

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

June 15, 2020

Town Hall

7:00 P.M.

703 Washington Street

Present: Mark Ahronian, Chairman; John Cronin, Vice Chairman; Tina Hein, Clerk

Also Present: Chief Michael Cassidy, Emergency Management Director. Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator (remotely)

At 7:00pm M. Ahronian called the meeting to order.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Chief Cassidy reported that as of this week there were 56 total cases, 51 recovered, 2 fatalities and 3 active. He has been working with all departments on a phased reopening of the Town offices. The Library has chosen to continue curbside pickup only due to the fact that people cannot currently browse within the building. There will be an on-line training set up for employees to access outlining the new procedures for returning to the workplace. The Chief has been working with the Town Clerk in order to make next week's Town Election as safe as possible. At this point there are still multiple venues that are being considered for the Town Meeting on July 20th, 2020. J. Cronin asked the Chief how Holliston stood in comparison to other Towns regarding reopening. The Chief stated that Holliston appears to be "in the middle of the pack", as the Town continues to adhere to the safety precautions set in place. M. Ahronian expressed his gratitude to Chief Cassidy and Chief Stone for all their hard work during this crisis.

WARRANT: T. Hein made a motion to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$3,397,488.61. \$173,590.40 of which is Town Payroll and \$1,396,682.25 which is School Payroll. Second J. Cronin.

PUBLIC COMMENT: T. Hein read a year in review of the Select Boards Work which was prepared by J. Cronin. JUNE 2019 - the Board changed its name from Selectmen to Select Board. The Town took control of 9 Green Street. The roof was replaced at 1750 Washington Street. The Board completed a Department Head Salary model. JULY 2019 – A new Solid Waste & Recycling Program was initiated. Phase 1 of the MVP program began. Walk assessment in preparation of the Fall Walking School Bus Program. AUGUST 2019 – Evaluation of the 4 dams conditions. HPD presents "optimized" light solutions for Marshal Street solar project as bid closed. Luau at Holliston Senior Center. Roof of the Library completed. Review of HCAT cable license negotiation.

SEPTEMBER 2019 – Municipal Vulnerability Program designation. Green community grant received. Solsystems was chosen for the Marshal Street project. Town Septic System problem was announced. Discussion of capital requests with the School Committee for FTM. Appoints George Leurinin the new HPD Lieutenant and Todd Hagan as new HPD Sargent. OCTOBER 2019 – Presents Facility Manager position for consideration. EEE virus cancels Haunted Trail Walk at the Community Farm. Discussion of Agricultural Restriction to preserve farmland at Thistle Dew Farm. Board Votes to support DPW/infrastructure studies for FTM article 8, 10 and 11. NOVEMBER 2019 – Facility Manager position posted. RFP for 9 Green Street environmental assessment prepared. Traffic Advisory Committee was formed. Awarded \$6,000 Signs and Lines grant. Cyber security update provided by the Technology Director. Discussion of possible new Town Administrator position. META grant received to fund solar project consultant. Held Humanitarian Awards Ceremony. Tax Classification Hearing and tax rate set at \$18.85. DECEMBER 2019 – Approved \$24,000 for downtown lights. JANUARY 2020 – Adopts complete streets policy. Approves Financial Policy in preparation of bond rating app. Interviews for Facility Manager. Marijuana Cultivator vendor discusses expansion into medicinal dispensary. Contract awarded for environmental assessment of 9 Green Street. FY21 budget reviews begin. Funds received from Sherborn to pay the new Sustainability Coordinator. FEBRUARY 2020 – The Town receives grant for Upper Charles Trail improvement. Town receives MVP grant (phase II). Presentation from the Library regarding possible acquisition of abutting property. M. Ritter announces his retirement effective July 12, 2020. Mr. James Keast is hired as the new Facility Manager. Discussed debt model, prepared by the Town Treasurer. MARCH 2020 – Interview Paradigm Associates to aid in TA search. Town Auditor report of financial conditions. Negotiates electrical aggregation rate. School Superintendent present new SOI for a new High School. Chief Cassidy presented report on COVID-19. Hires Paradigm to conduct search for new TA. Approves remote participation for public meeting video conferencing. Approves local state of emergency and directs Chief Cassidy to coordinate all town business and resources to confront COVID-19 crisis. Moves town election to June 23, 2020. Moves town meeting to June 15, 2020. Immediate cessation of all non-essential spending. APRIL 2020 – Hears residents complaints of truck traffic from Lowland Park. Forms Governance Committee. Seven residents named to serve on Town Administrator Screening Committee. Discuss fiscal impact of COVID-19 with Fin Com Chairman. MAY 2020 – Discuss public health and funding issues with Rep. Dykema. Moves town meeting to July 20, 2020. Directs town accountant to draft 1/12th budget plan. Discusses Department Head salary matter with Fin Com. Hears from School Committee on capital budget needs. JUNE 2020 – Accepts \$500,000 of COVID-19 requests from various departments and approves and receives a \$1,317,137.00 from CARES Act. Interviews 3 final candidates for the Town Administrator position and selects Travis Ahern. Disbands 9 Green Street committee, and directs a RFP be prepared. Hears an update from Senate President Spilka and Representative Dykem in meeting with the School committee.

