

**TOWN OF HOLLISTON**  
**SELECT BOARD**

November 14, 2022  
6:30PM

Town Hall  
703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; James Arena-DeRosa, elected State Representative, Andrew McWilliams, Robert Weidknecht, recipients of the Humanitarian Award, Kevin Rudden, Principal Assessor, Sherri Bates, Assistant Assessor, Mary Greendale, Board of Assessors Chair, and Jeffrey Marshall Board of Assessor member, via zoom.

**HUMANITARIAN AWARDS:**

At 6:30pm the Select Board met in the Upper Town Hall to present the Annual Humanitarian Awards. Each Select Board member nominated an individual whom they felt were examples of those working towards advancing the wellbeing of others within the community.

B. Sparrell thanked Senate President Karen Spilkas' Office for the Citations provided for the evening's presentation.

T. Hein presented Andrew McWilliams with his award for the completion of the Eagle Scout canoe/kayak storage project.

B. Sparrell presented Robert Weidknecht with his award for the tireless work and contributions to the Rail Trail.

J. Cronin's recipient Chris Lencini, the owner of the Holliston Superette was unable to attend. J. Cronin nominated C. Lencini for his continued support within the community, especially all the donations made to the Council on Aging on behalf of the Superette.

J. Cronin took the time to recognize many others who have gone above and beyond to volunteer time and materials, Dellicker Excavation, Arhonian Landscaping, Chipman Electric, D'Eramo Masonry, Dave Burroughs, Nate Simpskins and Griffin Electric to name a few.

At 7:01pm B. Sparrell called the meeting to order.

**UPDATE ON WATER TREATMENT PLANT AT WELL NO. 5**

T. Ahern stated that Sean Reese the Director of the DPW was unable to attend the meeting and therefore the update on the Water Treatment Plant at Well #5 will be rescheduled. On November 3, 2022 a letter was received from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection approving the renovated, updated Well #5. It is currently ready for operations. T. Ahern provided slides showing the new and improved facility.

**WARRANTS:**

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$734,972.93. J. Cronin

second. Vote 3-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

T. Hein read the memo for the Fall Curbside Leaf Pickup during the week of November 28, 2022.

T. Hein also read the memo for the No On-Street Winter Parking Ban currently in effect through March 2023.

J. Cronin expressed his thanks for all involved in making the Veterans Day Memorial celebration/luncheon such a wonderful event, including Steve Bradford, Bobby Blair, Commanders Turcotte and DeGanne and the Lions Club.

**COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

The next scheduled ARPA Steering Group meeting will be on Tuesday November 29, 2022 at noon. One of the items on the agenda is related to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Feasibility Study pertaining to the approved Article from the October 17, 2022 Town Meeting, due to a request from Mass DEP to have 8 rather than 6 borings drilled for analysis. This will cost an additional \$55,000.

T. Ahern had sent letters to the various farming business in Holliston regarding the future of the Agricultural Commission. He has received 3 responses to date. The deadline for feedback is November 17, 2022.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission will continue to work with Holliston's Economic Development Committee. The next scheduled meeting will be in December 2022, with a report target date in February 2023, projected project completion in March 2023.

The Assistant Town Administrator is currently working on the next quarterly Hometown Newsletter. At this time there are approximately 1,000 subscribers.

**BOARD BUSINESS:**

T. Ahern drafted a letter of support for the Safe Routes to School Program through MassDOT. T. Hein pointed out that there has been a strong focus over the past several years on improving all road use, particularly for those that bike and walk to school.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Letter of Support for the Towns application for the Safe Routes to School Program through the MassDOT funding program as presented with thanks to those residents, Boards, Committees and stakeholders who have provided letters of support to the Town Administrator. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

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T. Hein made an inquiry into the possibility of connecting the Queens neighborhood with the High School through Mellon Street. T. Ahern noted that the concept had been addressed in 2020. There could be conversation around the possibility of a trail through the area of Mellon Street that is not paved in the future.

T. Hein made a motion to appoint Vladimir Nechev as an Associate Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term to expire June 2023. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to appoint the following individuals as Firefighters and/or EMT's through June 30, 2023, subject to conditions of physical evaluation and background checks: Paul Jameson, Firefighter; Nicholas Cutone, Firefighter / EMT; Steven Garrett, Firefighter / EMT; Brendan Malone, Firefighter / EMT, with reappointment on an annual basis by this Board. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the donation of time and work to the Community Farm from Dellicker Excavating in the amount \$5,000 including trench work and installation of power from the house to the greenhouse. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 11, 2022, including the Dangerous Dog Hearing as written. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Event Permit for the Community Farm Bonfire to be held December 31, 2022 form 6:00pm-10:00pm at Rogers Road. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

### **7:30PM TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING – FY23 TAX RATE SETTING:**

Kevin Rudden, Principal Assessor, Sherrie Bates, Assistant Assessor, Mary Greendale, Board of Assessors Chair and Jeffrey Marshall, (via zoom) Board of Assessors member joined the meeting to participate in the FY 2023 Tax Classification Hearing / Tax Rate Setting. K. Rudden gave a detailed presentation including slides providing the information on how the property tax rate is calculated, new growth, sales prices relative to values/assessments and the various exemptions available as well as a split tax rate vs. a single tax rate. K. Rudden stated that FY23 tax rate has been calculated to be \$15.40 per \$1,000. This is subject to certification by the Department of Revenue. After explaining each available exemption K. Rudden also noted the Board of Assessors recommendation as follows: chose a single tax rate verses split tax rate, no on the residential exemption as well as the open space exemption, and the small commercial exemption.

At 8:16pm T. Hein made a motion to open the Tax Rate Classification Hearing on Monday November 14, 2022. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

There was discussion regarding the housing market, especially during the Pandemic, and how this translates to assessed values. Jeff Marshall, Board of Assessors member and also a financial professional called the events over the past several years “a perfect storm”, resulting in a supply and demand issue which drove housing prices up dramatically.

Barbara Pettie, 166 Union Street, joined the meeting via zoom and voiced her concern over the fact that her assessed value was being compared to other million dollar homes within the Town. K. Rudden explained that that was not the case. Her home was being compared, assessed along with other homes within her neighborhood, with similar construction (age/style), square footage and condition.

At 8:36pm T. Hein made a motion to close the Tax Classification Hearing. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion that the Town of Holliston not adopt a duel tax rate for Fiscal Year

2023. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion that the Town of Holliston adopt a residential factor of 1.0 thereby establishing a single tax rate of \$15.40 for FY2023 subject to approval from the Department of Local Services/DOR. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion that the Town of Holliston not adopt the residential exemption for FY23 J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion that the Town of Holliston not adopt the Open Space exemption for FY23. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion that the Town of Holliston not adopt the Small Commercial exemption for FY23. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the excess levy capacity of \$791,770.00 for FY23 subject to the Department of Local Services/Department of Revenue approval. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Each member of the Select Board called out their nomination for the Humanitarian Awards which were presented earlier in the evening.

T. Hein nominated Eagle Scout Andrew McWilliams for his remarkable Boat Launch Project.

J. Cronin nominated Chris Lencini for years of generous donations and continued support of the needs of the community.

B. Sparrell nominated Robert Weidknecht for all his efforts and continued work on the Rail Trail.

T. Hein asked if a cannabis business was vacate its Holliston location in the future could the facility be used by another type of indoor agriculture business. T. Ahern stated that at this point in time there is a trend for indoor agriculture in North America, however nothing is on the radar in Massachusetts per say.

At 8:44pm T. Hein made a motion to adjourn. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved\_\_12-19-22

