

Select Board
January 11, 2024

Robert Czekanski, Chair
Stanley Wysocki
Brian Boyle

Via Zoom

Don Lowe, Town Administrator

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

Choose-Your-Own-Adventure Story Walk

Sam Fantana, project coach for the robotic team was present with several student members: Lydia Fantana, Jackson Yesue, Madelyn Warren and Kyle Mortimer were present. Lydia described the project which is a series of 32 QR codes along the trails at the Bolton Common with 8 possible endings over the 2 ½ mile trail. The project was installed temporarily with Parks and Recreation approval and the group requested permission to keep the installation in place permanently.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Select Board approved the request from the Florence Sawyer robotics team #18300 to install a story walk on the trails around Bolton Common. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)

Fire Department Update

Chief Legendre was present to update the Board on the changes to the Bolton Advanced Life Support (ALS) Service. The department surpassed the 2022 numbers for call volume rounding out 2023 with 1,265 emergency responses. 892 were ALS responses averaging 4 calls per day. Mr. Wysocki questioned the profitability of the program. The Board invited the Chief to attend after learning that the program is not as profitable as expected. The Chief reported decreased response time with the implementation of the 24/7 service. Additional resources are anticipated as the Town will be taking over the 2nd half of Berlin for mutual aid. The program is profitable though not as much as anticipated. The Chief will be looking to increase the fees to bridge the gap. Adding \$25 to the fee will increase the revenue by \$16K for the year. Ambulances have doubled in cost since the purchase of the last vehicle. The department will need to find other avenues to purchase the next ambulance in 5 years. Mr. Czekanski commented that the fire department has put aside a large portion of money for the purchase of ambulances and that it was historically the sole source of funding. Mr. Czekanski stressed that the department will need to look at ways to make the department profitable enough to purchase an ambulance without asking the Town to take on additional borrowing. The Town is stretched thin financially. The Board discussed uncollected bills. Chief Legendre will provide the Board with information from Coastal about the amount of uncollected funds. Of every \$100K how much does not get paid due to negotiated rates and how much is paid from nonpayment. Mr. Boyle inquired as to why Bolton adopted the practice of not using a collection agency.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

MVP Project

The Town has contracted with a landscape architect that is interested in taking on the project. Work should begin within the next week.

Gift Policy

Mr. Lowe reported on the brief summary sent to Town Counsel for review. Mr. Lowe will have a future update at the next meeting after reviewing comments from Counsel on the matter. Mr. Czekanski clarified that the problem that we are trying to solve is that some items come to the Board while others are accepted

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by other committees and asked Mr. Lowe to discuss the policy with Parks and Recreation and Conservation Commission before the next meeting.

ARPA Update

Mr. Lowe shared the information on the five unplanned but necessary items which drove the buildings account into a serious deficit over \$70K. All of the work that was approved by DPW Director Randy Heglin. Mr. Heglin approved work in the neighborhood of \$180K that needs to be recommitted. The federal government has changed the rules relating to ARPA. The work now needs to be underway by the end of calendar year 2024. Mr. Lowe asked the Board to remove the amount previously approved by the Board for the work that Mr. Heglin will not get to in the calendar year and reallocating the funds to the invoiced work. \$168,938K will remain in ARPA. Mr. Czekanski explained that Advisory reviewed a transfer request from Mr. Heglin at their meeting on January 9th. Advisory is 50% through their reserve account funds for the year. Mr. Wysocki explained that the Town has been scrubbing the budget down to the bare minimum and in the last year the cost of everything has gone up exponentially.

Mr. Czekanski summarized that the reserve account can't support the transfer request made by Mr. Heglin at the Advisory meeting on January 9th and is requesting that the funds come from ARPA.

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the use of ARPA funds in the amount of \$70,974.23. (Wysocki-yes, Boyle-yes, Czekanski-yes)

Staff Update

Mr. Lowe notified the Board that Rebecca Bucciaglia has returned from leave.

Mr. Lowe reported that Chief Nelson has submitted his intent to retire as of June 30th, 2024. Mr. Lowe asked the Board to consider inviting Ltd. Hamburger in to a future meeting. Mr. Wysocki stated his comfort with promoting from within. The Board will invite Ltd. Hamburger to the next meeting.

SELECT BOARD BUSINESS

Public Service Announcements

There were none.

Future Agenda Items

Mr. Boyle inquired if an update on the Selection Committee for Town Administrator will be on a future agenda. Mr. Wysocki who sits on the Committee reported that the Committee will be meeting for the first time in the two weeks before the next Select Board meeting.

Animal Control Officer Designation

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted by roll call vote unanimously to approve the designation with changes as presented to the Board by email and to appoint Ms. Jacobsen to submit the changes to the state. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Bills/Payroll Warrant

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted by roll call vote unanimously to approve the bills and payroll warrant W24-12 and W24-12A. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Minutes

No Minutes were approved.

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On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted by roll call vote unanimously to approve the bills and payroll warrant W24-12 and W24-12A. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

On a motion made by Wysocki and seconded by Boyle, the Board voted by roll call vote unanimously to adjourn at 7:55 pm. (Wysocki-yes, Czekanski-yes, Boyle-yes)

Respectfully submitted by J. Jacobsen.