

TOWN OF HOLLISTON

SELECT BOARD

December 18, 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; Chief Matthew Stone, Holliston Police Chief; Lieutenant James Barrett, Holliston Police Department; James Ray, Holliston Police Department appointee; Jay Leary, Board of Health Chair, Joshua Mann, Board of Health member; Scott Moles, Health Agent, Jay Talerman, Town Counsel and James Keast, Facilities Manager.

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

BOARD BUSINESS / 6A. APPOINTMENT OF POLICE OFFICER JAMES RAY:

Chief Matthew Stone provided a brief background of appointee James Ray which included his 13 years as a civilian dispatch and his current status as the Captain of the Auxiliary Police Unit. Chief Stone continued to state that he received glowing reviews from James Ray's references. Officer Ray will be "road ready" in February 2024. Lieutenant James Barrett added that during staffing shortages J. Ray has offered his time and assistance, and noted he will be a fantastic addition to the department.

T. Hein asked J. Ray if there is an area of community policing he is especially drawn to. J. Ray replied that he would like to participate with the logistics involving safety around Celebrate Holliston.

J. Cronin inquired as to J. Rays "style of interaction". J. Ray responded that he seeks to be a friendly connection to the community.

B. Sparrell made a motion to appoint James Ray as a Holliston Police Officer with a start date, and swearing in to be determined by the Holliston Chief of Police, but currently assumed to be January 2, 2024.

J. Ray thanked all for the opportunity and looks forward to serving the Town of Holliston.

UPDATE OF DOWNTOWN SEWER FEASIBILITY WITH THE BOARD OF HEALTH:

At 7:10pm Jay Leary, Board of Health Chair called the Board of Health meeting to order.

J. Cronin stated that the reason for the joint meeting was to open a line of communication between the Select Board and the Board of Health regarding the proposed Downtown Sewer Project. The Facilities Manager, James Keast presented an in-depth review of the project to the Board of Health at a recent meeting.

J. Leary stated that there is concern regarding compliance at the plant/facility and demonstrating to the DEP that it can handle the increased volume the project would add. Joshua Mann, Board of Health member would like to see a more definitive timeline.

J. Keast stated that the DEP has yet to issue a Discharge Permit. Soil and Perk testing needs to continue to determine the actual discharge capacity of the site. J. Keast is hopeful that this will be done in the Spring of 2024.

J. Leary added that there are still many logistics which need to be determined, such as betterments for those directly affected by the project and also funding.

S. Moles, Health Agent stated that as the project moves forward they will need to determine which properties should be connected first based on need.

T. Ahern will report back with an update from the DEP and the ARPA Steering Group once available.

B. Sparrell asked if the Proposed Downtown Sewer Project would result in any bylaw/rule changes. J. Leary stated that there would need to be a discussion with the Planning Board regarding a Sewer District and as this proposed project is based on a hybrid model what that might entail.

At 7:19pm J. Leary made a motion for the Board of Health to adjourn. J. Mann second. Vote 2-0.

DISCUSSION OF FLAG POLICY:

J. Cronin stated that a recent Supreme Court Ruling *Shurtleff v. Boston* in 2022 regarding the City of Boston's denial of an application to fly a flag at Boston City Hall has prompted Holliston to open up discussion regarding a Flag Policy.

Attorney Jay Talerman, Town Counsel began by noting that there needs to be a thought process as to how much concern around possible turmoil flying a flag can create. Such as anything representing racist, explicit and disturbing material. The Select Board can determine if they want to have a full "Public Forum" policy or limit to "Government Speech". Government Speech can espouse the perspective of "this body", the Select Board, who have been elected. J. Cronin asked if a Flag Policy can be building specific, to which J. Talerman replied it can. The Schools would be a separate entity. The Select Board reviewed the MTC drafts of Flag Policies from the Town of Middleton and Burlington. T. Hein noted that it would be appreciated if one of the goals of such a policy would be to ensure a diverse and equitable community, which ties into the Strategic Plan.

At the request of J. Cronin, T. Ahern will work with J. Talerman to draft a Flag Policy using the Middleton Policy as a reference. T. Hein called out a line from the Burlington Flag Policy she would like to see incorporated "Any flag raised on the flagpole or displayed is an expression of the Town's official sentiment(s)".

A draft of the Flag Policy will be on a future agenda for further discussion and a possible vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lori Markoff, 280 Mark Tree, thanked the Select Board for considering the Strategic Plan and the inclusion of diversity within a proposed Flag Policy.

B. Sparrell read the memo for the Marshall Street Recycling Center, which will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00am-3:00pm during the month of December 2023 and

January 2024, expect Sunday December 24, 2023.

B. Sparrell read the memo for the “No On Street Winter Parking Ban” which is in effect through March 31, 2024.

B. Sparrell wished all Happy Holidays.

J. Cronin thanked the DPW for a great job in handling the recent storm clean up.

J. Cronin asked for a moment of silence to remember Jackie Dellicker and Fire Capitan Gallerani who both recently passed away and had served the Town of Holliston for many years.

WARRANTS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$2,176,372.06. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern presented a list of 15 procurements that have been recently closed or will be shortly. All with great results, thanks to the Facilities Manager James Keast for coordinating.

A follow up to engage the MBTA Housing Production Plan is one of the previously mentioned procurements. J.M. Goldman Consultants will be working on the project.

The TIP Grant Application for the proposed traffic signal at Whitney and Washington Street design has been submitted with an inquiry as to if the application can be reviewed in conjunction with the Town of Sherborn’s application for improvements at Route 16 and Route 27, referencing the Route 16 corridor.

The one time Fair Share Appropriation pertaining to the DOT will increase the Chapter 90 Funding by \$275,000, and will be used towards the Woodland Bridge/Dam project.

During the OPEB meeting held prior to the Select Board meeting this evening (December 18, 2023) it was recommended that the FY25 contribution be \$1.25 million.

BOARD BUSINESS:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2023 as written. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve a donation in the amount of \$100 from Edmund Mullin Jr. to the Holliston Senior Center Gift account in memory of Edwina Kirby. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the assignment of the net metering, leasing and pilot agreement from SolSystems LLC to Onyx Renewable Partners LP for the Towns Solar Project located at the capped landfill on Marshall Street, and authorize the Town Administrator along with the assistance of Town Counsel to execute any other nonsubstance changes required to complete the transition T. Hein second and noted that this was previously discussed during a follow up meeting that Beth Greenblatt attended. Vote 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

J. Cronin stated that the Town Administrators evaluation will begin in early 2024.

J. Cronin wished Happy Holidays to all and noted that the Select Board will meet again the first

week in January 2024.

At 8:09pm B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Driscoll

Approved__02-05-24

