Bolton Valley Access Road. I'm in favor of the police moving to Duxbury Road (laughter).

Sharon Murray: we did reduce the coverage this year, and modified how the areas were covered, and kept the two areas enforced/patrolled as Duxbury Road and the Bolton Valley Access Road.

Jeffrey Leete: On line 65 for Richmond Rescue, where did that number come from? For contract services that come into town, that comes out to \$231 per person, who then get charged a \$3000 ambulance bill.

Sharon Murray: The request and the number came from Richmond Rescue, they provide quarterly reports on the services provided.

**Motion: Jeffrey Leete: I make the motion to amend that; to level fund that from the previous year, \$18,660.  
Second: Rob Mullen**

Duncan Galbraith: Is that assessed by the number of the calls or by the population?

Mica Cassara: That is uncertain.

Sharon Murray: Their report is on page 83 of the Town Report.

**No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote on the amendment to level fund Richmond Rescue at \$18,660. Could not determine the voice vote. The Moderator called for a raise of hands: aye 29, nay 32, the motion did not carry.**

No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote on Article 2, which included the library reimbursement amendment for a budget total of \$1,036,674. All were in favor. Article 2 passed.

**Article 3 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton vote to pay real and personal property taxes to the Town Treasurer in four (4) installments with due dates of September 15, 2019, November 15, 2019, February 15, 2020, and May 15, 2020?**

**Motion: Lela McCaffrey  
Second: Bernie Moore**

John Westie: Why do we vote on this every year?

Leslie Pelch: To give that authority to collect taxes 4 times a year to the Treasurer.

Amy Grover: You can vote to change this to once a year on September first (laughter).

Jen Dudley Gaillard: That would make it easier on the Treasurer, but I recognize one payment could be a hardship for taxpayers.

No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. All were in favor. Article 3 passed.

**Article 4 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton authorize the Select Board to borrow money for the necessary needs of the Town as they arise?**

**Motion: Jen Dudley-Gaillard  
Second: Steve Peery**



No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. All were in favor. Article 4 passed.

**Article 5 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton appropriate \$88,200 in uncommitted general funds to the following reserve funds, in addition to those reserve contributions included in the FY 2019-2020 Proposed Municipal Budget:**

**Highway Reserve Fund: \$73,000**

**Highway Equipment Reserve Fund: \$10,000**

**Fire Equipment Reserve Fund: \$5,200**

**Motion: Brittany LaBerge**

**Second: Deb Andrews**

Ron Lafreniere: What is the total of uncommitted funds?

Sharon Murray: Paving costs a lot of money, we have been focusing on capital expenses and equipment. I mentioned the permitting for town highways that went into effect, and we have to make improvements on a lot of roads and pave. The Select Board has asked the Capital Planning Committee to include roadwork in the capital budget. We had \$295,000 in unassigned general funds, a large portion of that is highway funds from scheduled paving which was delayed last year and for stormwater work on Wentworth and Thacher which was funded through grants. We also hope to get a VTrans paving grant for a portion of the Bolton Valley Access Road, and we need to provide a \$35K match. The \$10K will be applied to sign equipment or any overrun on the truck costs. The \$5,20 is a match for a \$100K federal grant for BVFD airpucks, which were purchased originally with grant funding. We are using reserve funds to leverage money we can get through grants. The state has been level funding paving grants, we have to fund the rest. When we went out to bid for paving Wentworth and Thacher, costs were much higher than anticipated. There is a bill in the legislature for an additional gas tax to give towns more funds for paving, which was discussed at the Select Board level. We didn't sign on as the increased costs could be a hardship on our more rural commuters. We are trying to address the condition of our roads, build up the highway reserve fund to match grants, do special projects, extend the paving budget to do a better job maintaining our roads, and will be actively budgeting going forward. Specifically, the funds are for matching grants, the work truck or sign equipment, and matching the fire grant. If we don't receive the grants, those funds will stay in the reserve fund for future uses. We are trying to make sure the tax rate stays on an even keel year to year.

Tony Barbagallo: Did that answer your question?

Ron Lafreniere: Yeah, finally!

Sharon Murray: You know I talk a lot Ron (laughter!).

No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. All were in favor. Article 5 passed.

**Article 6 ~ Shall the voters of the Town of Bolton establish expenses for the members of the Select Board?**

**Motion: Jen Dudley-Gaillard: I make the motion to set the expenses at \$30 per meeting.**

**Second: Judith Bergeron**

Jen Dudley-Gaillard: We had a lengthy discussion last year around babysitting costs and the fact that being on the Select Board is a ton of work outside of meetings including reading emails, phone calls, responding to issues.

Melissa Champney: I think we should keep it the way it is. My husband used to be on the Select Board and it was \$10 a meeting, not that long ago. Every year we've jumped that up. This year let's keep it at \$25.

Rob Mullen: My Dad was on the Select Board too. Just because there is a history of underpaying the Select Board doesn't mean we should continue to do so.

No further discussion. The moderator called for a vote. The majority were in favor. Article 6 passed.

**Article 7 ~ To transact any other business thought proper when met.**

The Moderator noted that binding votes were not allowed.

Amy Ludwin: There is BOLL by door setup for tonight, so for tonight and tomorrow during voting we have a new BOLL location! Please take a book or leave a book. I also want to encourage folks to support Article 9 tomorrow, the ¼ cent for the Conservation Fund. That is a small amount of money; for a \$100K house that is \$2.50, a \$200K house would be \$5, I would like your support on that article. Thank you.

Mica Cassara: I agree with Amy, and I am speaking for myself, not as a member of the Select Board. It is not a lot of money, and it is worthwhile. In the past the fund has enabled us to do a number of things that have been beneficial for the town such as the PPCA town forest, and the canoe access on the Winooski River.

Ralph DesLauriers: Speaking of small amounts of money, there are really deep potholes on the Bolton Valley Access Road. An employee just spent \$800 to fix their car. It wouldn't cost that much for some cold patch to go into the road. I do know that cold patch won't last all winter, but it will last a month or so. A lot of folks can't afford \$800 every time they hit a pothole.

Steve Barner: If I were a skier, and I know Ralph DesLauriers wouldn't say this, but if I were a skier and I hit a pothole that cost me for repairs like that, I don't think I'd come back. We value Bolton Valley as an economic driver, it's an embarrassment that the road is that bad.

Moderator Leslie Pelch: is there any other business?

No further discussion.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting: Duncan Galbraith  
Second: Bernie Moore**

Moderator Leslie Pelch adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Attest: Amy Grover  
Town Clerk & Treasurer

These minutes were accepted on 3/18/19

  
