



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
FEBRUARY 26, 2018**

Present: Kevin Conley, Chairman; Jay Marsden, Vice Chairman; Mark Ahronian, Clerk

Also present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

K. Conley called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

- 1.) **Insurance Advisory Committee:** Matt Waugh, Chairman of the Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) and Mary Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector were present. M. Waugh said he is currently the Chairman of the IAC representing the Police union. The IAC met last Thursday for the purpose of reviewing health insurance plans to be offered to employees in FY19. The West Suburban Health Group has decided to drop the Ratesaver plan and to only offer the Benchmark and the High Deductible plans starting on July 1, 2018.

The following motions were made and approved by the IAC:

That the Insurance Advisory Committee vote to eliminate the Rate Saver health insurance plan effective July 1, 2018. Vote 5-1 (Waugh)

That the Insurance Advisory Committee approve to continue offering of the Benchmark health insurance plan for July 1, 2018, and to agree to enter into negotiations with the Board of Selectmen under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32B, Sections 21-23. Voted 6-0

That the Insurance Advisory Committee has reviewed the mitigation proposal submitted on the Benchmark health insurance plan and make the following recommendations for mitigation to the Board of Selectmen (to be negotiated). Voted 6-0

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That the Insurance Advisory Committee recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the Town offer the High Deductible health plan with a health savings account (HSA) in addition to the Benchmark health insurance plan effective July 1, 2018, and we agree to enter into coalition bargaining for health insurance with the Public Employee Committee and the Board of Selectmen under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32B, Section 19. Voted 6-0

M. Bousquet stated the next step is to call a meeting of the Public Employee Committee for next Tuesday to discuss sharing some of the savings with employees. The Town has offered both the Ratesaver and the Benchmark health insurance plans for at least the last six (6) years.

It was also discussed at the IAC meeting an option for employees not to take health insurance through the town and for the Town to consider paying those with an individual plan \$1,000 and those under a family plan \$2,500 annually until 2021.

M. Waugh also stated a motion was made and approved by the IAC for the town to explore other health options and providers such as the GIC and MIIA.

K. Conley asked what the current employee contribution was. M. Bousquet stated 60-40. K. Conley said he would love to see it moved to 50-50.

J. Marsden noted the Town went through the exact same process several years ago. The process allows everyone to have a seat at the table. M. Waugh noted the process was pretty fair and went smoothly.

J. Marsden made a motion to approve and accept the recommendation of the IAC as outlined. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

11.) Board Business

Minutes of February 12, 2018 and February 15, 2018: J. Marsden made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from February 12, 2018 and February 15, 2018. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Reserve Fund Transfer Request – Wastewater Treatment Plant: J. Marsden made a motion to approve and forward to the Finance Committee a Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the amount of \$7,109.00. The purpose is for Whitewater to complete a facility inventory and inspection of the treatment plan as required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. This inspection is required every five (5)

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years. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Appointments – Housing Trust and Memorial Day Committee: J. Marsden made a motion to appoint David Thorn to the Housing Trust for a term to expire in 202. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

J. Marsden made a motion to appoint David DeGanne, Robert Hopkins and Ralph Stover to the Memorial Day Committee for terms to expire in 2018. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Appointment On-Call Firefighter and On-Call EMTs: J. Marsden made a motion, based on the recommendation of Fire Chief Cassidy and Town Administrator Ritter to appoint Tyla Doolin as a seasonal on-call firefighter and Michael Murphy and Arielle Vandette as on-call EMTs. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Gift Acceptance Form – Fire Department: M. Ahronian made a motion to accept a on behalf of the Holliston Fire Department a gift in the amount of \$200 for the Ambulance Gift Account from Spring Street residents. Second, J. Marsden. Voted 3-0

One Day Alcoholic Beverage License – UUAC Sherborn: J. Marsden made a motion to approve a request from UUAC Sherborn for a One Day Alcoholic Beverage License for an event to be held in Upper town Hall on April 7, 2018. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Department of Public Health: J. Marsden made a motion to approve the Standard Contract between the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Town of Holliston on behalf of the Holliston School Department for a \$50,000 grant for the Substance Abuse Prevention Program and to authorize K. Conley to sign the Contract. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

12.) Other Business

Project 604123 – Ashland – Reconstruction of Route 126/Pond Street: The Board reviewed a letter prepared by J. Ritter to the Metropolitan Planning Organization in support of the Town of Ashland's request for funding for the reconstruction of Route 126/Pond Street. J. Marsden noted there has been discussion about this project at MetroWest and made a motion for the Board to approve and sign the letter of support. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Recess: At 6:46p.m. J. Marsden made a motion to recess the meeting until 7:00p.m. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

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Return to Open Session: K. Conley called to meet to order.

2.) **Warrants:** M. Ahronian read the Warrants and made a motion to approve the weekly vendor (expense) and payroll warrants in the amount of \$1,321.658.77. Second, J. Marsden. Voted 3-0

3.) **Public Comment:** K. Conley stated there was a recent article in the Holliston Report which reported in the headline that the town's drinking water was contaminated. This was based research conducted by Boston University entitled, "Integrated Assessment of Shallow-Aquifer Vulnerability to Multiple Contaminants and Drinking Water Exposure Pathways in Holliston, Massachusetts." There is no problem with the quality of the Town's drinking water. It is tested by DEP regularly. The Town does have issues with brown water and at the Spring annual Town Meeting a new treatment plant will be proposed.

