

## **TOWN OF HOLLISTON**

### **SELECT BOARD**

June 22, 2020

Town Hall

7:00 P.M.

703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator; Stacey Raffi, School Committee Chair; Senator Karen Spilka; Carolyn Dykema, State Representative. Mary Bousquet, Town Treasurer; Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant. Travis Ahern, the newly appointed Town Administrator.

**At 7:00pm M. Ahronian called the meeting to order.**

M. Ahronina introduced Senator Karen Spilka and State Representative Carolyn Dykema and welcomed them to the meeting. Senator Spilka thanked Mr. Ahronian and all the Board members for all their efforts as well as Stacey Raffi, and all School Committee members, Scott Moles, Board of Health, both Fire and Police Chiefs especially during these past few months. She went on explain that the State budget is currently in two-fold crisis brought on by public health needs due to Covid19 and revenue that is at a standstill. The State legislature passed a 1/12 budget of \$5.25 Billion which is to aid towns. She encouraged the Town to write to the Federal delegation outlining the need for more funding as it may arise. Senator Splika recognized Select Board member Tina Hein for her work on transportation safety in Town. She went on to say there are several bills currently being looked at: EEE funding, racial justice, lower prescription drug costs, mental health care along with tele-medicine. She also will continue working on improving the Metrowest commute into Boston.

Representative Carolyn Dykema also expressed her gratitude to everyone in a leadership role in these unprecedented times for making Holliston as safe as possible. The tremendous amount of work and effort to transition to home schooling and all the IT components. When asked about budget concerns she stated they would not expect to have an idea what that would be until mid-summer. There are two matching grant programs regarding IT (school technology and town government needs) being considered to help support and keep programs in place for those needed at this time. With the EEE Bill pending she has concerns regarding the need for public health safety along with environmental issues. Representative Dykema addressed what she perceives as long standing issues around mental health within the communities.

Both Senator Splika and Representative Dykema wished both Jeff Ritter the Town Administrator and Brad Jackson the School Superintendent best of luck on the the next phases of their lives.

School Committee chair Stacey Raffi thanked the Senator and State Representative for their continued support. School sub-committee members Anne Louis Hanstad and Lisa Kocian had several questions. There will be a streamlined FY21 State budget process, still awaiting guidelines to plan the School budget. Ms. Hanstad asked for more details on the matching IT grant. Representative Dykema explained that the bill has not passed as of yet and if it does it may be used to offset the CARES Act funding. There was discussion regarding transportation once schools open and what that will look like, what the additional costs might be. At this point nothing has been outlined. Ms. Kocian inquired about the best way to advocate for Holliston's financial needs. Both Senator Spilka and Representative Dykema advised to advocate at the federal level as well as state level by putting requests in writing and obtaining as many signatures as possible. After more discussion the Senator stated that she will forward samples of letters/requests to the Select Board and the School Committee.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

T. Hein stated that the Holliston Household Hazardous Waste Disposal day will be held on Saturday, July 11, 2020 from 9:00am till noon at the Adams Middle School.

J. Cronin welcomed Holliston's Fire Department new Engine #1, he also thanked the Fire Department and the Police Department for overseeing the Diverse Holliston walk and insuring the safety of all who attended.

M. Arhonian thanked everyone for their support and hard work during his time on the Select Board.

S. Raffi thanked Mr. Ahronian for his graceful leadership.

#### **COVID-19 UPDATE:**

Chief Cassidy informed the Board that the COVID case count remains at 56 (51 recovered, 2 fatalities and 3 active cases). The \$1.3 Million CARES Act funding has been deposited into the Holliston bank account. The Chief stated that he has received the guidance on how to proceed with distributing the funds. There is a spreadsheet which outlines A. what has already incurred B. anticipated expenses C. anticipated future needs. A.L. Hanstad asked that the Chief forward the procedural memo to her. Following the Chief's update, the Board approved the following motions; J. Cronin made a motion to direct the Town's Emergency Management Director to provide the Board with weekly updates for the Board's consideration to review and approve requests through the CARES Act. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0. J. Cronin made a motion to direct the Town Accountant to set up the necessary accounts needed. Seconded by T. Hein. Vote 3-0

#### **WARRANTS:**

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Warrants totaling \$712,008.22. Second by J. Cronin. Vote 3-0.

