



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
JANUARY 13, 2020**

Present: Mark Ahronian, Chairman; John Cronin, Vice Chairman; Tina Hein, Clerk

Also Present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

M. Ahronian called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

1.) Warrants: T. Hein made a motion to approve and sign the weekly expense and vendor Warrant (20-29) in the amount of \$2,088,835.46. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: T. Hein offered her congratulations to Dr. Brad Jackson for his selection as superintendent of the year.

She recently met with the Vice Chair of the Ashland Select Board it was a very good and informative discussion. They reviewed the planned upgrades to Rt. 126 that will start in 2021.

T. Hein is planning to attend the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting in Boston starting on Friday, January 24th.

She recently attended a training seminar regarding the "Complete Streets" program. The training included discussions about funding and how the program includes all modes of transportation. The Town of Holliston is about ready to submit a Complete Streets program application.

M. Ahronian said he wanted to recognize that Pat Duffy a strong and very engaged citizen volunteer in Holliston recently passed away. She was a nurse and active in many community organizations. For example, Holliston in Bloom, the church, youth groups, and the Lions Club. She will be missed.

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3. Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said he had a brief report this evening.

The Finance Committee will not be meeting tomorrow evening and have rescheduled their meeting for this Thursday.

The School Strategic Improvements Initiatives meeting will take place on Friday, January 24th start at 4p.m. in the High School Library. This is a good opportunity to hear and understand new programs being proposed for FY21 by School Department personnel.

M. Ahronian asked the Select Board be posted in case there is a quorum present.

4.) Trails Committee – Robert Weidknecht, Drainage Improvements: R. Weidknecht, Chair of the Trails Committee was present and provided a briefing to the Select Board regarding a Mass Trails Grant application they have prepared.

They would like to widen the Trail in the area of “Phipps Hill” and install a twelve (12) inch drainage pipe so that water can flow off the Trail. Leafs fall onto the Trail in this area and creates a hazard. This would allow the DPW to vacuum the leafs up.

J. Cronin asked if the grant would fund the redesign of the area. R. Weidknecht said no it was really only for materials for the installation of about nine hundred (900) feet of pipe. The pipe would work to move the standing water out of that area.

J. Cronin asked if the Trail was treated for the EEE virus. R. Weidknecht said he was not sure but he thought it was done previously.

The grant would fund the pipe, gravel, under drains, crushed stone and stone dust. The compacting would be done by hand with volunteers. The grant is 80% funded by the federal government and 20% by in-kind services.

The total grant is for \$30,000. \$20,000 would come from the federal government and \$10,000 would be donated. No use of Town funds are being considered.

J. Cronin asked about the timeline. R. Weidknecht said the submittal date is February 1st and the award would most likely be this September.

J. Cronin made a motion to authorize R. Weidknecht to submit the \$38,040 Mass Trails Grant application on behalf of the landowner (the Town). Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

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J. Cronin made a motion to allow the Trails Committee to coordinate the work on behalf of the landowner subject to a grant award. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

J. Cronin asked about the area behind Casey's and if R. Weidknecht had any update. R. Weidknecht said he is not on the Blair Square Committee and it would be best to get that information from them. He thought an engineer was working on a drainage plan.

M. Ahronian said he understood a new plan is being developed and asked J. Ritter to invite the Blair Square Committee to provide an update at a future meeting.

5.) Dona Walsh – Animal Control Budget: Dona Walsh, Animal Control Officer (ACO) and Ashland Chief of Police, Vincent Alfano were present.

They explained the Memorandum of Understanding is more than ten (10) years old and needs to be updated. There are new regulations and required training now in place. There have been significant increases in populations to both communities.

Approximately thirty-three (33%) of the calls come from Holliston or about 127 with another 211 calls for service annually.

M. Ahronian asked about the staffing levels. D. Walsh said they now have a part-time person who covers for her on week-end and when she is on vacation.

V. Alfano said the total annual budget is about \$67,000 and there are other operational expenses. The MoU calls for two (2) vehicles one for Holliston and one (1) for Ashland but that does not make operational sense.

M. Ahronian asked if one (1) full-time and one (1) part-time person is sustainable. D. Walsh said right now we work opposite hours so there is complete coverage and the coverage seems to be working.

M. Ahronian asked who is at the kennel. D. Walsh said the operation is essentially a one (1) person department and she spends time at the kennel.

T. Hein asked how long the average service call takes. D. Walsh said that depends it could only be several minutes or several hours.

T. Hein said in reference to items 1F, 1I and 1J in the operational plan which addresses records being kept, impounded dogs and public education. D. Walsh said they do not do public

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education and ask residents to reach out to a veterinarian or a doctor. The ACO does not provide advice to residents.

T. Hein asked that the Holliston by-law be reviewed and that there is proper reporting procedures in place. J. Cronin said the ACO should work closely with the Holliston Police Chief and dispatchers like it is structure in Ashland. That should be included in any updated MoU.

V. Alfano reviewed the budge and said Ashland does not expect Holliston to purchase their own vehicle but should be prepared to underwrite expenses.

J. Cronin asked about the kennel fees and if a Holliston dog is in the kennel how much that would be and where the money for those fees go.

