

TOWN of HOLLISTON
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, March 16, 2022. 7:00 P.M.

Remote Participation Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 P.M.

Frank Chamberlain read the Opening Statement:

Pursuant to the Governor's Order Suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c 30A paragraph 20, as well as the Select Board's Emergency Order dated 3/16/2020..... the CPC will be using remote participation for this meeting. The audio of this meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the Town's webpage within 24 hours in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Action requirement of keeping the public informed of actions during this meeting. I would ask that all participants remotely attending this meeting please state your name for identification purposes each time you speak throughout the meeting.

Frank Chamberlain called the roll for each member:

Responding Present: Frank Chamberlain, Chair; Chris Bajdek; Warren Chamberlain; ; Paul Saulnier; Eva Stahl; Geoffrey Zeamer.

Present: Thomas Dumas (7:15); Melissa Kaspern (7:41)

Absent: John Vosberg.

Also present: Town of Holliston IT, Holliston IT, Representing the Blair Square Project: Regan Andreola: Inge Daniels: Ben Sparrell. Representing the Town Cemetery Preservation Project: James Keast, Town Facilities Manager. Representing the Agricultural Committee: Kristine Westland. Other attenders: Gretchen Rice: iPhone.

Public Hearing

Frank Chamberlain introduced the hearing. This is a chance for the public to join us and ask questions or offer opinions on our work. He invited members of the public who might be present with questions to unmute and speak.

There being no comments, the Hearing was closed at 7:12

CPC leadership position(s) – Chair and Vice Chair - Elections

Frank Chamberlain welcomed the two new members, Mr. Saulnier and Mr. Zeamer. They have been sworn in by the Town Clerk, and this brings the Committee up to full participation. He noted that a discussion should be moved to the end of the meeting, when more members would be present.

MOTION to move consideration to the end of the meeting: Mr. Saulnier.

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Second: Mr. Zeamer.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Frank Chamberlain, aye.

Final Discussion and Vote on Recommendations for May Town Meeting

Town Cemetery Preservation Project – Town Facilities Manager / Historical Commission

- Frank read the balances in the various CPC funds and explained the allotments.
- Mr. Saulnier asked about how the improvements would be structured. Mr. Keast replied that they would cycle through the cemeteries.
- Mr. Saulnier asked if the Historical Preservation fund would be zeroed out by this project. Frank Chamberlain explained the way the funds are balanced, and how the Committee manages allotments to keep the balance stable.
- Ms. Stahl asked what maintenance looks like for the cemeteries. Mr. Keast replied that the project would simply bring the sites up to quality. One maintenance option is a “Friends Of” group that would volunteer and train workers. He hopes there will be a DPW Grounds group that emerges from Town Meeting. Ms. Stahl noted that the Town should make a commitment to supporting the work. Mr. Sparrell stated that the Selectboard has not voted on the DPW department, but will be discussing it Monday, hoping to move on it then.
- Mr. Zeamer asked if this project is linked into databases in town and nationally. Mr. Keast mentioned the research and documentation done by Paul LeBeau, which is now stored and linked, at least in town. Frank Chamberlain noted the BPL Digital Commonwealth database, and the effort of the Historical Society to share digital scans for wider exposure. This project is just physical maintenance, but may spark some interest in further preservation and research.
- Mr. Bajdek stated that restoration is often deferred maintenance, and that he shares the opinion of Ms. Stahl that there should be some commitment to maintenance from the Town; that should be considered before passing the request for such a large amount of money. Frank Chamberlain pointed out that some deferred work is centuries old and that there is some urgency in the preservation aspect of the project. The committee could

phrase our recommendation with the maintenance assured. Mr Keast agreed, but noted that the DPW does already do some of that work.

- Mr. Bajdek asked about how the work would be phased. Mr. Keast explained the geographic design, starting with the Central Cemetery with a focus on the 300th celebration. Mr. Bajdek asked about the conditions of each cemetery. Mr. Keast mentioned that South Cemetery is the most decayed, but that all are in various levels of decline.
- Frank Chamberlain emphasized that a main concern should be to recommend to the Town that a maintenance plan be established, put in the record and brought to Town Meeting. Approval should be contingent on something along those lines.
- Mr. Zeamer asked if the cemetery on Cedar St was on the list. Mr. Keast replied that it is.
- There was discussion of other cemeteries.
- Ms. Kaspern asked what the total dollar amount on hand is, noting the several large projects that are pending. Frank Chamberlain said over \$3,600,000, with a projected outflow of \$1million and \$600,000 incoming. He said the funds are there to support these projects.

MOTION to recommend appropriation of up to \$500,000 in CPA funds in FY'2023 for support of the Holliston Cemeteries Preservation Project as described in the application from James Keast, Holliston Facilities Manager dated 2/04/2022. Funds are to be drawn from the following reserves: \$100,000 from the CPA Historic Preservation Reserve and \$400,000 from the CPA General Reserve. Funds are to be available to support a long-term contract for the preservation of the five historic cemeteries owned by the Town of Holliston, with funds available for disbursement over the next four years (work is to be completed and the appropriation is to expire by the date of the May 2026 Town Meeting). Approval is contingent upon the opening of a discussion with the Select Board regarding the development of a long-term maintenance plan for the cemeteries once preservation work is complete: Mr. Zeamer. (Frank Chamberlain).

Second: Mr. Dumas.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms.Kaspern, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

Blair Square Project - Blair Square Committee

Representing the Blair Square Project were Regan Andreola, Inge Daniels, Ben Sparrell. Frank Chamberlain had forwarded additional information that Ms. Andreola supplied. Beals and Thomas, Inc. sent a letter to supplement the application request for funding to support the construction of the proposed site improvements at Blair Square.

