

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

January 3, 2024  
7:00PM

Town Hall  
703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Kathleen Buckley, Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director.

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

**UPDATE ON HIGH SCHOOL SOI RESPONSE FROM MSBA:**

J. Cronin began the update by stating that Select Board had voted to approve the request from the Superintendent of Schools to prepare and submit an application for an SOI for the High School in early April 2023 with a 2-1 Vote. On December 13, 2023 the Superintendent received a letter stating that Holliston High School was not invited into the program from the School Building Authority. However the Superintendent spoke with a representative from the School Building Authority and was told that the application was a strong contender and to continue to apply. J. Cronin noted that the Facilities Manager James Keast prepared a 49 page report of the interior and exterior condition of the High School this past summer 2023 and it had been forwarded to be added to the application. The report contained photographs and grading on 5 categories. Both the interior and exterior reports consisted of mostly poor condition. J. Cronin pointed out that this was based on the condition of the facility and not on safety. J. Cronin stated that although he voted against the application in April of 2023 he will endorse the application going forward.

B. Sparrell stated he supports moving forward in the future with the SOI application. He would like to find a way to reach out to the Senior population within the Town and give them insight as to how a new High School building would impact them. B. Sparrell stated that he will contact the Council on Aging and work with them to schedule a forum.

T. Hein noted the importance of the Facility Assessment completed by the Facilities Manager and its importance in the process. J. Cronin added that an update assessment should be done prior to the new application being submitted this spring 2024.

**WARRANTS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$2,328,018.33. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

B. Sparrell stated that the Envisioning Future Holliston Committee held a meeting in December 2023 and 95% of the details are complete. He would like to add a component that speaks to

the maintenance of the goals set in place.

B. Sparrell read the memo for the Marshall Street Recycling Center, which will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00am-3:00pm during the month of January 2024.

B. Sparrell read the memo for the “No On Street Winter Parking Ban”, no vehicle allowed parked on the street from 1:00am – 5:00am, which is in effect until March 31, 2024.

T. Hein stated that she had watched the December 21, 2023 Economic Development Committee Meeting and was very impressed with Melanie Hamblen, the Economic Development Coordinator. M. Hamblen will be reaching out to the business owners in Town looking to set up “Meet and Great” meetings. T. Hein encouraged local business owners to contact M. Hamblen.

T. Hein attended the First Night Walk sponsored by the Friends of Trails Committee and commended them on a wonderful event. There were 4,363 visitors who passed through Blair Square that evening including individuals who were not Holliston residents.

J. Cronin also commented on what a wonderful event First Night Walk was, as he also participated.

J. Cronin acknowledged all those that contributed to the successful transition to the Holbrook Regional Communication Center that took place at the end of December 2023. According to all accounts things went well. Thanks to all the dispatchers for all their work and diligence right up until the transition was complete. A special thanks to Chris Meo, the IT Director. Also thanks to the Town Administrator and both the Police and Fire Chiefs.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

The Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director Kathleen Buckley read a statement from Fire Chief Michael Cassidy in which he thanked all the dedicated Public Safety Telecommunicates who worked right up to and through the transition to the RECC. Best wishes to those who will not remain as Town Employees. Also thanks to all Safety Professionals who are currently adjusting to the change and to IT Director Chris Meo for all his support.

K. Buckley also read a statement from Police Chief Matthew Stone who echoed all the above as stated by Chief Cassidy. Chief Stone noted that this transition has been a collaborative effort and is thankful to all “our partners”, as he looks forward to a long relationship with them.

#### **BOARD BUSINESS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023 and November 20, 2023 as written. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to accept a donation from Robert and Diane Keeley in the amount of \$200 to the Senior Center gift account. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to accept a donation from Dorothy Giebutowski in the amount of \$200 to the Senior Center gift account. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

T. Hein stated that there will be a meeting on Tuesday January 9, 2024 with representatives

from Senate President Karen Spilkas Office pertaining to transportation issues, which include the \$1 million transportation bond bill, Safe Streets for all Task Force and the Metrowest Greenway Coalition to expand the Rail Trail into Sherborn and Framingham.

J. Cronin stated that in October 2023 a Real Estate Broker approached the Town to see if there was any interest in acquiring the property at 799 Washington Street Holliston, previously the site of the Gulf Gas Station. Since then there have been several Executive Sessions held regarding the subject. The Select Board then solicited feedback from the Economic Development Committee. J. Cronin noted that the Town has approximately one month to decide if this is a viable purchase. The topic will be listed on the next Select Board Meeting Agenda, January 8, 2024 and community feedback is most welcome.

B. Sparrell stated that this particular property is an “Anchor Location” for the downtown area and it is important for the Town to look into the possibility of a purchase.

J. Cronin stated that Melanie Hamblen the Economic Development Coordinator will draft a plan.

T. Hein agrees with B. Sparrell in that this property is an “Anchor Location” and to look at this as an opportunity to draw more activity into the Downtown area.

At 7:38pm B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;

Margaret Driscoll

Approved\_\_02-26-24