

Town of Holliston Annual Town Meeting May 10, 2021

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## **Select Board Presentation**

# Holliston Annual Town Meeting

## May 10, 2021



- Opening Remarks/Welcome
  - As with our July and December Town Meetings, we are conducting our business under public health guidelines to ensure your safety. Physical distancing, mask wearing, and movement within this space is designed to minimize contact
  - Please help us make this a successful and safe meeting!

# Holliston Annual Town Meeting

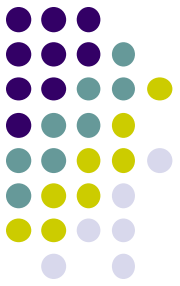
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- The content of the Warrant has been publicly discussed and debated by a variety of sources including the Finance Committee which offers its corresponding recommendation as required by state law and Town by-laws
- Note about 555 Hopping Brook Park Project
  - There is no content up for discussion or vote at this meeting; the Planning Board is the Special Permit Granting Authority for the Town and currently has an open Public Hearing

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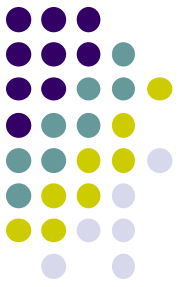
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- I'd like to form remarks around the following four areas;
  1. Overall State of Holliston
  2. Warrant Highlights
  3. FY21 Highlights
  4. Looking ahead to FY22

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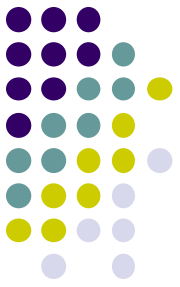


### Overall State Of Holliston

- COVID-19 management continued to dominate our business
- The Select Board met weekly with our Emergency Management Director/Fire Chief, Mike Cassidy, to receive updates on local impact (cases, positivity rates, trends) as well as financial requests from eligible sources in Town to offset their needs to keep workplaces safe for employees and citizens

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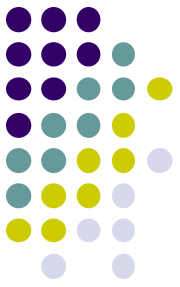


### Overall State Of Holliston

- To-date, the Select Board has managed to distribute \$733,437 of our \$1,317,107 CARES Act grant award
- Holliston has tracked 801 COVID positive cases (with 8 fatalities) since the declaration of emergency was made in March 2020
- Our positivity rate has recently dropped to 1.9%

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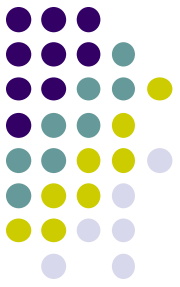
### **Town received \$1,317,137 in *CARES Act* funds\***

- PPE for first responders
- disinfecting public buildings
- food for families
- enhanced telework capacity
- technology to facilitate distance learning
- rent and mortgage relief
- unemployment insurance costs

**\*separate from CvRF / ESSER funds received by HPS**

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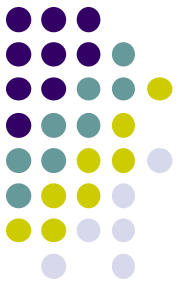
### Overall State Of Holliston

- Like other communities, we are making great strides to get vaccinated!
- As this table shows, we are quickly approaching 50% of our population as fully vaccinated. Most importantly, our seniors have achieved near-perfect vaccination rates



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### COVID-19 Vaccination in Holliston

*Weekly Municipality COVID-19 Vaccination Report (a/o May 6, 2021)*

**68.8%** at least partially\* vaccinated

**46.9%** fully vaccinated

\*15% individuals 0-19

\*75% individuals 20-29

\*83% individuals 30-49

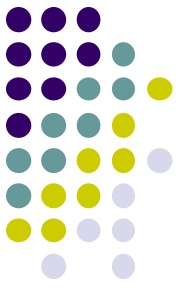
\*85% individuals 50-64

**\*99% individuals 65-74**

**\*102% individuals 75+**

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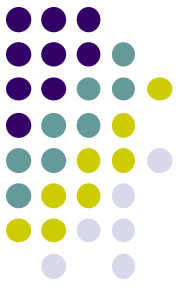


### Overall State Of Holliston

- We hired a new Town Administrator - Travis Ahern - on July 20, 2020
- Travis had had an immediate impact, preparing a flawless Special Town meeting warrant in December and then managing the FY22 budget process into the product you will see under the upcoming Omnibus Budget

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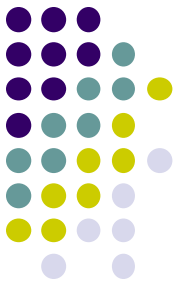


### Overall State Of Holliston

- Traffic Management
  - The Select Board addressed long-standing issues involving commercial traffic on several of our neighborhood streets
  - Conducting a public meeting in August, the Board moved to identify funds in the Special Town meeting to hire a traffic engineering firm to study the flow of commercial traffic on several streets identified as having high rates of such traffic

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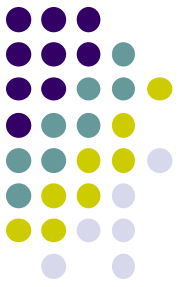


### Overall State Of Holliston

- Traffic Management (cont.)
  - Working with MassDOT, and our State Senator and State Representative, we finalized our report in April to the state appealing for permanent relief from Commercial traffic for South, Woodland, High, Locust, Fiske, Bullard, and Lowland streets
  - Based upon strong supporting documentation from the engineering study, we expect favorable approval from MassDOT in the next 1-2 months to restrict commercial traffic from these areas – finally delivering relief for residents

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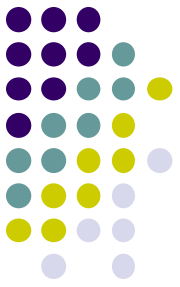


