

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

January 17, 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; Allen Orsi, PARE Corp engineer; Michael Cassidy, Holliston Fire Chief; Lisa Deering, Theresa Lamkin, Peter Barbieri, members of Celebrate Holliston Committee and Robert Weidknecht, Rail Trails Committee.

At 7:03pm B. Sparrell called the meeting to order.

LAKE WINTHROP DAM:

Allen Orsi from PARE Corp. joined the meeting with a presentation pertaining to the Lake Winthrop Dam. The presentation included various slides and an explanation of the Alternatives Analysis done by PARE Corp. The Lake Winthrop Dam has been historically considered a significant hazard potential dam due to the amount of water stored there. However it has been determined, if the dam were to fail there is limited risk as there are no structures downstream. As a result of the jurisdictional review, which was submitted to the Dam Safety Department in 2021 it has been determined that the dam qualifies as “non-jurisdictional” resulting in the Town being relieved of any regulatory requirements and also rescinds the previous Town Safety Order. A. Orsi recommended the Town continue with regular inspections, maintenance and repairs as needed. Most of which can likely be facilitated by the DPW. A. Orsi offered his assistance going forward to answer questions and to keep the Town informed of any upcoming Grant opportunities. The Lake Winthrop Dam report will be posted on the Towns’ website and PARE Corp will continue to be involved in the ongoing work to the Houghton Pond and Factory Pond Dams. The Select Board thanked A. Orsi for his time.

BOARD BUSINESS: (a. donation from Celebrate Holliston)

Theresa Lamkin, Lisa Deering and Peter Barbieri, Celebrate Holliston members attended the meeting with a donation and an update on Holliston’s 300th Celebration. A donation in the amount of \$45,000 was presented to be used for the Blair Square Project. P. Barbieri noted that over the lifetime of Celebrate Holliston the committee has raised and donated back to the Town approximately \$200,000. The Committee is looking to mirror the 275th celebration and have a monthly event in 2024, with a planned parade in the month of May (2024). There is a planned meeting on February 8, 2023 at the Senior Center in an effort to kick start the planning. T. Lamkin encourages all residents, clubs, and businesses to contribute ideas as they would like to incorporate “free family fun” into the ongoing yearlong celebration. B. Sparrell invited the

Committee to return in the near future with an update and also with any requests for funding via funds that were voted, allocated at the October 2022 Town Meeting.

T. Hein made a motion to accept the donation from Celebrate Holliston in the amount of \$45,000 to be used to offset the cost of the Blair Square Construction Project. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

FY2024 BUDGET:

T. Ahern presented the proposed FY24 Select Board Budget. The increase in the FY24 budget is driven mainly by the Town Administrators contract extension. Once the Solar Project on Marshall Street is on line and generating income, the funds will be directed into the revolving account and therefore may be used to counteract the increase. However these funds may not be available prior to the beginning of the FY24 budget.

T. Hein made a motion to authorize the submission of the Select Boards Budget 01122 for the FY24 budget process as presented tonight in the amount \$426,726. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

T. Ahern also presented FY24 Human Resources Budget. J. Cronin complemented the Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director Kathleen Buckley and Cheryl Houle HR Benefits Manager for all that they accomplish.

T. Ahern invited Robert Weidknecht of the Trails Committee to present the FY24 Rail Trail Budget. R. Weidknecht stated that there are no changes to the proposed FY24 budget which was increased to \$5,000 in FY23. Thanks to the many volunteers and the Holliston DPW maintenance of the Trail continues to be ongoing. R. Weidknecht specifically thanked the Highway Department for their contribution to the Phipps Tunnel Project. J. Cronin suggested a follow up conversation regarding the transition of Trails maintenance to the DPW Grounds Crew Division. R. Weidknecht supported the idea, however he will continue to solicit volunteers and seek grant funding when available.

T. Ahern presented the proposed FY24 Celebration Budget which has increased from \$2,300 to \$2,500. This budget contributes to the funding of the Memorial Day Parade.

T. Ahern presented the proposed FY24 Sealer of Weights & Measures Budget. This consists of a self-sustaining revolving fund. As the clientele increases there may be a need to explore options, such as directing some of the funds into the general fund.

WARRANTS:

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$1,890,525.65. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

T. Hein read an email from Liz Theiler, a resident asking for a staffing report of the Holliston EMT's for the week of December 23 – 31st, 2022. Chief Cassidy provided her with that information.

T. Hein stated that the Upper Charles Climate Group has requested a meeting with the Select Board to discuss several items of interest. T. Ahern will invite the Sustainability Coordinator as well.

The Lions Club will be honoring several residents with a new Heart of Lion award at a ceremony on January 18, 2023. T. Hein will be in attendance.

The Schools will complete a facilities assessment prior to submitting another Statement of Interest (SOI) for the High School. At this point the Schools do not anticipate a large capital request in May 2023.

J. Cronin stated that he and B. Sparrell recently met with Us Representative Jim McGovern. There appears to be a possibility that ARPA funds that are not allocated in the future may be expected to be returned to the Federal Government. J. Cronin suggests engaging in plans for use of the funds sooner rather than later.

COMMENTS FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

At 6:00pm on Wednesday January 18, 2023 the Schools will participate in an equity audit focus group to discuss a 5 year strategic plan.

Envisioning Future Holliston will meet on Wednesday January 18, 2023 to review the results of a recent bid opening and select a consultant who will be tasked with formulating a strategic plan using the data from the 2 surveys conducted in 2022.

Chief Cassidy stated that the Holliston Ambulance Service now has a Full Year License which became valid on December 29th, 2022 and will expire on December 31, 2023. The Chief expressed his appreciation for all who worked hard to achieve this. Once the role of Assistance Fire Chief is filled he/she will become responsible for overseeing the licensure process.

There has been a request to identify a location for placement of the “Heart of a Lion Community Service Award” and “Humanitarian Award” within the Town Hall.

BOARD BUSINESS: (b. – c.)

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2022 as written. J. Cronin seconded. Vote 3-0.

T. Ahern explained Indian Ridge Road South has been presented to the Select Board several times previously. The Town voted to accept the road at the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting, however this did not come to fruition and the Town will now enact “a taking”.

T. Hein made a motion to authorize the “order of taking” as presented by Town Counsel for Indian Ridge Road South, formally known as James Road pursuant to Town Meeting vote, Article 40 of the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting and to further authorize the Town Administrator’s Office to file said order with the Registry of Deeds within 30 days of execution of Order of Taking. J. Cronin second. Vote 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS: NONE

J. Cronin made a motion at 8:32pm to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;

Margaret Driscoll

Approved__02-27-23