

## **TOWN OF HOLLISTON**

### **SELECT BOARD**

November 20, 2023  
7:00PM

Town Hall  
703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Beth Greenblatt, Consultant Beacon Intergraded Solutions; Anna Noucas, representative SolSystems; and Kevin Cox, representative Onyx Renewables.

At 7:00pm J. Cronin called the meeting to order.

#### **UPDATE ON TOWN OWNED SOLAR PROJECT ON MARSHALL STREET:**

Beth Greenblatt, of Beacon Intergraded Solutions began the update on the Marshall Street Solar Project stating that tonight's discussion would focus on the transition to Onyx Renewables and introduced Anna Noucas of SolSystems. A. Noucas stated that due to changes in recent economics SolSystems had to seek alternative financing for the project and has worked to structure documents to pass the project on to Onyx Renewables.

Kevin Cox, Vice President of Origination for Onyx Renewables joined the meeting and gave a brief presentation and explained that Onyx has taken several months to familiarize itself to the project and established a good working relationship with SolSystems. He also added that A. Noucas will continue to participate. Onyx Renewables partners with Sustainable Development Capital LLC. There are currently eleven projects ongoing in Massachusetts, six projects in the Northeast that are on old landfill sites. K. Cox stated that Onyx plans to keep to a similar timeline that SolSystems created and complete the project in late 2024. They will also keep the Town involved per the specifications of the contract. One of the changes as a result of the delay is the fact that the wattage of the modules has increased and therefore may alter the design slightly.

In response to a question asked by B. Sparrell K. Cox stated that Onyx will manage all aspects of the project which will include managing subcontractors at the site. B. Sparrell pointed out that communication with neighboring residents throughout all phases of construction would be greatly appreciated. K. Cox noted that all projects have a direct impact on the community and that Onyx will happily reach out during the process. B. Greenblatt suggested that the Onyx teams schedule a meeting with the Planning Board as part of the transition process.

T. Hein thanked B. Greenblatt for her commitment to the project and the community, specifically sponsorship of several High School Scholarships. T. Hein asked if the footprint is to decreased due to the increased wattage, would there be any impact on the Recycling Center on Marshall Street. B. Greenblatt noted that once the design is complete and reviewed by TRC Companies to determine any real substantive change to the design, it may or may not have

to go back to the DEP for a cursory review. B. Greenblatt also encouraged sending a report to Kleinfelder to confirm the integrity of the cap on the landfill. K. Cox stated that the DEP will be made aware of any changes in a cursory review only, as they are not expanding the site of the project.

J. Cronin asked if any delays should be expected within the timeline going forward. K. Cox expects no delays, with the intent to follow a similar schedule as presented by SolSystems. J. Cronin noted his past frustration with the project and the bureaucratic caused delays. B. Greenblatt suggested, moving forward look to make sure the requirement agreements are in place, including the performance bonds. T. Ahern stated that Lisa Meade, Town Counsel, will review the necessary documents.

J. Cronin thanked both B. Greenblatt and K. Cox for the update on the project.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

B. Sparrell read the memo regarding the change in the Trash and Recycling Schedule for the current week, trash and recycling for Thursday November 23, 2023 will be picked up on Friday November 24, 2023, Fridays trash and recycling will be picked on Saturday 25, 2023.

B. Sparrell read the memo for the “No On Street Winter Parking Ban”.

B. Sparrell read the memo for Fall Curbside Leaf Pickup the week of November 27, 2023.

B. Sparrell stated that the Marshall Street Recycling Center will be open on Saturdays and Sundays during the months of November and December 2023 and January 2024 from 8:00am – 3:00pm.

B. Sparrell read an email from a resident who wanted to express her gratitude to Chief Stone and the Holliston Police Department for their prompt response to an accident she was involved in at Norfolk and Central Street intersection on November 15, 2023. She specifically acknowledge Office Downey and his kindness throughout the ordeal.

B. Sparrell read an email from a Holliston business owner thanking the Town Administrator, Health Agent and the Building Inspector for their collective contributions for the success of the Open Kitchen at the Mill which took part in an event on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

T. Hein wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

J. Cronin noted the passing of longtime resident Henry Dellicker and recognized many of his contributions and service to the Town, after which there was moment of silence.

J. Cronin stated that Superintendent Dr. Kustka has formed a coalition Against Hate and Bias Committee. They have scheduled a meeting for December 6, 2023 to discuss a multifaceted plan and address recent incidents.

J. Cronin noted that the Town Administrator, T. Ahern received an award from ACNE Northeast for a presentation he recorded on HCAT.

