

## Town of Holliston Finance Committee

### Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2017

The meeting convened at 7:00pm in Room 105 at Holliston Town Hall. In attendance: Chairperson Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Clerk Benjamin Sparrell, Vincent Murphy, Suzanne Nersessian and Tim Maxwell. Dan Alfred was absent.

Ms. Zeamer made a motion to approve the transfer \$17,000 from the Reserve Fund to the Planning Board Professional and Technical Services account 01173-53000 to meet the discovery deadline for on-going litigation. Mr. Maxwell seconded and the motion passed with a vote of 6-0.

Members of the Budget Subcommittee, Joan Shaughnessy, Anne Louise Hanstad and Cynthia Listewnik of the School Committee presented the capital requests for Fall Town Meeting from the School department. Ms. Shaughnessy identified four capital needs.

First, a request for \$100,000 for a new student information system. The discussion on this request included the use of system for all schools; the five-year expected life of the system; that it is all hardware, Cloud based, per user fee based; and has a small increase in operating cost over current iPass system. Mr. Szajda advised having a better idea of exact price for Town Meeting. School Superintendent Brad Jackson noted that the purchase was being made within the State vendor system using Massachusetts Certified Vendors.

Second request was for \$78,440 for a new sound system for the high school auditorium. The discussion included the switch from an analog to digital system, the type of warranty; and whether Bose had been approached regarding a donation. School Budget Director Keith Buday reported that the school had applied for a Bose grant but had not gotten it.

The third request from the School Dept. presented by Ms. Shaughnessy was for \$38,000 for a sidewalk plow. The discussion included the value of the time saved by this snow removal method to Superintendent Jackson's decision to delay or close school and make timely notification. There was a discussion about the specific area to be plowed, and whether the snow removal should be done by the DPW. Ms. Nersessian asked for comparison to the purchase of snow removal services. Mr. Sparrell asked who would maintain to equipment.

The final request was for equipment for Elementary School Technology as part of the School's Strategic Vision for Technology. Mr. Szajda repeated the need for an inventory of the school's current electronic equipment. Dan MacLeod, the new Director of Technology & Digital Learning for the School Department, expressed the importance of developing deep critical thinking skills in the goal of the strategic plan. There was discussion of items on the list of requests, whether the infrastructure can handle the innovations, and the push for electronic infrastructure from MCAS and other assessments. Ms. Shaughnessy asked about the next steps for this request. Mr. Szajda said that the publication deadline for the warrant for Fall Town Meeting is October 17, 2017.

The next discussion concerned the Treasurer's Office request for additional hours for a clerk currently working part-time in that office to meet essential payroll and tax rate deadlines. The additional hours would make the position eligible for benefits and pension. The Board of Selectmen had voted at their last meeting to increase the person's hours to 25 hours. The Finance Committee would like to consider the long-term cost of this change, the impact to other Town departments and the possibility of job sharing with other Town staff.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to reconsider other options, explore better costs/benefits options and other solutions. Ms. Nersessian seconded the motion and it was passed by a vote of 6-0.

The next topic was the composition of a recently formed capital request committee, organized to determine the weights/importance of various capital needs in the Collins Center Capital Plan. Mr. Szajda said that the Finance Committee was concerned that the members of the capital committee are the largest consumers of capital.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to reconsider the composition of the Capital Request Committee to remove the conflict of interests. Ms. Zeamer seconded and the vote was passed 5-1, with Mr. Sparrell dissenting. The

Committee discussed exploring possible solutions including rotating at-large members and how other towns handle it.

Ms. Zeamer addressed the petitioner request on the warrant for extending Town curbside trash services to condominium developments. She suggested that it should be a question of private vs. public property rather than condominium vs. non-condominium. The petitioners' trash pickup issue will be discussed at October 10 meeting.

Mr. Szajda said that Mary Bousquet and Sharon Emeril would address staffing issue at next week's meeting.

Mr. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Murphy seconded and the vote passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm.

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