

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

March 18, 2024
7:00PM

Town Hall
703 Washington Street

Present: John Cronin, Chair; Tina Hein, Vice Chair; Ben Sparrell, Clerk;

Also Present: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Attorney Elizabeth Lydon, Town Counsel; Sierra, Counsel for Dirigo Cannabis, MA LLC; Lisa Deering, Kathy Shore, Theresa Lamkin, members of Celebrate Holliston 300th Committee; Michael Cassidy, Holliston Fire Chief; Brian Kelley, Holliston Assistant Fire Chief/EMS Director.

At 7:00pm J. Cronin called the meeting to order.

HOST COMMUNITY AGREEMENT TRANSFER REQUEST FOR 72 JEFFREY AVENUE:

J. Cronin stated that Dirigo Cannabis MA LLC is seeking approval to acquire the Host Community Agreement (HCA) from Good Feels located at 72 Jeffrey Avenue. He then introduced Attorney Sierra, legal counsel for Dirigo Cannabis MA LLC. Attorney Sierra gave a brief history of the company along with bios of co-owners Christopher French and Joseph Croteau. B. Sparrell asked if there are any operational changes necessary to accommodate the method of extraction for their particular product. Attorney Sierra did state that she can obtain more specific information regarding the extraction method. B. Sparrell noted there is a concern with noise and odor as 72 Jeffrey is located in close proximity to a Holliston Pediatrics. Attorney Sierra does not anticipate any issues with noise or odor.

T. Hein shared B. Sparrell's concerns and would like more clarification on extraction and actual plans with specific information.

J. Cronin noted that in the presentation it was mentioned that there may be a physical change within the building itself and again pointed out that the building faces a Pediatrics Office. T. Ahern displayed a graphic that showed the site line to the Pediatrics Office, he will send the original PowerPoint presentation to Attorney Sierra. J. Cronin also inquired as to the number of employees. Attorney Sierra posed a guess of between 5-10 individuals with J. Croteau and C. French on site as well. J. Cronin asked the various questions/concerns verbalized this evening be addressed and Dirigo Cannabis return within the next few weeks for further discussion before the Select Board takes a vote on the matter.

Attorney L. Lydon pointed out that due to the fact that Dirigo Cannabis MA LLC is assuming the original HCA, the Ordor Control issue #13 Condition must be adhered to.

CELEBRATE HOLLISTON 300TH, UPDATE:

Kathy Shore stated that there will be three trees planted signifying Holliston's 300th Celebration as part of the Arbor Day Celebration on April 26, 2024. Four trees in total will be planted in the

“green space” on Green Street. Mark Ahronian will design the space.

Theresa Lamkin arrived at 7:23pm. T. Lamkin gave a brief update of the 300th Celebration, which included an idea to have a “talk series”. K. Shore will be attending the 300th Celebration Parade meeting on March 19th, 2024 and noted that the deadline for applications for groups to participate is April 15, 2024. B. Sparrell asked that viewing for Senior Citizens and those with disabilities be addressed. L. Deering stated that there will be sites designated for such viewing on the parade map.

T. Ahern stated the original FY23-FY24 earmark for Celebrate Holliston 300th Celebration of \$10,000, has been allocated, \$5,000 of which was used to fund events at the Historical Society and the other \$5,000 to fund events at the Community Farm. The May 2022 Town Meeting Warrant Article in the amount of \$30,000 will be used for various items pertaining to the Parade, Holliston Police Department Details (\$15,000), DPW overtime (\$4,000), Counsel on Aging Van’s and Driver (\$5,000) and Town Hall Float materials. The Parade Committee is in need of renting golf carts however at this point in time there is no resolution on that particular cost. T. Lamkin stated that the Celebrate Holliston Committee is going to purchase 8 Adirondack Chairs which local artists will paint to be placed in Blair Square. She also noted that in a “non-vandalism” approach they do not wish to chain the chairs. J. Cronin asked that T. Lamkin put the request in an email to be addressed at a future Select Board meeting. T. Lamkin noted that they do not want to delay the ordering of the chairs, to which J. Cronin replied he did not foresee and issue, however he suggested getting the Park Department involved in placement of the chairs in the square.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the cost of the Police Details for the 300th, Parade on May 11, 2024 to be charged to the Auxiliary Police budge for FY24 (org 01211) and further to approve the estimated cost of \$4,000 for DPW Overtime and COA drivers to be charged to Article 24 of the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting (org & object: 02122-28242) for an estimated \$5,000. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve \$15,000 to be sent from Article 34 of May 2022 Annual Town meeting (org & object: 02122-58242) to Celebrate Holliston, as a separate 501c3 organization that is currently planning a variety of events for the Towns’ 300th celebration as presented to the Board. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

