

Town of Holliston
Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 16, 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.

Dr. Szajda called the Finance Committee to order at 7:02 pm. In attendance were Ken Szajda, Michelle Zeamer, Ben Sparrell, Daniel Alfred, Tim Maxwell, Sue Nersessian and Vincent Murphy.

Mr. Murphy had sent the minutes for review for 6/4/19, motion by Mr. Alfred to approve and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted to approve 7-0. Approve minutes of 5/5, motion made by Mr. Alfred and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted to approve 7-0. Approve minutes of 5/19, motion made by Mr. Alfred and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted to approve 7-0. Approve minutes of 5/26, motion made by Mr. Alfred and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted to approve 7-0.

Discussion on line item between department transfers: 1) Select Board cover additional hours for Donna in Select Board Office; 2) Additional Town Council expenses and special council for Select Board office; 3) Mandated utility and assessment software for the Assessor who we already have discussed; 4) Maintenance cost and electricity for the street light budget; 5) Transfer for Youth and Family Services this goes back a ways and we did hear about this where it was incorrectly budgeted last year and she came to us, even before the pandemic. Where she came to us and talked about how their budget was miscalculated so this is the line item transfer to fix that. We told them to fix it at the end of the year. 6) One more for the Veterans, again its benefits and this was something we discussed and he had brought it up a few weeks ago. Another veteran benefit issue a funeral that was paid for by the Town. Have paperwork for it. 7) There is one for \$20K for the court judgment on a tax case and that one we also had discussed. Dr. Szajda said at one point the town had a pilot agreement with a company that has since gone bankrupt and under the bankruptcy they raised a question as to whether they can recover the money already paid to the town as part of the pilot in the bankruptcy proceeding and the total amount was in the order of high of \$60K to \$70K that was the pilot. The Town reached a settlement with the party in question to refund \$20K and that was at the advice of council because it would cost us way more to fight to go into an extended battle over this. 8) There as one more from the Youth and Family that is going to come from the COVID money and Dr. Szajda spoke with Mr. Cronin about it this evening. He agreed that they hadn't formerly voted but that they were all in agreement that it was going to be paid for. This was the email from Youth and Family Services that Finance Committee saw about the software for support during

COVID there was some telemedicine type thing that Youth and Family Services had needed some money. The advice Dr. Szajda gave Jackie was that it will come from the COVID money but you need to make sure the Select Board is on board with it because they dispense the money. So. Mr. Cronin confirmed that in his opinion they are on board with it although they haven't formally voted on it but they all know about it and they are in agreement it is COVID related. So that was pulled from the list because that obviously does not need to be made.

The Select Board met this morning in an emergency session and re-voted the hours for the poles to be open in the Towns election so the poles will be open from 7a.m. to 8 p.m. per the Town's bylaws. Mr. Ahronian asked me to state that during our meeting tonight for anybody who might be watching and not have seen that it has since been picked up by HR so it's already on Holliston Reporter so anyone who wants the information it is there. So the poles will be open the full bylaw allotted time next Tuesday. The state law dictates that for town elections the poles must be open at least from noon to 4. In Holliston we have bylaws, and an actual bylaw that says the poles must be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. So because the emergency legislation did not specifically address overriding bylaws and setting of hours for the poles, even though the Select Board can change the date, they could not change the bylaw requirement of the hours of the poles being open.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be next Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Four transfers that are not being held are the utility and assessment software for the Assessor, the Veterans, the court judgment for the settlement and fixing the incorrect budget for Youth & Family Services.

First is for Youth & Family Services it's a line item transfer in the amount of \$15,900 from Trash Removal (solid waste) Organization #01433, Object #52910 to Administrative Assistant in the Youth & Family Services Budget, Organization #01542, Object #51110. So moved by Mr. Sparrell and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted 7-0 to approve.

The second one is the court settlement of \$20K and that one is a line item transfer in the amount of \$20K from the Motor Vehicle Fuels Budget, Organization #01499, Object #55392 to the budget account name Judgments as Ms. Emerick set up a separate line item for this, Organization #01941, Object #57600, explanation being it's the court judgment in the tax case. So moved by Mr. Sparrell and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Vote 7-0 to approve.

