

Town of Holliston

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 18th, 2020

The meeting was held remotely under the guidelines that were issued because of the emergency caused by the COVID-19 virus. All votes taken during this meeting were done as a roll call vote.

Mr. Szajda called the meeting to order at 7:02PM. In attendance were Chairperson Ken Szajda, Vincent Murphy, Tim Maxwell, Sue Nersessian, Michelle Zeamer, and Clerk Mark Whittaker – Vice Chair Dan Alfred was not present.

Other notable attendees included: Travis Ahern – Town Administrator, Chief Cassidy, James Keast, and Ben Sparrell of the Select Board.

Approval of previous Meeting Minutes:

A batch approval for meeting minutes from 7-9-2019, 9-3-2019, 9-10-2019, and 9-17-2019 was moved by Tim Maxwell, and seconded by Sue Nersessian. This motion was approved 5-0-1 with Ken Szajda, Vincent Murphy, Tim Maxwell, Sue Nersessian, Michelle Zeamer all voting yes, Mark Whittaker abstaining.

Approval for the meeting minutes from 7-28-2020 was moved by Vincent Murphy, and seconded by Sue Nersessian. This passed with a 6-0 vote with Ken Szajda, Vincent Murphy, Tim Maxwell, Sue Nersessian, Michelle Zeamer, and Mark Whittaker all voting yes.

Discussion on the Capital Sub-Committee:

With Ben Sparrell (a former member of the Finance Committee) moving to the Select board- this vacated a slot in the Capital Sub-Committee. Tim Maxwell was nominated by Michelle Zeamer, and Seconded by Sue Nersessian. This was passed with a 5-0-1 Vote with Ken Szajda, Michelle Zeamer, Sue Nersessian, Vincent Murphy, and Mark Whittaker all voting yes, with Tim Maxwell Abstaining.

Liaison assignments:

This was deferred to give committee members time to respond to Ken Szajda with a list of desired assignments.

Covid-19 Pandemic and related financial matters:

Chief Cassidy stated that the town is in good shape with PPE supplies.

A lengthy discussion on the CARES act funds followed with the primary focus being that we make sure to cover all COVID-related expenses we possibly can from the CARES act funds before they expire at the end of calendar year 2020.

Matters concerning the FY21 budget as approved by Town Meeting on July 20, 2020:

The finance committee viewed very skeptically the comment/commitment that local aid will be level funded this year. Ken stated that even if the entirety of the State's rainy day fund was used this year, that would still leave the state with a potential \$2 billion plus shortfall to cover level funding based on current models. Ken Szajda suggested that until we see a state budget, we should not steer from the current path of our town's fiscally conservative approach. Committee members all generally agreed with this approach and spoke about this.

Plans and anticipated meeting schedule for next town meeting:

The next town meeting and timing related thereto was discussed for a time and left off that the traditional October fall meeting may benefit from being pushed back into November. One side effect of this is that the Capital Sub-Committee will meet next Wednesday (8-26-2019) with the Select Board to determine courses of action, and the full Finance Committee will meet the following week (time to be determined by feedback to Ken Szajda).

Motion to adjourn was put forth by Vincent Murphy, and seconded by Tim Maxwell. This passed with a 6-0 Vote Ken Szajda, Sue Nersessian, Michelle Zeamer, Tim Maxwell, Vincent Murphy, and Mark Whittaker all voting yes.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45.