

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

January 9, 2023
7:00PM

Town Hall
703 Washington Street

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

Also Present: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Matthew Stone, Holliston Police Chief, James Barrett, new Holliston Police Lieutenant; Elizabeth Greendale, Holliston Town Clerk; Dr. Caitlin Coyle, Mary Kreps, Representatives from the Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging Gerontology Institute University of Mass. Boston; Lisa Borchetta, Director of the Senior Center; Yvette Cain, CoA Chair; and James Arena-DeRosa, Holliston State Rep.

At 7:00pm B. Sparrell called the meeting to order.

INTRODUCTION / APPOINTMENT OF POLICE LT. JAMES BARRETT:

Chief Stone gave a brief background of the process regarding the recruitment of the Operations Lieutenant. Out of 27 applicants James Barrett was offered the position. J. Barrett comes to Holliston with 27 years of experience with the Wrentham Police Department as well as many other outstanding qualifications. J. Barrett complemented Holliston by stating “this was one of the best processes he has ever participated in”.

Each Select Board member had the opportunity to ask questions, noting his impressive resume and experience.

T. Hein made a motion to appoint James Barrett as the Operation Lieutenant for the Holliston Police Department with a start time to be determined by the Police Chief and to execute a contract through June 30, 2025. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

The Town Clerk Elizabeth Greendale administered the oath of office.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: (a.)

T. Ahern chose to discuss the date and time of the May 2023 Annual Town Meeting while the Town Clerk was still present. The Town Moderator is not able to participate in the scheduled May 8, 2023 Annual Town Meeting. T. Ahern stated there are two options. 1.) The Town seek out a alternate Town Moderator or 2.) The Town choose another Monday in May, (it is written in the bylaw that it must be held on a Monday. The Select Board chose to seek another date rather than replace the Town Moderator.) L. Greendale requested the date not go past May 15, 2023 as elections will be later that month. T. Ahern will work with the Town Clerk, Town Counsel and the moderator and bring back a date.

COUNCIL ON AGING SURVEY RESULTS PRESENTATION:

Dr. Caitlin Coyle and Mary Kreps joined the meeting representing the Center for Social &

Demographic Research on Aging Gerontology Institute University of Mass. Boston to present the findings of the Survey which was sent to all residents 55 and older within the community. Dr. Coyle stated that the survey was designed to focus on the needs and interests of the older adult population. The survey was designed to help shape the planning and development of Holliston's Council on Aging, Inform planning of programs and services provided by the Senior Center and raise awareness of the needs of residents of a certain age within the community and among the various Town departments. As a result of the survey three main concerns came to the forefront. 1.) the ability to afford to stay, income less than cost of living. 2.) the ability to access the community, future of mobility. 3.) the ability to maintain one's own household or have the option to downsize to maintain one's independence. Dr. Coyle noted two themes throughout the responses. 1. Residents do not feel the need to make use of the Senior Center. 2. Residents do not have time to participate. There seems to be a perception by some that the Senior Center is need based. As a result of the study several recommendations included, seeking satellite locations for programs, solicit volunteers, and look to accommodate for more physical space for such activities as exercise programs.

State Representative and resident James Arena-DeRosa was in attendance and asked how Holliston results compared to other communities. Again Dr. Coyle noted that there is a perception that the Senior Center is needs based. "You only go to the Senior Center if you are in high need."

Both Lisa Borchetta, Senior Center Director and Yvette Cain, Council on Aging Chair appreciated all the work that went into the study and feel that the Senior Center is moving in the right direction towards making the Senior Center a more desirable place for Holliston's Seniors.

T. Hein noted that along with the various recommendations might come additional budget requests in FY24. J. Cronin noted that there seems to be a changing culture, a pivot into a more vibrant Senior Culture. B. Sparrell noted that incorporating this study with the data from the Envisioning Future Holliston results will ensure a more inclusive vision.

Dr. Coyle will be available in the future as a resource and gave her permission for the results to be posted on the Town website. There will be a community presentation at the Senior Center on Tuesday January 17, 2024. T. Hein will be in attendance.

The Select Board members thanked Dr. Coyle and her team for the very thorough presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

T. Hein stated that on Thursday January 12, 2023 the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing regarding CRG, LLC and 555 Hopping Brook. The Select Board will continue to support the Planning Board and that process.

J. Cronin congratulated James Arena-DeRosa on newly being sworn in as a full-time State Representative.

WARRANT:

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$1,395,185.00.

J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: (b. – i.)

T. Ahern stated that the FY23 Budget Q2 update through December 31, 2022, along with the Town Accountant Revenue update show the Town trending in a positive direction. In an answer to a question posed by T. Hein regarding the Opioid Settlement payments to the Town. T. Ahern replied that the Town Accountant will speak with the Town Auditors to determine the appropriate accounts to deposit the funds.

All Town Department Budgets are due January 20, 2023.

As discussed at a previous Select Board meeting the EV Charging Stations located at the Town Hall are no longer available for public use. T. Ahern explained that there is a \$10,000 annual cost therefore there is a \$10,000 “upfront” cost needed before a mechanism for public use can be installed. At this time the “upfront” funding needs to be determined.

There is an effort to look at options for engineering and GIS as multiple departments use GIS. J. Cronin stated that there are other priorities facing the Town and funding would be put to better use for a 26-27 Police Officer and the Assistant Deputy Fire Chief.

The LED Street Light Conversion Project is moving forward. The audit of the system is complete and the process of changing the lights will begin very soon. T. Ahern acknowledged that it has been frustrating for residents at times and appreciates their patience.

T. Ahern noted that trees have been removed as part of the Blair Square Project. Some of the trees have been marked to be saved/replanted. Weather permitting the project will be completed by Memorial Day 2023. J. Cronin noted that going forward projects will need more clarity on which trees will be saved for replanting. T. Hein added that with the proposed Tree USA a bylaw would define the process.

The most recent update regarding the Marshall Street Solar Project appears to indicate that the ASO Study will most likely have favorable results. Once that project is greenlighted T. Ahern will report back.

Town Counsel has approved the request that the Conservation Commission represent the Town regarding the Community Farm Conservation Restriction.

BOARD BUSINESS:

T. Hein made a motion to approve the One Day Beer & Wine License at the Christ the King Church on January 22, 2023 from 3:00pm – 7:00pm. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the request from the Department of Transportation for the Winter Recovery Reimbursement Request in the amount of \$211,147.96. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to appoint Wilston Johnston and Joseph Paru to the Open Space Committee with a term ending June 2023. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,750 from the American

Legion Downtown Marigold Project to the Holliston Community Farm for the Greenhouse Heater. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

J. Cronin would like the Select Board to review the fees associated with the rental of the Upper Town Hall in an upcoming meeting.

T. Ahern noted that PARE Corp will be attending the Select Board meeting on January 17, 2023 with an update on the Lake Winthrop Dam. The Celebrate Holliston Committee will attend the meeting as well with a donation to be presented for the Blair Square Project.

At 8:50pm J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved____2-13-23