Warren Chamberlain noted that maintenance is an issue with this project too. Mr. Sparrell stated that the Town is committed to taking care of the area. The Committee voiced their support for a discussion with the Select Board to further the effort.

Frank Chamberlain detailed that the funding is for \$585,510 from the Open Space allotment, but that recreation is often taken from the General Reserve. He broke down the figures from the budget, and asked about additional funding sources. Ms. Andrealoa listed the grants applied for so far in addition to the current CPC application:

- Hometown Grant (up to \$50,000) - submitted
- Travel & Tourism Grant (up to \$150,000) – Will be submitted by 3/31. A letter of support from Senator Spilka has been received and will be included with this grant application.
- FY23 State Budget Request - added to list of requests sent to Senate President
- Friends of the Holliston Trails (FOHT) group has confirmed their financial commitment to the Project through the purchase of select site amenities
- a proposed joint fundraising campaign specifically to fund the Project pavilion structure with a \$45,000 dollar-for-dollar match
- Additional funding from volunteer work and funding projects.

The proposal is requesting the full amount, but intending to offset it as additional funds come in.

Mr. Bajdek asked about line items from the estimate of Nov 2021: if they are all included within the CPA guidelines. For example, sidewalks might not be eligible. Frank Chamberlain recalled that sidewalks are questionable. Ms. Stahl suggested we should get advice from the CPA.

Mr. Saulnier suggested that such a small item, \$16,725, could be carved out and raised with the additional funding. Frank Chamberlain stated that approval could be contingent upon funding being available within the CPA guidelines, due to being integrated into a larger project.

MOTION to recommend appropriation of up to \$585,000 in FY'2023 from the CPA General Reserve for the support of Blair Square Site Improvements as described in the application from the Blair Square Committee dated 1/13/2022, with the understanding that the applicants are actively seeking grant monies and

pursuing contributions of cash and services to offset the cost of the project, and that any grant funds or other contributions received will be used to directly offset and reduce the amount of CPA funds used. Included in the \$585,000 figure is \$16,725 for sidewalk improvements made contingent upon approval from the Mass. Department of Revenue. Work is to be completed and the appropriation is to expire by the date of the May 2024 Town Meeting: Warren Chamberlain. (Frank Chamberlain)

Second: Ms. Stahl.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms. Kaspern, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

Abstaining: Mr. Zeamer.

Discussion and Vote on Recommendation to Extend Sunset Date on Appropriation to Town Farm Committee Dated 5/2022.

Kristine Westland reported on the status of projects at the Community Farm. They have encountered obstacles but worked out solutions.

- The deadline of May is approaching, and there is money not yet spent,, mainly on the electrical, the Pavillion, and the composting toilets.
- Frank Chamberlain explained that Town Meeting must approve any adjustments.
- Ms Westland has another project design in the works for the restroom, looking at various options.
- The original funding was \$35,000, but she estimates that an updated figure would be \$50,000.
- Frank Chamberlain suggested keeping the existing project alive by extending the date, and then submitting a new proposal. Ms. Westland could submit a new proposal for the restroom by July 15 for the fall Town Meeting.
- Mr. Saulnier noted that an extension to fall would create problems with inflation, construction, and delayed use of the facility. He asked if it might be adjusted now by using the existing funds .
- Frank Chamberlain stated the committee might phrase approval contingent on another estimate coming. Ms. Westland agreed to try to bring a revised plan in two weeks. Mr. Zeamer and Mr. Bajdek agreed that trying to finish earlier would be better.
- Frank Chamberlain read from the Town Accountant's statement of the remaining funds. There was discussion of how the numbers might work out.

Frank Chamberlain suggested that the committee extend the sunset date two years to May 2024 Town Meeting, increase the funding by adding \$40,000 (not to exceed \$57,000) to the

proposal - to reflect installing the new toilet connections - with the condition that the new CPA proposal be submitted within two weeks.

MOTION to amend and extend the appropriation in the original amount of \$55,000 for improvements to the Holliston Community Farm approved by the Town Meeting of 5/10/2021 for FY'2022 by increasing the amount available for sanitary improvements by \$40,000 for a total appropriation from the CPA General Reserve of \$95,000 as described in the application from the Community Farm Committee dated (pending-date TBD) and extend the expiration date of the appropriation from 5/10/2022 to the date of the May 2026 Town Meeting:

Ms. Kaspersn. (Frank Chamberlain)

Second: Warren Chamberlain.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms.Kaspersn, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

Abstaining: Mr. Zeamer

CPC leadership position(s) – Chair and Vice Chair - Elections

Frank Chamberlain stated that he is willing to continue leadership by a year. He requested a volunteer or nomination for the vice-chair role, noting that the commitment is seasonal.

Mr. Saulnier nominated Mr. Zeamer, who stated that he would do his best.

MOTION to appoint Frank Chamberlain as chair and Geoff Zeamer as Vice

Chair: Mr. Saulnier

Second: Warren Chamberlain

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms.Kaspersn, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

Approval of Minutes of this Meeting as read, with specific Motion phrasing to be provided by Frank Chamberlain

MOTION to approve the minutes of March 16, 2022 as read: Mr. Saulnier.

Second, Mr. Zeamer.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms.Kaspersn, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Ms. Kaspern.

Second: Warren Chamberlain.

VOTE Approved by role call: Mr. Bajdek, aye. Warren Chamberlain, aye. Mr. Dumas, aye. Ms. Kaspern, aye. Mr. Saulnier, aye. Ms. Stahl, aye. Mr. Zeamer, aye. Mr. Chamberlain, aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 P.M. .

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Woodrow
Clerk