D. Walsh said there is a \$40.00 per day fee which goes into the Ashland general fund and is used to offset expenses for the ACO. About 30% of the budget comes from Holliston.

V. Alfano said the ACO function is not what it was ten (10) years ago. Much more training and regulations are now in place.

M. Ahronian said there is no reason why Holliston can't provide more funding to support the vehicle.

J. Cronin said we need to move quickly on this.

7.) Board Business

Financial Policy: J. Cronin made a motion to adopt the Financial Policy as approved by the Finance Committee. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

6.) Chief Cassidy – Disaster Planning and Washington Street Corridor: Fire Chief Michael Cassidy was present. M. Cassidy said MEMA Recommends that each community have a debris management plan. Depending on the type of debris specific locations are identified. The debris management plan is part of the overall emergency management plan. Vendors are pre-selected again depending on the type of debris. He feels confident that Holliston is prepared and ready.

T. Hein asked if bulk pick-up of items is part of the plan such as old rugs. M. Cassidy said they work closely with the hauler and extra resources are added as needed.

J. Cronin asked where the money would come from in the event of a major disaster. M. Cassidy said the Select Board can declare a state of emergency. J. Cronin said he would like to see some of the marijuana revenues go into a fund to pay for any large scale emergency.

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J. Cronin said there are many different types of disaster and it would be interesting to learn what other towns are doing to pay for these disasters. Do we ever collect funds from a third party? M. Cassidy said yes and this has been done several times. This is pursuant to 21E but it depends who the responsible party is.

T. Hein asked about the Response and Recovery revolving fund and how much is in the fund now. M. Cassidy said around \$100,000.

Regarding the Washington Street Corridor, M. Cassidy said emergency notification equipment have been installed on all seven (7) lights and emergency vehicles in the Fire Department and it is working well. They are now working with the Police Department.

J. Cronin said now the entire Washington Street corridor has this emergency notification system on the traffic lights. M. Cassidy said yes it is now faster and safer for the public and emergency responders.

J. Cronin asked about the status of the call boxes on town buildings. M. Cassidy they are nearly sixty (60%) percent complete with that project but several buildings still need work.

T. Hein said regarding the earmark, will Hopping Brook be covered. M. Cassidy said yes and the company is working to install repeater equipment on the water tanks which should significantly improve communication.

M. Cassidy reminded residents when it snows to clear snow from around the hydrants.

Finance Director Position: J. Cronin said as a follow up on the December 10th discussion team meeting we are close to reaching an agreement on the position of the Chief Financial Officer regarding the job description for the position and should have more to report at the end of the month. The position would oversee the Treasurer/Collector and the Town Accountant.

T. Hein asked about a long term investment policy. J. Cronin said the Chief Financial Officer would develop a plan and report to the Town Administrator. He will report back in two (2) weeks.

Economic Development Committee Budget: Peter Barbieri, Chair of the Economic Development Committee was present and said the only difference was a small increase in the salary for the Economic Director position. J. Cronin made a motion to approve and send to the Finance Committee the Economic Development Committee FY21 budget. Second, T. Hein.
Voted 3-0

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Economic Development Committee Appointment: J. Cronin made a motion to appoint Glenn Brown to the Economic Development Committee with a term to expire on June 30, 2022. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Legislation: P. Barbieri said he is working with State Representative Carolyn Dykema's Office and Legislative Counsel to resolve the differences between what was approved at a Town Meeting and what Legislative Counsel would like to see in the business grant legislation. He will keep the Select Board informed.

FY21 Project Needs List: The Select Board reviewed a project list to be sent to State Representative Carolyn Dykema and State Senator Karen Spilka. The recommendations were prepared by various Department Heads. J. Cronin made a motion to approve and submit the list to Holliston's representative in the State Legislature. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Facilities Manager/Sustainability Coordinator Position: J. Ritter reminded the Select Board they are meeting with five (5) candidates this Thursday evening. M. Ahronian suggested the Select Board narrow the field down to the top two (2) candidates for a second interview.

J. Cronin said the Select Board should consider a similar path for the Sustainability Coordinator position. J. Ritter said those interviews are scheduled for this Wednesday at 6p.m.

FY21 Budget Review – Liability Insurance, Celebrations: J. Cronin made a motion to approve and submit to the Finance Committee the Celebrations budget in the amount of \$2,000 a level funded budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and submit to the Finance Committee the Insurance Liability budget in the amount of \$275,572 a level funded budget. Second, T. Hein. Vote 3-0

Eversource Interconnection Agreement: J. Cronin noted that he asked Beth Greenblatt for a list of milestones and a path forward for the project. J. Cronin made a motion to approve and sign an application for Sol Systems who is working to develop a solar field at the former landfill off Marshall Street to submit to Eversource for connection to the grid. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

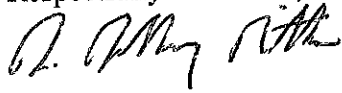
Snow & Ice Budget – Vote to Overspend: J. Cronin made a motion to over spend the snow and ice appropriation for FY20. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

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8.) Other Business: T. Hein said regarding the ACO position she reviewed the MoU. She said it was important to have monthly and quarterly reporting and a call log. Reporting is really important.

Adjourn: T. Hein made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43p.m. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jeff Ritter", written in a cursive style.

J. Jeff Ritter
Town Administrator