HOLLISTON FIRE DEPARTMENT – AMULANCE RATE HEARING FY2025:

Holliston Fire Chief Michael Cassidy and Holliston Assistant Fire Chief/EMS Director Brian Kelley joined the meeting to present the proposal for the FY2025 EMS Billing Rates. Chief Cassidy noted that it has been 9 years since there have been any changes to the billing rates for EMS services. Chief Cassidy also noted that if the Select Board were to approve the new rates they could do so with an effective date of tomorrow, March 19, 2024 and not wait until July 1, 2024. Assistant Chief Kelley stated that when doing the research he pulled data from various other communities. Assistant Chief Kelley also went into depth when explaining the billable services and the manner in which they are billed to Medicare/Medicaid and Private Insurance.

Assistant Chief Kelley stated that he submitted an application for the Certified Public Expenditure Program in which the Town may be eligible to collect additional funding in the amount of \$10,000-\$20,000.

J. Cronin noted that the increase in rates was quite substantial and he voiced his concerns regarding residents that may not be able to incur such a cost. He stated that he would hate to see individuals pass on medical services due to that fact that they are unable to pay the bill once service is completed. Assistant Chief Kelley stated that there are mechanisms in place to accommodate, one being Hardship. He also noted that when bills go into collection that will not affect an individual's credit. J. Cronin suggested a possible gradual approach be taken with the increase in rates over the next several years. Chief Cassidy noted his concern that if the Department delays the increase the further it will get from the current market.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the ambulance rate proposals, as presented. B. Sparrell second. Vote 2-0-1. J. Cronin opposed.

T. Hein made a motion to amend the motion to make the rate change effective as of July 1, 2024. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell will approach Council on Aging and schedule time at the Senior Center to go over the information.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

J. Cronin stated that he attended the Saint Patricks Day Breakfast in Upper Town Hall on Sunday March 17, 2024, and noted that it was a well-attended, wonderful event.

WARRENTS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$1,421,872.36. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern stated that the Director and the Chair of the Library will meet with the Select Board, as well as the Parks Commission, (CPC funding) during next week's meeting on March 25, 2024 regarding the May 2024 Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

T. Ahern will also be presenting the Select Board recommended (level 3) FY25 budget. Please forward any suggested adjustments to him before then.

The Town will be applying for the META Grant for the Energy Resiliency and Microgrid Systems Feasibility at the Woodland Street schools.

J. Cronin stated that he had spoken with Rich Rosenberry and Joan Levinsohn and after receiving some feedback from them regarding the new contract for the Sustainability Coordinator he asked that the Town do a better job of communicating with Weston & Sampson, the current consultant. T. Ahern noted that the previous consultant was one individual who was more approachable and the Weston & Sampson has taken on a more advisory role working with other Town staff.

T. Ahern stated the Congressionally Direct Spending Window opened today. He has been in contact with Congressman McGovern and Senator Markey's Offices. The Town will be submitting applications related to the proposed Downtown Sewer Project.

BOARD BUSINESS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2024 as written. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin reconfirmed that vote taken last week under Other Business, for a vacant seat on the Board of Assessors by Mary Greendale, which will be added to the May 2024 Town Election.

B. Sparrell made a motion to release the bond for the Holliston at Highlands Subdivision Streetlights pending the cleanup of the lay down area for streetlight installation, specifically the mast arms, pallets, etc. located at the top of Mayflower Landing. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin stated that the Select Board has completed the Town Administrators performance review and that T. Ahern has done an exceptional job and the Town is lucky to have him.

OTHER BUSINESS:

B. Sparrell will not be in attendance at the March 25, 2024 Select Boards meeting.

T. Hein will not be in attendance at the April 8, 2024 Select Boards meeting.

T. Hein requested that the Celebrate Holliston Committee send a letter with the intended location and design of the previously discussed Adirondack chairs and suggested having Shaw Lively, a Parks Commissioner look at the plans as well as a way to keep the integrity of the space at Blair Square.

J. Cronin stated that the language pertaining to the "Town Manager Act" has been sent to Town Counsel for review prior to May 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

At 8:54pm B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;

Margaret Driscoll

Approved__04/29/2024