M. Ahronian said the Town is being pro-active to address the issue and outlined a draft letter to DEP asking if the Town should be doing anything more than it is doing.

J. Marsden said the Town has made significant improvements as a result of the creation of the DPW. Now the Highway Department and the Water Department are working together. One reason the Town hired S. Reese was because he had strong skills on the water side based on his knowledge and background.

M. Ahronian thanked HCAT and S. Reese among others for producing an excellent show explaining how the water production and distribution system works including testing.

K. Conley noted the sites in the study are on private property not on public property. If that Town were to take on cleaning up private property it would cost millions. These are old polluted sites today there are much different environmental regulations in place.

Anthony Lulek, 35 Dalton Road said the brown water appears to be getting worse and there seems like a strong smell of chlorine.

Paul Saulnier, 29 Church Street said the Holliston Report did a summary of the findings from Boston University report. The findings did not say there were chemical in the drinking water. The Report did identify several sites in town which could present exposures to chemicals.

Martha Pellegrino, 27 Donna Road acknowledged the Water Department surcharge but asked what she was to done in the meantime, until the system is fixed.

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Dwight Simpson, 62 Cranberry Lane asked if there would be an end date for the s surcharge. K. Conley said when the water system is fixed.

J. Marsden said under the new model if Cranberry Lane were to be repaired the Water Department and Highway Department would organize that project so there not be any duplication.

Chelsea Laconte, 655 Central Street said revenues should be used to correct the problems with the water system. J. Marsden said the revenues are for the infrastructure not for a new treatment plant.

William Canavan, 467 Gorwin Drive asked why the town can't reprogram money for the 8 Arch Bridge project to be used on upgrading the water system or use CPC funds. J. Marsden said there are very specific use for those funds and the water system does not fit the criteria.

Martha Pellegrino, 27 Donna Road said she pays \$300 for the surcharge each year and would like to know how those funds are used. Sean Reese, Director of Public Works said there are many issues and challenges that go into running a complex water system. Call the Water Department with questions or concerns. We are flushing the water mains which tend to cause brown water but it a necessary step. Well #5 dates to the 1960's. We balance the use of chemicals all the time. The Department is always maintaining the system. But the treatment plant is a couple of years away. He encouraged everyone to attend Town Meeting this May and support the Water Department. DEP monitors everything this is a highly regulated and specialized profession.

6.) Water Rate Hearing

J. Marsden made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0 S. Reese was present and recommended no increases for FY19.

Janice Block, 15 Partridge Way asked if was ok to drink the water. S. Reese said yes it is ok to drink the water. If it were not ok the Water Department would notify residents immediately. He said well #5 was not designed to run 24/7. There has been significant population growth and we always sampling and monitoring.

Sharon Weaver, 69 Woodland Street her concern are the chemicals especially the amount of chlorine in the water it really smells instead of the brown water. S. Reese said the Town is required to pump it into the system and some people are more sensitive to it than others. There is no way to reduce the smell. More is used during the Summer vs. the Winter.

Chelsea Laconte, 655 Central Street asked S. Reese to describe his five (5) year plan roads vs. water. S. Reese said the Highway Superintendent does the roads and he does

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the water. A number of factors are taken into account such as the number of complaints, road conditions, including money. We understand for example, Winter Street is in tough shape and that is scheduled for next May.

Brian Moran, 267 Norfolk Street said it would be helpful for the Department to issue a quarterly informational flyer even something in the water bills would help to educate residents. As a former member of the Board of Health he is familiar with the five (5) sites in question and none of these site are a threat to the Town's drinking water and water supply.

John Valentin, 980 Washington Street asked about joining the MWRA and if any studies had been done about that. S. Reese said there has been some discussion but to tie in and the distance would be very expensive and unrealistic. We do have a tie to Milford and Ashland in the event of a water emergency. We are trying to address the immediate concerns.

Chelsea Laconte, 655 Central Street asked when the 2017 report would be published. S. Reese said on or about July 1st.

Jennifer White, 62 Ruthellen Road asked about sewers. S. Reese said that discussed years ago and rejected.

Anthony Lulek, 35 Dalton Road asked what he can do to support the Water Department. S. Reese said attend Town Meeting this May.

J. Marsden made a motion to close the Water Rate Hearing. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

M. Ahronian asked about the letter drafted to DEP to see if there is anything else the town should be doing. M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and sign the letter. There was no second. J. Marsden said if DEP had an issue with Holliston they would let us know.

M. Ahronian said this is not a problem limited to Holliston it is a problem throughout the Commonwealth. He asked for support in making a proposal for a CPC type program working with our State Representative. J. Ritter would invite State Representative Carolyn Dykema to meet with the Board at a future date and time.

4.) Report of the Town Administrator: None this evening.

