

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

April 25, 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, Interim Deputy DPW Director, Highway Superintendent; and Matthew Coletti, Chair of the Economic Development Committee.

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

REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EDC CHAIR:

Matt Coletti the outgoing Chair of the Economic Development Committee joined the meeting to discuss a letter he submitted to the Select Board with recommendations regarding the Committee going forward. M. Coletti stated that the biggest challenge seems to be bringing ideas developed and discussed by the Committee to fruition. He noted that the Committee is “well intentioned, however under resourced.” When looking at models in surrounding towns most have a town staff member assisting them. T. Ahern stated that the previous town staff member was no longer available and that in fact several other options were looked at, posting an advertisement for a part-time position, a Request for Proposal for a consultant and also the possibility of a co-op within a masters program. Unfortunately none of these options resulted in a solution. T. Hein pointed out several of the EDC’s accomplishments including legislation establishing an Economic Development Fund, contribution and support of the 9 Green Street renovation project and the Local Rapid Recovery Plan. As well as creating the Local Business Directory on the Town’s website. The Select Board members asked T. Ahern to look at the possibility of ARPA funding for a study to best approach M. Coletti’s concerns. T. Ahern noted that all the footage used for the Viewpoint Video is owned by the Town of Holliston and can be used by local businesses.

Each of the Select Board members thanked M. Coletti for his service.

BOARD BUSINESS / APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY DPW DIRECTOR (HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT)

Sean Reese joined the meeting via zoom to endorse Robert Walker (in attendance), as the permanent Deputy DPW Director, Highway Superintendent. S. Reese highlighted various reasons for his endorsement. R. Walker revamped the snow & ice removal with positive results, serving as Clerk of the Works on the ongoing Mudville Project, managing the day to day responsibilities of the Highway Department. S. Reese stated that day in and out he remains calm, cool and confident while building strong relationships with other departments within

the Town. The Select Board agreed with all that S. Reese presented and also commended R. Walker for the outstanding work he has been doing.

J. Cronin made a motion to appoint Robert Walker as the Deputy DPW Director, Highway Superintendent having successfully completed his probationary period from November 2021 through April 2022, such appointment will be considered on schedule with other annual appointments through June 30, 2023. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

MAY 2022 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING REVIEW:

T. Ahern stated that the Warrant for the Annual 2022 May Town Meeting is currently on the Towns' website. Any supplemental information will be added and posted up to 7 days prior to the Annual Town Meeting start date of May 9, 2022. One of the changes/amendments being considered is a Consent Agenda for several Warrant Articles.

B. Sparrell noted that Town Meeting will begin at 7:00pm and not 7:30pm this year.

T. Hein stated that this year T. Ahern will have a meeting with Town staff to "walk through" the Warrant. This will also help to determine what staff will be present at Town Meeting to address any questions that may come up during the meeting.

T. Hein noted that the youth division of the Holliston Community Action Fund will be providing free babysitting for residents. More details will be provided closer to May 9, 2022.

Chief Cassidy stated that this Town Meeting will resemble Town Meetings prior to the pandemic. He will discuss the details and logistics at next weeks Select Board Meeting, May 2, 2022.

WARRANTS:

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$1,838,939.95. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

J. Cronin paid tribute to Ray Moloney the former Holliston Fire Chief who passed away recently.

J. Cronin stated that Chief Moloney was a tremendous service to the Town and will be greatly missed. T. Hein asked that a "moment of silence" be observed in his honor.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern stated that the Town is preparing to start the borrowing process for the new Wastewater Treatment project for well #5 on Central Street. The fact that the Town now has AAA Standard and Poor's rating it will be in the position to save a substantial amount of money over the upcoming years. T. Ahern thanked M. Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector, Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant, Kathryn Pierce and Kevin Rudden, Principal Assessor's for their contributions in securing the AAA rating. The Select Board will sign the Bond at next weeks meeting.

T. Ahern explained that after doing some research the Town will renew their contract with MIIA

MA Insurance Association for Liability Insurance.

Preliminary data has been received from the cost benefit analysis for the Houghton and Factory Pond Dams. The data will be reviewed by the Dam Working Group and then presented to the Select Board to then put on the Capital list for 2022 October Town Meeting.

There are still open seats for appointments on several Boards and Committees. A full list is provided on the Town website. There will also be forms available at the May 9, Town Meeting. The Select Board discussed the pros and cons of several ways to approach the information provided by interested parties. Using a Talent Pool in which information could be shared or submit information to be held private by the Town Administrator. T. Hein asked that the Assistant Town Administrator / HR Director be brought into the discussion as well.

BOARD BUSINESS CONTINUED:

J. Cronin made motion to accept with thanks to Senate President Karen Spilka and former State Representative Carolyn Dykema the American Rescue Plan Act funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as follows; \$350,000 for water and sewer infrastructure line item 1599-2058, section 2A of Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021 and \$300,000 for water infrastructure per line item 1599-2032, section 2A of Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2022 as written. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to disband the Affordable Housing Committee. B. Sparrell second with a comment that it would be good practice to review Boards and Committees periodically. Vote 3-0. The Board members thanked those who served on the Affordable Housing Committee for their service.

T. Hein stated that she will be attending an Evening of Impact at the Hopkinton Arts Center to participate in the discussion regarding the plan for a new YMCA facility in Ashland which will be serving the Town of Holliston as well.

OTHER BUSINESS:

T. Ahern stated that MASS Department of Transportation upcoming paving project of Route 16 and 126 is currently scheduled to begin in July 2022. Most of work will take place during the nighttime to minimize traffic issues and should be completed within a months' time. The sidewalk project in that area will be completed on a separate timeline.

At 8:05pm J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved____05-31-22