The third is the Veterans which was an additional funeral for a veteran that they were entitled to Veteran's benefits for that funeral cost so this one is line item transfer in the amount of \$4,411 from the liability insurance budget Organization #01945, Object #57400 to the Veteran's

Benefits Budget Organization #01543, Object #57700. So moved by Mr. Sparrell and seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Voted 7-0 to approve.

The last one is the Utility Assessment software they need the expertise so this is a line item transfer in the amount of \$7,220 transfer from Worker's Compensation Organization #01912, Object #51710 to the Assessor's Professional & Technical line Organization #01141, Object #53000, for the utility assessment software, so moved by Mr. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Sparrell. Voted 7-0 to approve.

Chief Cassidy gave an update regarding the Corona Virus and the Community response. We continue to make sure that our supply of PPE is sufficient not only for our first responders but also for the community wide efforts that we have planned this spring, summer and already gearing up for the fall. He recently acquired some PPE to facilitate the annual town election and after we get thru that we will be focusing on the annual town meeting at a date to be determined. Been working with the schools to make sure that their plans as they look at interim guidelines that came out from the Department of Early and Secondary Education with regards to in person learning with regards to the number weeks of supplies that the need to have on hand. All of those calculations and plans rolled up into the communities' application to the Commonwealth last week. As of Thursday, June 11th at 11:40 a.m. Holliston's submission for the \$1,317,137, eligible amount for FY20 & FY21 combined was submitted to the Commonwealth. Chief has not heard back anything yet and also awaiting further guidance from A & F and DLS on how to set up the accounts and how to do the bimonthly reporting that will be required. Our case load is pretty flat from where it was a week ago. We are still at 56 total cases, 51 having reported as recovered, 2 COVID related fatalities which leaves 3 active cases and those active cases are all at single family homes. We do not have any cases at group homes and have not yet had any at the one nursing home that we have in town. We are continuing to monitor and working with Town Department as the look forward to either a modified reopening or a soft opening.

Fiscal Year 21 budget discussion entailed. Dr. Szajda stated that the blueprint they are going to work over with the 20%, \$400K from Stabilization that with 0 leaves us at \$215,000. Keeping in mind that we also took capital down by \$500k. He said if the free cash turns out to be \$500K then put the \$400K back into Stabilization and maybe bring Capital up to \$1.6M or something like that in October. Mr. Sparrell wanted to know why we were creating a cushion at the beginning of the year when they could just add to it in 3 months. Dr. Szajda stated that they cannot count on October happening in October. In a situation now because we had planned on fixing them in May and May didn't happen. The difference with October is there are many months until the end of the fiscal year. So if October Town Meeting gets delayed we will certainly have enough time before fiscal year ends. So he's less concerned about the fiscal year wrapping up but if we run into a second wave in the fall or whatever and October gets pushed to January or something like that then we will be saying we didn't put enough money into the

Reserves. So he would rather put it in than fill it later and put it back later, just to make sure if Town Meeting gets delayed we are covered. If no questions this will be our working blueprint.

Updates on the Warrants. The commitment for today was that we would have the updated warrant and we are kind of there and the version that Donna had sent out is almost near the final product, at least according to Mr. Cronin. There are some corrections and one of the big ones that Mary sent out to everybody was that the wage tables in there was wrong. They are the original FY21 tables so Ms. Bousquet pointed out she is in the process of pulling them back and fixing them. There were a couple of other things to note in terms of some changes that Dr. Szajda picked up and he said hopefully whomever comes next week from Select Board can discuss this. He noticed that the Capital Article was significantly paired back which he kind of expected but there is some ongoing debate because they pulled the school stuff which again gets into the issue of does the Select Board have the authority. He said that was between the two Boards but that the school may want additional capital. Tina Hein from the Select Board said that the School Committee had not come in and made their capital request and that they were coming in next week to do that. She said to just put on hold the School Committee issues for Article 14 as they have not yet heard from them. No further comments on the Warrants were made.

Dr. Szajda said that today was Mr. Sparrell's last meeting on the Finance Committee that he was going to greener pastures. Said they would be in touch with him in his new role with Select Board and Dr. Szajda thanked him for his service.

Motion to adjourn by Ben Sparrell and seconded Mr. Alfred. Vote passed 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.