

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

January 10, 2022
7:00PM

Town Hall
703 Washington Street

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

Also Present: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Michael Cassidy, Fire Chief; Sean Reese, DPW Director; Robert Walker, Deputy DPW Director; Sam Tyler, Len Engel, Scott McKechnie, Joan Shaughnessy, Paul LeBeau, Governance Committee members; Deborah Moore, Bob Smith, Golf Course Advisory Committee; Jay Robinson, Holliston resident.

At 7:00pm T. Hein called the meeting to order.

DPW UPDATE:

DPW Director S. Reese and Deputy DPW Director R. Walker attended the meeting with an update on the both the Water and Highway Departments. The Water Department hired a new employee and are currently fully staffed. The Highway Department filled a Crew Chief position by promoting within and also hired a heavy equipment operator. They continue to look to fill a remaining heavy equipment operator position.

The project in Mudville has shut down for the Winter. It will resume in the Spring. R. Walker is working with the utility company to come up with a workable plan for moving the poles for the remaining work to be done.

S. Reese stated that the Water Treatment Plant Project was on schedule and on budget. He cautioned that if there are any delays it will be due to vendor shortages and availability of components. He will keep the Town informed.

R. Walker stated that the new brining method for snow and ice removal has been put to the test and he is pleased with the results so far.

The Highway Department will continue to move forward on the sidewalk and ramp work needed by prioritizing a list utilizing the Stantec Report.

R. Walker is working with M. Zettek, the Sustainability Coordinator on creating a smoother operation at the Recycling Center on Marshall Street. The plan is to make it a one way direction only with signage that will assist residents with directions pertaining to the various stations (bins etc.). The goal is to have two cardboard compactors on site, and eventually add staff for additional hours of operation.

R. Walker will be taking an inventory of the culverts within the Town and inspect them to determine the condition and what action may need to be taken. He is also conducting a sign audit and will present his findings to the Select Board within the next several weeks.

Discussion will continue regarding the possibility of a Grounds Division of the DPW with the Parks Department, Facilities Manager and also include the Trails Committee.

S. Reese commended R. Walker for the outstanding job he has been doing since he became the interim Deputy DPW Director.

J. Cronin suggested forming a group to review and plan how the Town may be able to use the funds that will become available with the Federal Infrastructure Bill.

J. Cronin also noted that he had received a letter of concern from a resident on Curve Street resulting from the recent snow storm. R. Walker stated that he had received and acknowledged the complaint.

Each Board member thanked both S. Reese and R. Walker for their very thorough update.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE:

Members of the Governance Committee joined the meeting via zoom. Members included S. Tyler, Chair; L. Engel, S. McKechnie, J. Shaughnessy, and P. LeBeau. S. Tyler stated that at their meeting last week the Committee comprised 11 questions pertaining to 7 categories to present to the Department of Local Services (DLS) Technical Assistance Bureau (TAB). The Committee presented the questions to the Select Board with the intent of obtaining feedback and will finalize the list on Wednesday January 12, 2022 at their next meeting prior to submitting to DLS. Several of the questions include, the role of the Town Administrator, the Finance Committees budget process, the recommendation for a Town Charter and recommendations on how to conduct a complete Town Bylaw review.

The Select Board took the opportunity to briefly discuss the recommendation by TAB to institute a Town Charter, as well as an extensive review of all the Town bylaws. J. Shaughnessy and S. Tyler both noted that they had anticipated a more specific report from DLS this past fall. In response to a question asked by T. Hein S. Tyler responded that the Committee will weight any DLS suggestions in an advisory capacity. The Select Board encouraged the Governance Committee to move forward prior to any response from TAB to develop their recommendations on how to impact, improve Holliston's Town Government.

Each member expressed their appreciation for the ongoing work being done by the Governance Committee. B. Sparrell asked if the Committee could develop a list of questions he could include in the next Envisioning Future Holliston Survey to obtain input from residents on Holliston Town Government.

COVID-19 UPDATE / ARPA PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE:

Chief Cassidy began his Covid-19 update by stating there are 212 additional cases, 106 cases are currently active. He noted that the numbers are starting to trend downward, slightly.

The Board of Health issued a mask mandate for all indoor spaces open to the public throughout Holliston effective January 6, 2022 The Public Schools have also extended the mask mandate

until the end of February 2022.

