

TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD

March 21, 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.

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

COVID-19 UPDATE / ARPA PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE:

Chief Cassidy stated that he is working with the Department of Local Services to complete the final report for the CARES Act Funding due on Friday April 1, 2022. The first ARPA report is due on Saturday April 30, 2022. An auditing firm is preparing a single audit pertaining to the CARES Act funding. T. Hein asked that T. Ahern present the audit to the Select Board once it has been completed. The next ARPA Steering Group meeting will be at noon on Monday April 4, 2022. The Chief stated that Holliston continues to be in the Green category. There are currently 8 active cases within Town. Although the Omicron variant is a worldwide concern the Chief noted that at this point it appears that it will be left to communities to mitigate any outbreaks at a local level. The second booster shot is not recommended for all nationwide, however the Chief suggests those individuals that are high risk should contact their primary care physicians. The Chief concluded his update by stating that many public venues no longer have a mask mandate. However Mass transit has a mask mandate through till April 2022, and some businesses still choose to require mask wearing while on the premise.

WARRANT:

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$1,061,000. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

J. Cronin wished all "A Happy Spring".

J. Cronin met with the Chair of Council on Aging and the Senior Center Director to discuss upcoming events and also the selection of the new Senior Center Outreach Coordinator.

B. Sparrell attended the most recent Conservation Preservation Commission meeting. The topics of discussion included the Blair Square Project and the Town owned cemeteries. The CPC would like to meet with the Select Board to discuss in general the topic of maintenance in relationship to various improvements voted and funded throughout Town.

T. Hein attended the School Committee meeting in which the School Committee voted to

approve the FY23 Operating and Capital Budgets. The School Committee will meet with the Select Board in early April 2022 to discuss the Capital Requests.

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern will participate in the “Two Steps Forward Against Antisemitism” workshop which will be held via zoom next week.

The Superintendent of Schools and the Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations will join the Select Board meeting on Monday April 4, 2022 to discuss and review the Schools Capital Requests.

FY23 BUDGET REVIEW & DELIBERATION – OPERATING & CAPITAL:

The Town Administrators Recommended Budget was presented and posted on March 4, 2022 without the addition of the 26th Police Officer and the Grounds Division. The request from the Building Inspector to hire an Assistant Building Inspector was included. This is possible by moving the cost for the position from the revolving fund into the general fund to offset the salary, with the cost of benefits for the position being covered within the benefit budget which is funded by the tax levy.

T. Ahern noted that since that time some new information has been presented. New information has come from the Schools, there will be an adjustment to the amount of funding needed for Keefe Tech and Norfolk Aggie. It appears the Keefe Tech budget number will decrease, by \$22,000, however the actual number for Norfolk Aggie, which has increased significantly, will not be known until mid April. The Schools overall approved proposed FY23 budget increased by 5.14%, which adds \$109,000 to include a Mental Health Professional along with several initiatives.

T. Hein stated that both the 26th Police Officer and the Grounds Division would be a significant benefit to the Town and would touch all demographics within the community. J. Cronin made an inquiry to determine if ARPA funds can be used under “revenue loss” to accomplish funding for both if the funds are being moved from one line item to another. B. Sparrell voiced his support for both the 26th Police Officer and the Grounds Division, but had concerns about using funding from the Capital set aside in the Omnibus Budget. He suggested waiting until October 2022 Town Meeting to add the 26th Police Officer.

After some additional discussion among the Select Board T. Ahern presented the FY23 Proposed Capital Expenses. No changes have been made since the last time the list was presented. The proposed amount stands at \$1.25 million. Street Light conversion is \$350,000, with the plan to offset \$200,000 from the Green Communities Grant. Other Department requests include Facilities, DPW and Schools. T. Ahern noted that the request for vehicles by the Holliston Police Department will be presented at the Fall 2022 Town Meeting.