### Warrant Highlights

- We are presenting thirty seven articles for Town meeting consideration
- We will motion to include the following articles as a “Consent Agenda” to expedite this evening’s proceedings; **Article 3 and Articles 11 through 17**

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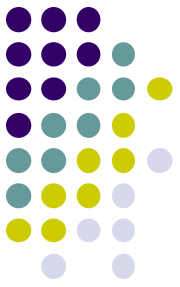


### Warrant Highlights - Governance

- Articles 9 and 10 present proposals from the Governance Committee
  - This Committee was formed in 2020 and provided a three year term to review and make recommendations to Town Meeting on all facets of Holliston's governance structure
  - The Select Board understands these articles have generated community interest and dialogue. We encourage a civil and thorough debate to help our Town evolve and embrace the opportunity to challenge the status quo for the greater good

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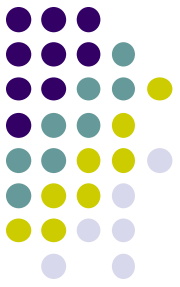


### Warrant Highlights - Sustainability

- By hiring a Sustainability Coordinator, the Town is looking to tap into opportunities using income from projects as well as grants to fund opportunities to reduce waste and reduce carbon emissions
  - Article 24 creates a revolving fund that supports recycling initiatives – using new, **non-taxpayer revenue sources**
    - Will make up to \$60,000 available for future environmental sustainability efforts
  - Article 25 creates a revolving fund that supports proposed EV charging stations – using new, **non-taxpayer revenue sources**
    - Will prepare the Town for grant opportunities to install EV charging stations on municipal lots; with the understanding that private users can charge vehicles and pay by credit card

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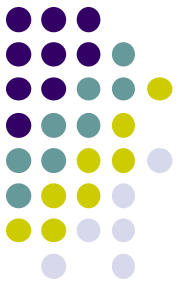
### Warrant Highlights - Infrastructure

- Select Board is committed to maintaining assets, meeting – or exceeding – residents' expectations for service, and improving treasured spaces throughout town
- Articles 31, 32, and 33 address those concerns



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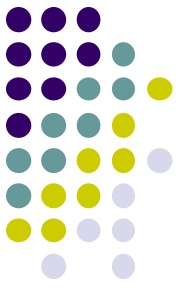


### Warrant Highlights - Infrastructure

- Article 31 – Blair Square Design and Engineering
  - Over 160,000 people visited Blair Square during the past 12 months
  - Blair Square is a park and walk spot for Safe Routes to School
  - Blair Square will host the Holliston Farmers Market this summer
  - Design and Engineering documents are needed before making future improvements

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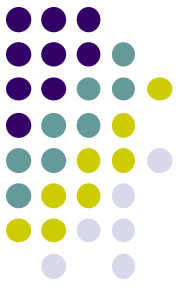


### Warrant Highlights - Infrastructure

- Article 32 Demolition of 9 Green Street – Opportunity to reimagine ways to improve the downtown area
- Article 33 Feasibility Study for DPW Facility - Investing in new opportunities for value to the town

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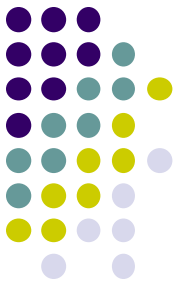


### Warrant Highlights – Traffic/Safety

- Article 34 - Pedestrian and School Zone Safety
  - Supports and improves safe routes to school for children
  - Improves safety for all road users who travel in the Woodland Street school zone
- Note:
  - 2 people (9%) injured in vehicle crashes while walking or biking in FY21
  - 7 people (24%) injured while walking or biking in FY20

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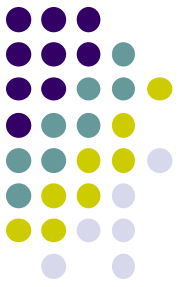


### FY21 Highlights

- Over the past fiscal year over 23 projects were undertaken
- These projects improve our;
  - Public Safety infrastructure
  - Access to Downtown and Rail Trail
  - Senior Center
  - Historic Library
  - Public works infrastructure
  - Water treatment infrastructure
  - Historic Town Hall

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### FY21 Highlights

- ✓ Traffic pre-emption receiving equipment **added** to intersections along Washington St (Highland, Cole Court, Concord, High/Woodland). Traffic pre-emption transmitters added to police and fire fleet vehicles.
- ✓ Replacement tone/voice pagers **ordered** for both fire and ambulance personnel
- ✓ Microwave links **added** to public safety radio infrastructure network; improving signal strength and quality for police and fire personnel communications
- ✓ Infrastructure articles passed in December are **in progress** (sidewalks and water modernization). Targeting STM for reports
- ✓ Water Treatment Plant **breaking ground** this month – Plant projected to be on line summer 2022
- ✓ Town Hall Floor Replacement and Refinishing - **completed**
- ✓ Town Hall doors - **completed**
- ✓ Senior Center Interior Improvements (carpeting, interior painting, ceiling tile replacement) - **completed**
- ✓ Library Interior Improvements (carpeting, interior painting) - **completed**
- ✓ Library masonry and front facade repairs - **completed**

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### Looking Ahead into FY22

- Holliston has an exciting future!
  - We can expect reports on the studies of our sidewalks, water pipe replacement program, and water sources this fall
  - The Marshall Street solar project is projected to be online in a year, generating clean energy and providing a significant increase in revenues to the Town
  - The Governance Committee will have more recommendations for us to consider
  - Water Treatment plant is expected to be on line by next summer
  - The hope that “normal” will find us again as we move out of the pandemic world we have known for over a year

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- On behalf of the Select Board, thank you for attending this Annual Town Meeting!