J. Cronin stated that he and T. Ahern had a conversation with the Chair of the Board of Health regarding the proposed Downtown Sewer Project. They would like to schedule a joint meeting with the Board of Health for some time in December 2023.

J. Cronin pointed out that work has begun on the restoration of the Central Burial Ground located next to the Town Hall as part of the CPA Grant which the Town received, as well as the other cemetery's located within Holliston.

**WARRANTS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$2,531,589.39. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

**FINANCIAL POLICY UPDATE:**

T. Ahern stated that every two years the Town reviews its Financial Policies and presented the Financial Policy Documents. The summary of the Financial Policies include the following: Reserve Fund, Stabilization Fund, Capital Outlay, Free Cash, Debt, Water, OPEB, Pension and OPEB and Pension. The Town had created a Programmatic Stabilization Fund in which cannabis revenue and opioid settlement funds can be deposited. More discussion pertaining to the Programmatic Stabilization Fund will continue between the Select Board and the Finance Committee.

B. Sparrell suggested looking at the Towns goals holistically, including capital improvements and could they be incorporated into the Financial Policy. T. Ahern stated there could consist of two separate documents that will complement each other. B. Sparrell will research other Towns Financial Policy's as a reference.

T. Hein asked T. Ahern if updates, such as the most recent account balances (October/November) could be provided prior to the Select Boards vote. T. Hein also asked if the funds in the Programmatic Stabilization Fund could be used in relation to matching grants funding. T. Ahern stated that the purpose statement would need to be updated in order to do so.

J. Cronin suggested that the under Section 8 of the policy that the OPEB liability commitment of 1.25 million minimum change to 1.25 maximum to remain consistent with the OPEB Trust Committee recommendation. T. Ahern stated that the OPEB report should be available in early December 2023. T. Ahern noted that Treasurer Collector C. Heymanns is in agreement with holding a multi committee/departments meeting to discuss policies and any changes including reviewing the Investment Policy.

**COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

T. Ahern stated that the Holliston Police Department was awarded at great from the Ed J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program in the amount of \$45,000. This will be used to purchase level 3 Logistical Gear, ballistic mini shields, plate carrier tactical vest and \$12,000 to be used for training purposes. Thanks to Lt. Barrett for his efforts in securing the grant. The Small Bridge Grant for the Woodland Street Bridge was awarded in the amount of \$500,000. PARE Corp is working with the Department of Transportation to seek additional Grant funding. The design is currently at 75% completion with the intent to complete the bridge in 2024.

Eversource is in the process of completing the installation of the EV Charging Stations at Green Street. The costs are being covered by Eversource and an EV grant.

The Sustainability Coordinators at Weston and Sampson have prepared a META Grant application to develop an investigation for clean energy opportunities, specifically at the Woodland Street Schools Complex in the amount of \$15,000. Thanks to J. Keast and C. Meo for their contributions.

The OPEB Trust Committee will schedule a meeting in the near future.

The construction for the sidewalk on Lowland Street, connecting the Rail Trail to Woodland Street has begun and weather permitting will be completed in December 2023.

Written approval has been given to Weston and Sampson to begin phase II testing at 20 Cross Street. There has been no movement in Land Court as of yet. Phase I indicated the need for additional testing. There will be more discussion which will include input from Town Counsel.

#### **BOARD BUSINESS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve and sign the following Rail Trail Abutters Licenses:

Depot Package Store, 110 Church Street; Auction Market Place, 95 Washington Street; Bennett Trust, 326 Woodland Street; Laine Realty Trust, 354 Woodland Street; Laine Realty Trust, 360 Woodland Street; Holliston Oil, 300 Woodland Street; M.E. Dellicker, 340 Woodland Street and Matthew Dellicker, 100 Washington Street. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to accept and submit the Green Communities Annual Report as presented. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Lion's Club Holiday Lighting Event Permit to be held on Saturday November 25, 2023 at 776 Washington Street at 4:00pm. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Event Permit for the Turkey Trot to be held on November 22, 2023 to begin at the Robert Adams Middle School at 9:00am. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the First Night Rail Trail Walk to be held on December 31, 2023 from 5:00pm-8:00pm beginning at Blair Square, with a four hour Police Detail. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes as written, not to be released for October 23, 2023, November 6, 2023 and November 15, 2023. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

T. Hein would like to join the task force related to the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization Action Plan to eliminate Roadway Fatalities and Serious Injuries. The commitment is through the spring of 2025.

J. Cronin stated that a Select Board endorsed letter will be sent to all the business owners in Town introducing Melanie Hamblen, the new Economic Development Coordinator.

J. Cronin wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

At 8:36pm B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved\_\_01-03-24

