

HOLLISTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 17, 2014

The Committee convened in Room 105 at the Town Hall at 5:40 PM. Present from the Committee were Chairman Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Bill Dowd and Beth Liberty. Dan Alfred, Charlie Kaslow and Brendan Shea were absent.

1. Review of the FY15 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Ken Szajda opened the meeting with an update on local aid as it appeared in the most recent House Ways and Means Committee report on the state's FY15 budget. According to that report, Holliston was due to receive a slightly larger local aid amount than had previously been estimated, resulting in an increase in the estimated budget surplus from \$8,932 to approximately \$27,000.

The Committee then proceeded to review and vote on the articles in the Warrant. For all of the votes noted below, members Alfred, Kaslow and Shea were absent.

Article 2. After a brief discussion about voting to approve a report that has not yet been prepared, the Committee concluded that since it would ultimately endorse its own report to town meeting, it was appropriate to proceed with the vote here. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 2. Four in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 5. Ken Szajda noted that the proposal under article 5 was consistent with previous presentations from the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, Seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 5. Bill Dowd expressed concerns that the pay table contained in the article was actually an increase in the number of steps at each pay level over the existing table. He also pointed out that this was the first time that the Finance Committee was seeing the proposed pay table. Moved to amend the motion by Bill Dowd, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommendation includes a note to the effect that further work is required in the near future to complete the process of adjusting compensation. On the amendment, four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the amendment carried. On the amended main motion, four in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 6. Paul LeBeau reported that a single late bill in the amount of \$1,035.45 related to repairs to the kitchen facility at Pinecrest golf course clubhouse was in need of approval. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend that the town raise and appropriate \$1,035.45 for the purposes stated in Article 6. Four in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 7. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend that action under Article 7 be indefinitely postponed. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 9. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 9. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 10. Paul LeBeau reported that this article is the usual authorizations for revolving funds except that the maximum expenditure limit for the ambulance fund has been increased to align with 1% of the levy limit, and the building inspector revolving fund has been increased to \$70,000. In addition, the passport fee revolving account was being terminated with the account balance in that fund swept to the general fund. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 10.

Articles 11,12 and 13. Ken Szajda reported that the Finance Committee typically does not take action on these articles sponsored by the Board of Assessors. Bill Dowd pointed out that they do have financial implications to the town's revenue, and suggested that the Finance Committee look more closely at these proposed actions. The consensus of the Committee was to take no action this year but to ask the Board of Assessors to provide information in the future so that the Finance Committee could make appropriate recommendations on these articles.

Article 14. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on the amounts shown in the recommended column of the omnibus budget. Three in favor, one opposed (Dowd), no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 15. Ken Szajda reported that the only capital request being sought for approval at Annual Town Meeting was \$130,000 for a large highway dump truck. Bill Dowd was opposed to approving any capital requests given that there has not been any action in the development of either a capital policy or capital plan for the town. Given the importance of the subject and the large number of missing members, moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee make its recommendation on Article 15 at town meeting. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 16. Ken Szajda reported that while the committee had received a presentation from the Community Preservation Committee, he had not been advised at this time of the actual projects to be proposed for funding at town meeting. Moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee make its recommendation on Article 16 at town meeting. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried

Article 17. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend that action under Article 17 be indefinitely postponed.

Article 18. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend that the town raise and appropriate \$625,000 for the purposes stated in the article. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 19. With legislative approval of the town's Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust, it is now time to both move prior set-asides into the trust, and vote the FY15 amounts for deposit. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Town appropriate \$3,295,479 from the

Stabilization Fund, raise and appropriate \$1,444,013, appropriate \$43,011 from Water Surplus and appropriate \$27,497 from the Ambulance Fund. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 20. Ken Szajda reported that the fund being proposed by the Board of Selectmen would be similar to the OPEB fund except that this would cover obligations related to paid time off payable to employees at termination or retirement. Bill Dowd pointed out that these kinds of funds are very common in the private sector and would enable the town to better understand the size of the potential obligation to terminating or retiring workers. Moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 20. Four in favor, none opposed no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 21. Ken Szajda reported that this article was in connection with the proposal from the Council On Aging to construct a larger parking lot at the Senior Center on Golding Street. He expressed his concerns that the proposal involved spending more money at a facility that it was not clear was in the long-term facilities plan for the town. Bill Dowd expressed his concerns that the proposal has not been fully explained to the Finance Committee and, again, was disconnected from any comprehensive capital policy or plan for the Town's facilities. Moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend that action under Article 21 be indefinitely postponed. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 22. Ken Szajda noted that the details associated with the Board of Water Commissioners' proposal in Article 22 have not yet been fully explained to the Finance Committee. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee make its recommendation on Article 22 at town meeting.

Article 23. Again, Ken Szajda noted the details associated with the Board of Water Commissioner's proposal in Article 23 have not yet been fully explained to the Finance Committee. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee make its recommendation on Article 23 at town meeting.

Article 24. After a brief discussion during which it was confirmed that the language of Article 24 only authorizes PILOT arrangements with solar developers and does not require them, moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 24. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 25. After brief discussion during which it was confirmed that if the article was successful at town meeting, it would involve moving a piece of property from nontax payment status to tax payment status, the Finance Committee took no action on Article 25.

Article 26. Paul LeBeau reported that the Treasurer/Collector was seeking to clean up some old outstanding borrowing authorizations that were unlikely to be acted on. In Article 26, the Treasurer/Collector is seeking to rescind the borrowing authority for a very old rail trail matching grant proposal, which did not materialize. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 26. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 27. Similar to article 26 this proposal involves rescinding the borrowing authority related to the Bullard Farm proposal from 2013 that was unsuccessful due to the failure to obtain a State grant. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the Finance Committee recommend favorable action on Article 27. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 28. Ken Szajda reported that the Treasurer/Collector had informed him that the amount authorized for borrowing at last fall's town meeting for the purchase of a replacement Fire Department pumper truck was too small to actually borrow. The Committee pointed out that such information would've been better to have had last fall when it was constructing the arrangements for the action on a number of capital requests. As the final payment on the pumper truck will not be required until after fall town meeting this year, and since there were no proposals for how to cover the \$175,000 of authorized borrowing, the Committee concluded that this matter would be best dealt with in conjunction with consideration of capital spending prior to fall town meeting. Moved by Bill Dowd, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend that action under Article 28 be indefinitely postponed. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Ken Szajda reported that the Finance Committee would meet the following Tuesday, April 22nd for the purpose of having a final review of Town Meeting matters.

2. Adjournment. At 7:52 PM moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Beth Liberty that the meeting be adjourned. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Bill Dowd

Approved____June 17, 2014_____