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

J. Ritter updated with the following: Pinecrest doors and painting are nearly complete; 260 Woodland Street Cleanup will be completed by next Thursday; the safety barriers at Town Hall should be installed by June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020; there is a meeting with the Planning Board on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 regarding the Lowland Industrial Park truck routes. Mr. Ritter concluded by thanking Dr. Jackson for being a great partner over the years and also thanked Mr. Ahronian for his guidance.

At 8:30pm the Board took a brief recess.

At 8:35pm the Board resumed the meeting

### **WATER RATE STUDY:**

Sean Reese, DPW Director was in attendance to update the Board on water-related topics. He stated that the water rate study will be completed as of this Wednesday and asked if he could be placed on next Mondays meeting agenda with the results. J. Cronin asked that S. Reese please post whatever information he can regarding the study on the Towns website. There was then discussion regarding the Water Treatment Plant project. It is currently six months behind schedule. Mr. Reese reviewed the updated project timeline, which will be posted on the website. The design is 60% complete currently, will be 100% complete October 2020. Still need to proceed with Building Department, Board of Health, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and the EPA. Will also need to dig two test pits for the septic system. Bidding phase will begin November 2020 till February 2021. The latest possible completion date is the Summer of 2022.

### **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:**

Chief Cassidy reported his findings from researching other Town Meetings. Some have already taken place, most are being held at schools. Hopkinton has postponed their meeting till September. Holliston has several options available: hold at the high school with seating changes; Miller School cafeteria, as well as outdoor areas within Town. All of which will allow for the 100 person quorum. Once a location is selected the Chief will communicate the protocol.

### **TOWN MEETING WARRANT & SCHOOL COMMITTEE CAPITAL REQUESTS:**

S. Raffi School Committee Chair asked for a one week extension to present its Capital request. J. Ritter stated he would put it on the next weeks agenda. The Board continued to review and edit articles on the Town Meeting Warrant. J. Ritter will include changes to Article #5 provided by M. Bousquet. Article #13 CPC appropriation amount has been corrected to \$661,000. Discussion on Article #16 & #22, J. Ritter explained both pertain to road acceptances. Article #22 had been previously brought before the Board but never voted on. M. Arhonian suggested verifying with the Planning Board and vote on it at the next weeks meeting.

T. Hein asked if Article #26 could be removed from the Warrant. J. Cronin asked J. Ritter to verify with Town Counsel to obtain the answer. J. Cronin questioned the necessity of keeping the line item for Waste Water Treatment & Repair within Article #14. J. Ritter suggested some funds remain in that line item. He will go over figures with the Facility Manager and get back to the Board per J. Cronin suggestion. J. Cronin made a motion to approve all changes/edits as discussed. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0.

Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant was present to update the Board on year-end transfers. She explained that these are fund transfers within departments. There were twelve line item transfers within eleven different departments in the amount of \$150,356. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the line item transfers referenced by S. Emerick. Second by T. Hein. Vote 3-0.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

J. Cronin made a motion to appoint Tina Hein as Holliston's representative to the MetroWest Regional Collaborative. Second by M. Ahronian. Vote 3-0.

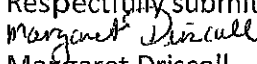
T. Hein made a motion to approve Select Board weekly meetings to be held on Mondays through the end of December 2020. J. Cronin second with the modification of adjusting for Board members vacations. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the two year lease for the Veterans Services at 1750 Washington Street starting September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2022. Second by J. Cronin. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to direct Mr. Ritter to draft an advocacy letter from the Select Board to the U.S. Representative Clark. Second T. Hein. Vote 3-0.

Mr. Cronin thanked the chairman Mr. Ahronian for all the hard work and commitment he had during the years he served on the Board. Mr. Ahronian thanked Mr. Cronin and Ms. Hein for all their help over the years and wished the newest Board member the best of luck in his upcoming term.

At 9:48 M. Ahronian made a motion to adjourn. Second by J. Cronin. 3-0.

Respectfully submitted  
  
 Margaret Driscoll

Approved 8/10/20