

## SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES

January 13, 2016  
7:30 p.m.

Town Hall  
Selectmen's Meeting Room – 105

Present; Jay Marsden, Chairman; Jay Leary, Vice Chairman; Kevin Conley, Clerk and Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator.

### MR. CONLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING WARRANT

16-29	GENERAL WARRANT	\$543,365.56
	PAY.COM (APPLICATION FOR MEDICARE-HEALTH)	\$ 767.40
	AGENCY (890) VETERANS DISTRICT PAYROLL	\$ 1,359.50
	TOWN PAYROLL	\$ 147,953.71
	TOTAL PAID WARRANT	\$ 692,086.67

### ACCOUNTANT'S NOTE:

ACCRUED DEDUCTION LIABILITIES NOT PAID	\$ 40,304.69
--	--------------

### TREASURER'S NOTE:

WIRE TO HEALTH INSURANCE TRUST	\$ 27,401.58
--------------------------------	--------------

**THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

### COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

There were no comments from the Board.

There were no comments from the audience.

### REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Ritter, said that there is a utility pole behind the Library that has needed attention for the past four years. He said that the double pole that has been held together with a rope has been removed by Eversource. He said that Verizon has re-placed their wires. Mr. Ritter said that this was a hazard waiting to happen.

Mr. Ritter said that they are meeting tomorrow January 14, 2016, with representatives from World Energy. He said that they have completed the energy audits in the buildings. He said that after we get the report, we can move forward on the Green Community application.

Mr. Ritter said that the Senior Center has had a few improvements. He said that we have committed \$18,550 in work so far. He said that the renovation project is moving forward.

### BUDGETS – ANIMAL CONTROL, MOTOR VEHICLE FUELS, SNOW AND ICE, SOLID WASTE, STREET LIGHTS

#### Animal Control

Mr. Marsden said that we share an Animal Control budget with Ashland. He said that we have an arrangement with them. We pay a flat fee for services for a year. He said that there is no change in the budget amount of \$38,000.

Mr. Ritter said that it is a level funded budget at \$38,000.

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO APPROVE THE ANIMAL CONTROL BUDGET FOR FY 2017 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$38,000. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

#### Motor Vehicle Fuels

Mr. Ritter said that gas and oil are dropping in price. He said that he asked the DPW for an estimate on the consumption of fuel from last year. He has suggested that we reduce the budget to \$90,000.

Mr. Marsden said if prices go up we will have to make adjustments to the budget line. Mr. Ritter said that un-leaded gas is \$1.60 per gallon and diesel is \$1.40 per gallon.

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MOTOR VEHICLE FUELS BUDGET FOR FY 2017 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$90,000. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

#### Snow and Ice

Mr. Marsden said that this has been all over the map as well. He said that last year we has so much snow and this year just a little snow.

**MR. CONLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE SNOW AND ICE BUDGET FOR FY 2017, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$250,000. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

#### Solid Waste

Mr. Ritter said that the solid waste budget is under contract with Republic Services Inc. He said that they pick up curb side trash and recycling weekly. He said that there is also a hazardous waste day. He said that they pick up large items at the curb.

Mr. Ritter said that we are working with Republic Services now to reduce the amount of trash and to increase recycling. Mr. Ritter suggested that we level fund the solid waste budget at \$1,045,456.

Mr. Ritter said that he is hoping to get rolling containers for recycling.

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO APPROVE THE SOLID WASTE BUDGET FOR FY 2017, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,045,456. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

#### Street lighting

Mr. Ritter said the Town has about 900 street lights. He said that the current budget is \$60,000.

He said that he is recommending a level funded budget at \$60,000. He said that there are two things going on. He said that he is having a conference call with World Energy and Eversource. He said that there is talk of having a LED program in Town. Mr. Ritter said that Eversource would like the Town to purchase the streetlights. Then all the bulbs could be changed out to LED bulbs.

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO APPROVE THE STREET LIGHT BUDGET FOR FY 2017 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$60,000. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

#### MINUTES

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO APPROVE THE SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2015, AS WRITTEN. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

**LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS**

Mr. Leary said that he would like to work with public safety or DPW. Mr. Marsden said that Mr. Leary could swap a liaison assignment with someone. Mr. Marsden said that he will take General Government and Mr. Leary can take Public Safety.

**RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT APPLICATION AMENDMENT**

Robert Weidknecht, Trails Committee Chairman, said that they have been awarded three grants under the Recreational Grants Program. He said that the Trails Committee was able to save some funds, because of the help that the Highway Department gave them. He said that they still have funds available from a grant that they received a few years ago, and it is going to expire this year. They would like the Selectmen to make an amendment to the original grant. He also said that they are going to start working on the trail from Church Street to the Sherborn line.