T. Hein also noted that the Town's 1/12th budget was approved by the State and that the CARES Act grant application has been submitted. M. Ahronian thanked Donna Muzzy the clerk to the Town Administrator for stepping in while the office has been in need, for all the extra time she has been working.

REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: J. Ritter joined the meeting remotely to discuss the following. The debris removal will begin this Wednesday at 260 Woodland Street. It will cost approximately \$40,000 and should be done within 2 weeks. The doors at the Pinecrest clubhouse will be replaced within the next week or two. J. Ritter will confirm tomorrow that Senator Spilka and Representative Dykema will attend next weeks Select Board meeting as planned. M. Ahronian stated that he had spoken with the representatives' office and confirmed that this morning. Mr. Ritter informed the Board that the DPW Director, Sean Reese will attend next weeks meeting to continue the Water Rate Hearing and discuss the water treatment plant project.

BOARD BUSINESS: T. Hein read the Annual Appointments (see copy attached to the hard copy of minutes). J. Cronin pointed out that Mr. Ritters last day is July 12th, 2020 and not July 13th, 2020. T. Hein made a motion to approve the Annual Appointments as read and amended. Second J. Cronin. Vote 3-0. Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant was present to read seven line item transfers as follows: \$1,700 into Select Board Clerical from Liability Insurance. \$20,000 into Assessors for ATB cases from Motor Vehicle Fuels. \$15,900 Into Youth & Family Administration for incorrect step from Trash Removal. \$7,220 into Assessors technical from Workers Comp. \$13,000 into Street Lights from Liability Insurance. \$4,411 into Veterans Benefits from Liability Insurance. After some discussion it was determined that \$44,500 should be moved into the Select Board line from Health Insurance to cover several invoices including LEI and Special Counsel. S. Emerick stated that she had conveyed these amounts to the Finance Committee. She will also email backup information for all the above mentioned to B. Sparrell and D. Alfred. J. Cronin moved to approve the transfers with corresponding backup. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0.

WARRANTS: Article 18, Robert Weidknecht of the Upper Charles Trails Committee explained that they were looking for \$1,000 to fund maintenance, such as brush trimming and machinery repairs. J. Cronin made a motion to approve Article 18 as written to be placed on the warrant. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0. There was discussion of the possibility that #16 and #22 are duplicates. J. Ritter explained that Article 22 was previously on a Town Meeting Warrant however it was never filed properly. Article 16 is a new article and should remain as well. After some discussion on Article 14 Mr. Ritter stated he will update as needed. It was determined that feedback is still needed from M. Bousquet regarding Article 5. Article 13 needs an adjustment of \$5,000 to cover administration costs for the Community Preservation Committee. J. Ritter is waiting for an update on Article 21 to see if any changes are to be made.

He is also awaiting word from Town Counsel on Article 26 to see if it can be removed from the Warrant. J. Cronin expressed the need to have any edits and or changes made to the Warrant as soon as possible as there is a time constraint. J. Ritter stated that he would do so as quickly as he could. T. Hein made a motion to approve Len Engel and Scott McKechnie to be appointed to a one year term on the Governance Committee. Second by J. Cronin. Vote 3-0. T. Hein made a motion to approve June 1, 2020 meeting minutes as written. Second by J. Cronin.

The Board opened up discussion amongst themselves about their choices for the open Town Administrator position. The three finalists had been interviewed on Friday June 12th. Each Board member put forward their ranking of the three candidates, sharing reasoning for their first choice. Both J. Cronin and M. Ahronian placed Travis Ahern as #1 on their ranking with Kate Hodges #2 and Thomas Gregory 3rd. T. Hein placed Kate Hodges as #1 with Travis Ahern #2 and Thomas Gregory 3rd. J. Cronin moved to offer Travis Ahern the position of Town Administrator. Second by T. Hein, noting she stands by her first choice. Vote 3-0. M. Ahronian stated that he would call Mr. Ahern and Mr. Lynch from Paradigm will contact the other 2 candidates.

OTHER BUSINESS: T. Hein informed the Board to expect a possible proposal from Youth & Family under the Cares Act funding. This would be to aid residents in need of mortgage and or rent assistance. She pointed out that this is a small amount of not even 4%. She also stated that MassDOT announced a new program, Shared Streets and Spaces, a funding program to reconfigure existing infrastructure to provide more social distancing space for businesses and recreation. It will be looked at to see if it might apply to Holliston. M. Ahronian requested that the Town's Capital Request Policy be placed on next week's agenda. He also requested that the School Committee present its Capital Request at next week's meeting also.

At 8:43pm. J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;
Margaret Driscoll
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Approved 8/3/20