The Board of Health will be holding a vaccination clinic on Saturday January 15, 2022. It will be held from 9:00am-1:00pm at the Town Hall. Residents need to register ahead of time. Walk-ins are not allowed.

The State has made a digital passport app available for proof of vaccine. The Chief will post the website.

ARPA UPDATE

The ARPA Steering Group met on Tuesday January 4, 2022. Chief Cassidy presented a pie chart showing the desired allocation of funds 40% of which is earmarked for Capital/Infrastructure.

The Steering Group had 1 recommendation for the Select Board to review. The request to purchase additional rapid Covid test kits to be distributed similarly to those recently received.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the purchase of rapid Covid test kits not to exceed \$5,000 on a cycle to be determined by Chief Cassidy. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

WARRANTS:

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of 1,546,366.92. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

J. Cronin urged residents to register for the Covid-19 vaccination clinic being held on Saturday January 15, 2022.

B. Sparrell stated that the plans for Blair Square design are nearly complete. He asked that the Blair Square Committee be invited to attend a Select Board meeting with an update as soon as they are.

B. Sparrell reported that they have received 378 responses to the Envisioning Future Holliston Survey. The deadline is Thursday January 13, 2022.

T. Hein : none

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern had received the Q2 Financial update from the Town Accountant, which is the beginning process towards looking at trends within the fiscal year. The Facilities Manager has reported an issue at the Waste Water Treatment Plant with some additional maintenance costs. There is ongoing expenditure tracking around employee benefits. Regarding revenue the Building Department is having another very active year. Motor Vehicle Excise Tax revenue is due early March and with the current chip shortage effecting vehicle sales its difficult to predict the effect on the bottom line. Overall T. Ahern feels that the Town is in good shape.

At the January 18, 2022 Select Board Meeting the Select Board will hold a Public Forum for the Feasibility Downtown Sewerage Connection Study. J. Cronin asked if the Schools would have interest in being included in the Feasibility Study. T. Ahern will make the inquiry and get back to

the Board.

There will be a Public Hearing on 9 Green Street during the February 7, 2022 Select Board meeting with the intent to obtain further direction for Pare Corp as the work at that site continues. T. Hein asked if the impact on traffic at that downtown location could be included as part of the Hearing. T. Ahern stated that an abutters list will be sent out as part of the Public Hearing process.

GOLF COURSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2022:

D. Moore, Chair of the Golf Course Advisory Committee joined the meeting via zoom to outline plans for a potential 2022 Capital Project at the Pinecrest Golf Course. D. Moore explained that last year the bond for the club house was paid in full and the Committee would now like to move forward to do much needed improvements to the golf course itself. This work would be done in 2 phases, preferably in the Spring and Fall of 2022. A Notice of Intent is yet to be completed by Architect Bill Harrison, as well as an updated Wetlands Survey.

Jay Robinson, 233 Chamberlain attended the meeting and voiced his opinion stating that the golf course has been underserved and pointed out that once these improvements are made the Town will need to continue to invest in its maintenance.

Bob Smith, a Golf Course Advisory Committee member stated that the Golf Course is an asset to the Town and pointed out the importance of doing the proposed work.

After discussion revolving around the funding of the improvements, including anticipated revenue/expenses and what was voted at May 2021 Town Meeting, the Select Board asked that the Committee work on the specifics of a 2 phased plan and cost for the project and return to the Select Board.

BOARD BUSINESS:

J. Cronin made a motion to accept the ABCC (Alcohol Beverage Control Commission) Increase Estimation Form as of July 10, 2022 with an estimation of 15,138 residents. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2021 as written. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve a donation to the Senior Center Nutrition Fund in the amount of \$400 from the Superette. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve a donation from a Lowland Street Business to the Fire Department in the amount of \$250. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

T. Hein stated that the Celebrate Holliston Committee is meeting Tuesday January 11, 2022 to begin discussions around Hollistons 300 Anniversary in 2024. She would like for the Select Board to also begin discussions regarding the celebration. J. Cronin suggested the

Committee reach out to our State Representatives for possible funding. B. Sparrell also suggested making inquiries to other towns and see what their anniversary celebrations consisted of, such as planned events and length of those celebrations.

At 9:27pm J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved _2-7-22