**MR. CONLEY MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE GRANT AMENDMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

**MR. CONLEY MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE GRANT APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATIONAL FOR THE TRAILS GRANT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

**COMMUNITY COMPACT**

Mr. Ritter said this program is sponsored by Governor Baker. He said that if a Community enters into a Community Compact, that opens up the door for two things to happen. One, gives bonus points for any grant application that is being submitted to any State agency. He said that the second item is they will provide assistance and technical assistance and funding for supporting these practices.

He said that they are working on the accreditation of the Police Department, Community Health indicators and the establishment of capital improvement plan.

That would allow UMass Boston (the Collins Center) to come in and jump start the Capital Improvements plan. He said that we have been spinning our wheels on this for a while.

Mr. Leary said that he thinks that this is a great idea.

Mr. Conley said that he is impressed with the Collins Center.

**MR. LEARY MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY COMPACT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. CONLEY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

**ALL CHAIRS MEETING AT 8:00 P.M.**

Present: Liz Newlands, Kent Kissinger, Arts Council; Robert Weidknecht, Trails Committee; Melissa Kaspert, Park and Recreation; Inga Daniels, Park and Recreation; Brad Jackson, Superintendent of Schools and Anne Louise Hanstad, School Committee.

Mr. Marsden said that the Selectmen have been working on downtown lights. He said that they have had a few meetings on this. They would like to improve public safety.

Ken Szajda, Finance Committee, said that he attended a Selectmen's Meeting a few weeks ago and they went over the budget guidelines. He said that they are using a 1.5% guideline. He said that they are

starting the budget review next week. He said that there discussion of an over-ride, but he is hoping that we will not have to. He said that it is too early in the budget process to know.

Mr. Leary said that the Selectmen have already gone through five budgets. Mr. Leary said that the fuels budget is going to be cut by a large amount, because gas has gone down in price. Mr. Leary said that Animal Control is level funded. He said that snow and ice budget is level funded. Mr. Leary said that Solid Waste is level funded. Mr. Leary said that Mr. Ritter is talking to Republic Service and we could have savings. He said that streetlight budget is level funded. He said that some budgets could be challenging.

Mr. Szajda said that he does not like over-rides. He said that this year's budget process will be challenging.

Mr. Conley asked Mr. Szajda what are his thoughts on the capital Improvement plan? Mr. Szajda said that we need one. Mr. Szajda said that this will allow us to better plan for major capital purchases. He said that way, we can figure out how much to put aside each year. Mr. Szajda said that we purchased a ladder truck for the Fire Department in the amount of \$875,000. He said that on a replacement schedule, they can plan ahead. He said that the ladder truck is just one piece of equipment. They have to plan ahead on a lot of equipment. He said that buildings would be included in the Capital Plan.

Kent Kissinger, 130 Jennings Road, Chairman of the Arts Council, said this is his first year on the Council. He said that groups can apply to them for grants. He said that there are six members of the Council. This year, they received 17 grant applications and approved 10. He said that they had \$5,200 to use for grant funding. Mr. Kissinger said that the Council is planning on attending all of the programs that they have helped sponsor. He said that they will help with the advertising of the program as well.

Anna Louise Hanstad, School Committee, said that they have a number of meetings this year. She said that they sent out a survey town-wide and received over one thousand responses. She said that it was very encouraging. She said that they are working on the budget and are planning ahead. She said that they looked at the Special Education budget and it looks like it will have to be increased about \$80,000 this year. She said that the budget that they are looking at for the entire school district is 2.48% increase over last year's budget. She said that she knows that is over the guideline.

Ms. Hanstad said that they held office hours last week and several parents showed up.

Mr. Conley asked about changing the school schedule?

Ms. Hanstad said that starting later may not be the thing to do. She said that they have to check with Towns that have a later start time before they make a decision to change.

Mr. Marsden reminded all Department Heads about the Open Meeting Law.

Inga Daniels, Park and Recreation, said that they have been doing a lot of work at Stoddard Park. She said that they have been talking about putting a concession stand at Stoddard Park. She said that at Patoma Park there is a basketball court and tennis courts, and they are hoping to bring those courts up to-date. Ms. Daniels said that 1750 Washington Street is a great building for Park and Recreation. She said that now they can expand some of their programs. She said that this summer, they are hoping to have kayak and paddle board rentals. Ms. Daniels said that they may even have beginner classes.

