

**Town of Holliston  
Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 11, 2017**

The meeting convened at 7:04pm in Room 105 at Holliston Town Hall. In attendance: Chairperson Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Clerk Vincent Murphy, Dan Alfred, Tim Maxwell and Suzanne Nersessian.

Chairperson Szajda welcomed the newly appointed Chief of the Holliston Police Department (HPD), Matthew Stone and one of his Lieutenants, Craig Denman to the Finance Committee (the Committee) meeting. Mr. Szajda stated that Chief Stone was asked to come to the Committee because when the original FY18 budget was presented previously, Chief Stone had not yet been appointed as Chief of the HPD. The Committee wanted to ensure that the budget that was presented was consistent with his goals and the Committee had some follow up questions.

Chief Stone thanked the Committee and stated he appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Committee as the new Chief of the HPD.

The Chief then stated that because of his promotion from sergeant to Chief and the anticipated changes of the rank of different personnel within the department he wanted to modify the original request to a total budget for fiscal year 2018 of \$2,725,458, which was a decrease of \$47,931 from the original proposed budget of \$2,773,389.

The Chief was asked if the revised budget included the addition of an officer because of the need to have an officer to become a school resource officer (SRO) designated for the middle and elementary schools. The Chief stated yes.

The Chief was asked why was a SRO needed for these students. Both the Chief and Lt. Denman stated that they had been seeing an increase in drug use and other types of negative behavior by younger students and having an SRO dedicated to this age group is expected to help curtail this behavior from starting.

Mr. Maxwell then asked the Chief if he anticipated any negative issues with having a police presence in those schools. Mr. Maxwell then referenced a couple of videos from You-tube that show police officers within classrooms where the police had to physically restrain students. Mr. Maxwell also added that this could result in the Town having an increase in its liability insurance.

Lt. Denman replied that all the officers on the HPD are trained to deescalate situations, and the SRO is specifically trained to work with students. It is this training that will

hopefully prevent anything like has been seen on those videos from occurring in Holliston's schools. The Chief then added that because the current SRO currently works at all three schools in Holliston parents often see an HPD vehicle in front of a school and they do not, and nor should they, have any concern with an HPD vehicle parked at a school.

The members of the Committee did not have any additional questions so Mr. Szajda thanked both the Chief and the Lieutenant for attending the meeting.

Next, the Committee briefly discussed the need for the Town to consolidate the maintenance of all the Town owned buildings, including all the School Buildings, under one department, such as the Department of Public Works (DPW). Mr. Szajda stated he would have a follow up discussion with the Town Administrator, Mr. Jeff Ritter, the Chair of the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Jay Leary and the Director of the DPW before discussing it with the Schools.

Mr. Szajda then stated that because of the increase and changes to the on-call EMT pay structure that the Chief of the Holliston Fire Department (HFD) is anticipating that the budget for personnel for ambulance will be too low. The Chief is therefore requesting an increase of \$21,155 to the EMT/Base salary account, lines 01231-51117 with the funds coming from the reserve fund.

Mr. Szajda stated that the increases and changes were that the on-call stipend was changed to be a per-shift stipend rather than a monthly stipend and also the amount of stipend that would be paid per-shift was an increase from the equivalent per shift amount would have been if the monthly stipend was paid on a per-shift basis.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to transfer \$21,155 from the reserve fund to the EMT/Base salary account of the Ambulance Department, account 01231-51117. This motion was seconded by Ms. Nersessian.

Mr. Murphy then asked if this transfer was an allowable reserve fund transfer. Specifically did this need fall under being extraordinary. Mr. Szajda answered that he believed it was extraordinary as it was not known last year when the FY17 budget was being developed and finally approved at Town Meeting that several On-Call EMT's would decide to retire and that it would be so difficult to replace them.

Mr. Szajda then called for a vote of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Szajda then asked to begin voting for some of the different budgets that had already been presented and that there were no issues with those budgets. Mr. Alfred then made a motion for the Committee to recommend that the following FY18 budgets be approved by the Town at Town Meeting:

- Town Accountant - \$ 140,053
- Town Clerk - \$ 145,742
- Police - \$ 2,725,458
- Schools - \$ 32,678,520
- DPW-Highway- \$ 1,319,011
- Library - \$ 113,466
- Ambulance - \$ 460,606

Ms. Nersessian seconded the motion. The Committee then approved the motion unanimously.

Mr. Szajda then stated that the budget for the debt needs to be reopened as the budget did not include any interest expense for the downtown light project. Mr. Szajda stated that the Town Treasurer, Mary Bousquet, is planning to only finance the project for one year which will be done using Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN's) that are issued by the Commonwealth and she believes that the Town can pay for the entire project with the funds that are available in the Capital Expenditure fund or from Free Cash from Fiscal Year 2017.

Mr. Alfred then made a motion to reopen the budget for debt as his employer has a fiscal relationship with the company that provides the solid waste services to the Town. This motion was seconded by Ms. Nersessian. This motion was approved by the Committee unanimously.

Mr. Alfred next made a motion that the Committee recommend to the Town favorable action on the budget for debt of \$5,468,076. This motion was seconded by Ms. Nersessian. This motion was approved by the Committee unanimously.

Ms. Zeamer then made a motion to reopen for reconsideration the budget for solid waste. This motion was seconded by Ms. Nersessian. This motion was approved by the Committee unanimously.

Mr. Alfred stated he needed to recuse himself from the discussion and the subsequent vote of this budget as his employer has a fiscal relationship with the company that provides the services to the Town.

Ms. Zeamer then made a motion that the Committee recommend to the Town favorable action on the Solid Waste budget of \$1,055,068. Ms. Nersessian seconded the motion. The Committee approved the motion, 5-0, with Mr. Alfred abstaining.

Mr. Alfred then made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Ms. Nersessian. The motion was approved unanimously, 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Vincent J. Murphy, Jr.  
Clerk