The Select Board members all thanked T. Ahern for the exceptional job preparing and presenting the proposed FY23 Operating and Capital Budgets.

J. Cronin made a motion to recommend adjustments to the Town Administrators Recommended Budget dated March 4, 2022 as follows to add the requested 26th, Police Officer and the Grounds Division: Decrease the DPW Budget by \$22,000 as well as decrease Keefe Tech Budget by \$22,000. Reduce the Technology Budget by \$5,000, removing the archiving for Social Media and include in the FY24 Budget. Increase the Police Department Budget by \$86,405 for wages and educational incentives to include the 26th Officer. The Highway Department Budget will include positions in the additional amount of \$142,000, backing out \$22,000 as it relates to the Grounds Division. Remove \$9,813 from the Park & Recreation Budget to offset work which will be done by the Grounds Division. The Employee Benefits Budget will be reduced by removing certain positions, and will then increase by \$85,600. The Keefe Tech Budget will decrease by \$22,000. With an assumption made that \$1.875 million CapEx will be reduced by \$160,000 down to \$1.715 million. There will still be a need to cover a short fall of \$95,000, with an assumption that \$25,000 per year from the Recreation Revolving Fund to offset and then an additional \$75,000 this year FY23 for the Revolving Fund that ARPA funding could fill as "Revenue Loss". All above to cover and balance the FY23 Operating Budget. B. Sparrell second. Vote 2 – 1 (2 yes, B. Sparrell opposed).

2022 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:

The Select Board discussed changing the start time of the Town Meeting from 7:30pm to 7:00pm for the May Town Meeting.

J. Cronin made a motion to move the meeting time to 7:00pm from 7:30pm for the 2022 May Town Meeting. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

WARRANT REVIEW:

T. Ahern presented the draft of the May 9, 2022 Town Meeting Warrant. There are currently 41 Articles, 3 of which are Citizen Petitions. There is a possibility to place some articles into a consent agenda. T. Ahern went through each article. Some discussion included the conversion of the street lights, the 300th Anniversary Fund, the Planning Board articles regarding general and zoning by-laws and the Solar PILOT.

T. Ahern will reach out to the individuals who brought forth the Citizens Petitions and invite them to an upcoming Select Boards meeting.

J. Cronin asked to make an amendment to a previous vote regarding the time change of the May Town Meeting.

J. Cronin made a motion to amend the previous motion regarding the start time to the May 9, 2022 Town Meeting to begin at 7:00pm and any subsequent nights to complete the May Town Meeting. B. Sparrell second, (with a question as to if the Fall Town Meeting is included in this motion, to which the answer was no, will hold separate vote prior to Fall Town Meeting.) Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to close the Warrant for the 2022 May 9th Town Meeting from acceptance of any new articles. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

BOARD BUSINESS:

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2022 as written. B. Sparrell second. Vote 2-0. T. Hein abstained, she was absent 2-22-22.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the donation in the amount of \$1,500 from the Newcomers Club Community Grant to Park & Recreation for Summer Concerts. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Permit for the Youth Baseball & Softball Parade on May 1, 2022 to begin and end at Placentino.

T. Ahern presented deeds and memorandums of agreement for the installation of street lights at Mohawk Path, Indian Circle and Mayflower Landing. It was noted that the developer is responsible for the installation.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and endorse the deeds as presented for Mohawk Path, Indian Circle and Mayflower Landing Street/Roads which have been approved for acceptance at a previous Town Meeting. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to authorize the Chair of the Select Board to execute a memorandum of agreement as presented between the Town of Holliston and Holliston Residential Realty as to the installation of Street Lights as planned in the Highlands of Holliston subdivision. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

J. Cronin encouraged residents to view the update on the water treatment plant located on Central Street on the Town website.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Parade Permit in which Veterans will march to the Iraq/Afghanistan Monument for a dedication service on May 14, 2022 starting at 8:00am. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

At 9:00pm J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved_4-25-22