Robert Weidknecht, Trails Committee, said that they are having a meeting next week to work out a few things. He will get back to Selectmen with their thoughts. He said that there is 2 ½ miles of rail bed that the Town still does not own yet. They are looking to get in touch with Mass DOT for the contract to pay

for it. He said that he has spoken with CSX and they have agreed on a price. He said that when they have the signed contract, they will come back to the Selectmen.

Mr. Conley said that many people walk the trail that are not from Holliston. Mr. Weidknecht said that they would like have a parking lot at Hopping Brook Park with about 30 spots.

Mr. Conley asked how will the Rail Trail help business in Town? Mr. Weidknecht said that the downtown vision aspect to get people to visit the area. He said that if downtown was more pedestrian friendly, people would leave the trail and visit the downtown area.

Mr. Leary asked where the start and finish of the Rail Trail will be?

Mr. Weidknecht said that Sherborn owns part of the trail, from the Town line to Whitney Street.

He said that they can connect to the Ashland trail and end in Milford.

Barry Sims, Dunster Road, Keefe Tech School Committee, said that Keefe Tech has approved the school budget. He said that Holliston's portion is based on the number of students and the amount of money that we get from the state. He said that they are at the end of the union contract. He said that they are in negotiations. He said that the budget that they proposed is a little higher than the 1.5% that was recommended by Holliston.

Mr. Leary said that Mr. Sims has done a wonderful job with the budget. He said that Mr. Sims has been doing this for a long time.

Mr. Leary asked if the school was going to be doing any big projects? Mr. Sims said that Keefe Tech has no big projects planned.

Mr. Marsden thanked everyone who attended.

#### **DOWNTOWN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Marsden said that he went to a meeting last Friday with the Planning Board Chairman and Town Administrator, Jeff Ritter. He said that this meeting was an action plan on how we are going to move forward. Mr. Marsden said that they are going to take the plans and present them to any Board or resident who is interested. He said that a presentation will be done at Town Hall. He said that McMahon and Associates would be present. He said that there would be time for questions. He said that all questions and feedback would be given to McMahon and Associates.

Mr. Marsden said that if anyone is interested they can attend the meetings to talk about the downtown project.

Mr. Leary said that anyone with any ideas should attend the meetings. He said that they are looking for a few short term fixes.

Mr. Leary said that at the last meeting, he talked about a Special Town Meeting being called. He said that it is not feasible. He said that we would have to have an election right away. He said that Town Meeting will be May 9, 2016.

A resident asked if there are changes that are proposed to the plan before the Town meeting in May, he wants to know who is going to fund the project and when it will start and when will it be complete.

Mr. Marsden said the suggestions that can help the project will be put in the plans. He said that at the May Town Meeting, the plan will be ready to be approved or not.

Mr. Leary said that there will be a single plan presented, not two plans like last Town Meeting.

Mr. Leary said that this project will not be complete until the second quarter of 2017, if it should pass at Town Meeting. He said that it would be paid out of the Selectmen's budget.

**MR. CONLEY MOVED TO SET THE HEARING DATE OF FEBRUARY 10, 2016, FOR THE DOWNTOWN PROJECT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

Mr. Marsden said that there is a request to have the Special Town Meeting in October on the fourth Monday of the month. He said that this request will be on the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Silvio Mandino, 126 Hanlon Road, said that he received his real estate tax bill he said that his bill has increased over 31%. He said that he and his wife have retired and are living on a fixed income. He said that they have lived in town for fifty years. He said that none of his children have attended Holliston's public schools since 1989. He said that there are no sidewalks on Hanlon Road there is no town water on Hanlon Road. There is no sewerage on Hanlon Road. He said that residents with a modest income or a senior citizen may be forced to move out of town because they can't afford the taxes. He is asking that the Selectmen bring in more business to the Town so that will help with taxes. Mr. Mandino said that the Boston Globe had an article in 2014 about the highest communities to live in. Holliston was ranked sixth out of fifty towns.

Mr. Conley said that Holliston is ranked forty-seven now. He said that the amount of taxes that you are paying is because of the size of the property.

Mr. Leary said that the property value went up, that is why the rate increased.

Mr. Marsden asked Mr. Mandino if he had talked to the Assessors? He said that he has talked to them.

Mr. Masdino said that in the Town of Natick, if you are over 75 years of age, you get a lower tax rate than others that are under 75.

Mr. Marsden said that Holliston has a number of programs available to residents to help lower their taxes. Mr. Marsden said that he could talk to any staff member in the Assessor's Office and they may be able to help.

**AT 9:45 P.M., MR. CONLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. LEARY. ALL IN FAVOR.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna A. Muzzy

approved\_\_\_\_\_