5.) Street Sign Request Laurel Glen Court: Skip Kelleher, 76 Church Street and a local builder was present and requested permission to have a street sign installed this is for public safety purposes. J. Marsden made a motion to approve the request. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

- 6.) **Conservation Commission FY19 Budget:** Ryan Clapp, Conservation Agent and Kristin Stearly, Conservation Assistant were both present and reviewed their below guideline budget. M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and submit to the Finance Committee the FY19 Conservation budget as presented. Second, J. Marsden. Voted 3-0
- 7.) **Veterans District FY19 Budget:** Sarah Bateman, Veterans Agent for the District was present. The Board noted the increase of nearly 8.46%. S. Bateman some areas have increased but is only \$923 above guideline. J. Marsden made a motion to approve the budget but also requested additional detail on the \$28,493 line item which is showing a \$2,223 increase over last year. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0
- 8.) **Police Department FY19 Budget:** Chief Stone and Lieutenant were present and reviewed with the Board in detail the proposed FY19 budget in the amount of \$2,766,340 at budget guideline. Chief Stone read a budget statement. J. Marsden made a motion to approve the 1% budget. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0
- 9.) **School Committee - Statement of Interest (Sol):** Dr. Brad Jackson, Superintendent of Schools the Chair of the School Committee, Ann Louise Hanstad were present along with several members of the School Committee.

The conservation started as a result of the capital improvement plan and the consultant from UMASS Boston and the Collins Center. It was decided to remove from the Plan any capital improvements needed at the High School and there needed to be a separate discussion on that.

The purpose of the meeting was to start a discussion if there is a need for a new High School. Dr. Jackson started with his presentation which is summarized below.

“The Future of Holliston High School Beginning a Community Conversation,”

- The History of Holliston High School – 1965 to 2018
- September 1969 Holliston High School Opens
- Holliston High School Program of Studies – 1969 Sample Required Courses
- May 1998 – September 2001 Holliston High School \$26 Million Renovation
- Holliston High School Today Short Term 0-10 Years Infrastructure Needs
- Is Holliston High School Currently Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century Learner?
- Holliston High School Designed for This, Renovated for This, Used for This
- How Do We Make this Decision? (Feasibility Study, Partner MSBA)
- Statement of Interest

M. Ahronian asked about the proposed \$2.5 million for a new septic field and why the High School not tie into the treatment plant on Linden Street. B. Jackson said that might

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be possible but not sure it that would qualify for reimbursement under the regulations of the MSBA.

B. Jackson said as an educator it his responsibility to bring to the attention of the School Committee facility needs. The building was designed for 1969 uses, it is not energy efficient, fitness space is lacking, small group meeting space is lacking, group presentation space is lacking, parking is lacking, wireless Internet needs upgrading. If the SoI is approved by the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee and submitted to the MSBA and if they decide to move Holliston along in the process they will be looking at equal space for all students.

A. Hanstad said in today's world people are working in open spaces. Students needs to be given the opportunity to be trained for that new world work environment.

B. Jackson said we have a 50 year old building with a 20 year renovation. The feasibility study would provide the Town with an objective analysis. A School Building Committee would have to be established. This would require a Town Meeting vote and a debt exclusion at the ballot. We are asking support from the Selectmen to submit the SoI.

M. Ahronian asked if the number for renovations is around \$10 million. A. Hanstad said it might within the margin of error. We have to make sure we have everything on the list.

M. Ahronian asked about the feasibility of moving the Administration Office and opening up that area for more flexible class rooms.

A. Hanstad said it is all about flexible and changeable spaces to address new learning techniques. This is what the architect and feasibility study would accomplish a third party evaluation.

M. Ahronian asked if the Green Communities grant program could help fund part of the project. J. Ritter responded that the maximum about under that program is \$250,000 but it could be considered in the future.

J. Marsden reviewed the proposal, a SoI needs to be approved by the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee by April 6, 2018 deadline. The MSBA would review the proposal and let the Town and School Committee know by this November if we would be eligible for moving forward with the process.

If approved MSBA would fund up to 30% of the feasibility study which is in the total cost price range of \$350,000. He asked at what junctures in the project can we get out. How would we step back if necessary.

A. Hanstad said there will be several opportunities and needed community approvals. If nothing else, out of the feasibility study we will get a better understanding of our

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community building needs and how much it is likely to cost. Also, simply the input from the MSBA would provide insight into way the project was not considered. Parent expectations are much different than they were 16 years ago.

B. Jackson said Newton North and Wellesley High School were both paid for by the taxpayer so they got what they wanted. MSBA tends to go with the cheaper materials.

K. Conley said based on the information you provided last year the MSBA received 167 applications and funded 12. He is concerned about the messaging that the High School was renovated not too long ago and we have not completed payment on those old projects. Enrollment is down and technology in 20 years will again have outdated the learning needs of the students.

The Board agreed to continue the discussion next week.

Other Business: The Board will be meeting at 1p.m. on March 5th at the Senior Center and at 7p.m. at Town Hall. J. Ritter will place the posting for the Personnel Board on the Agenda and a discussion about goals. Shortly, the Board will be meeting at the Library.

Adjourn: At 10:26p.m. M. Ahronian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second, J. Marsden. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator