



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
JANUARY 27, 2020**

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

Also Present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

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

1.) Warrants: T. Hein made a motion to approve and sign the weekly expense and vendor Warrant (20-31) in the amount of \$1,607,945.97. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: T. Hein said she recently attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting in Boston and it was very informative and a good networking opportunity.

T. Hein thanked J. Ritter and S. Reese for their work on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant and the Complete Streets Grant program.

She recently had the opportunity to talk with Framingham officials about the feasibility of expanding the rail trail network to link the two (2) communities.

T. Hein presented a brief PowerPoint showing trends and the savings to date as a result of the new solid waste and recycling program. As of December 31, 2019 Holliston has saved about \$21,000 due to the reduction in trash taken to Wheelabrator.

J. Cronin reported that he recently met with Police Chief Stone regarding his proposed FY21 budget and the Board will review his budget in a couple of weeks.

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He also met with Sean Reese, DPW Director, he reviewed the DPW facility, sidewalks, and water line projects.

M. Ahronian reminded the public about the upcoming "Souper bowl" to be held on Saturday, February 1st. This is a very good fundraiser which benefits the food pantry. He will not be able to attend due to a retirement party for his wife.

3.) Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said regarding the 9 Green Street Committee, there will be a \$13,500 Reserve Fund Transfer request next week on the Select Board's Agenda. This will be to fund the services of a Local Site Profession to complete an environmental assessment on the property.

He and Special Labor Counsel will be meeting with the DPW union tomorrow morning at 10a.m.

This afternoon he and several staff met with the new Facilities Manager and reviewed several items to prepare for his start date.

J. Ritter said he had received phone calls from residents who said electricity providers were encouraging them to switch from Eversource. This is a scam and residents should remain with the aggregation program.

Town Counsel will hold office hours Wednesday morning at 10a.m. and there will be a meeting regarding the solar field project this Thursday at 3p.m. with the project consultant.

4.) Budgets – Treasurer/Collector, Town Accountant, and Auxiliary Police:

Treasurer/Collector Budget: Mary Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector was present and reviewed the proposed FY21 budget. The budget guideline number is \$393,827 and the proposed budget is \$393,827 which is on guideline.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and send to the Finance Committee the proposed FY21 budget for the Treasurer/Collector. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Debt Budget: M. Bousquet presented the **FY21 Debt budget** in the amount of \$3,054,618. The guideline number is \$3,058,618. J. Cronin noted this is a reduction from last year's appropriation of \$5,298,869. M. Bousquet said several debt items will be paid off during the new fiscal year and there might be ore in FY22.

She noted that the Town is working toward being designated as an AAA community and there will be a call in about a week with the rating agencies.

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J. Cronin provided an update to the Board, she had asked J. Ritter to insert a place holder in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for a stabilization to be created for the use of marijuana revenues and a separate article to help fund the retirement liability similar to what the Town is doing with the OPEB fund.

M. Ahronian asked for M. Bousquet to explain long term debt. M. Bousquet reviewed in detail the long term debt schedule. M. Ahronian said the renovations at the High School started in 1990.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the FY21 Debt budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0.

Town Accountant Budget: Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant was present and review the FY21 budget for her department. The guideline number is \$179,476 the FY21 budget request is \$175,104 or a \$4,372 reduction. J. Cronin made a motion to approve and refer to the Finance Committee the FY21 Town Accountant budget in the amount of \$175,104. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Auxiliary Police Budget: Lieutenant, George Leurini was present and provided an overview of the FY21 Auxiliary Police budget. The current FY20 budget is \$13,764.42 the proposed FY21 budget is \$13,902.06 or a .01 increase.

There are twenty-seven (27) auxiliary police officers with three (3) recent hires. The division is viewed as a stepping stone to becoming a full time officer. There is a small increase in the professional development line item for training of the new officers.

J. Cronin asked about the number of volunteers. G. Leurini said there are currently sixteen (16).

T. Hein asked if the professional development line is used for training. G. Leurini said yes.

M. Ahronian thanked all the volunteers for all they do.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the proposed FY21 Auxiliary Police budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0.

Select Board Budget: A small correction was made to Donna Muzzy's salary and added longevity and increase the line item for legal services for a total budget of \$317,372. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

5.) Sustainability Committee: Michael Lavin, Chair of the Sustainability Committee and Matt Zettek, Sustainability Coordinator for the Town were present.

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M. Lavin said they looking at establishing a textile recycling program. The estimate is about ten (10) pounds per household which would generate a small revenue stream. They are also looking at metal and the recycling center collection.

For the textile program they are thinking about using Black Earth as a vendor. They are already in town and this would be an opportunity to reduce curbside costs for collection.

M. Ahronian said the barrels appear to be working well. M. Lavin agreed but the recycling market needs to be watched closely.

M. Zetteck said he is impressed with the Committee and is here to provide assistance. With the introduction of the new carts trash is not blowing around as much.

J. Cronin said he was impressed with the cost savings to date. The Marshall Street facility is working well and we should consider expanding the hours of operation.

M. Lavin said they are looking for the next best opportunity for the facility. T. Hein said she would like to learn more about how the recycling center facility operates.

J. Cronin said the agreement with Black Earth was sent to Town Counsel and the attorneys could not work out their differences so the project was placed on hold.

M. Lavin said he thought there was a problem the exclusivity clause and they only provide curbside collection and may not be able to collect at the recycling center.

J. Cronin said it would be a good idea to issue a bid and test the market. M. Lavin noted this service is exempt from 30B.

T. Hein said if we were to use Black Earth there would a cost savings for the Town. M. Zetteck said you could explore the feasibility of expanding the Harvey contract to see if they could provide this service.

T. Hein asked for an update in six (6) months.

6.) Board Business

Performance Evaluation: J. Cronin reviewed the performance evaluation process and reminded the Board to submit comments to the Town Clerk and then the Chair will review with J. Ritter.

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Finance Director Position: J. Cronin said he is working on the job description. The Board voted in early December to move in this direction. A working group was established and a survey was completed of area towns. The position could also assume some human resources functions.

This would be an executive level position. T. Hein read the draft job description.

M. Ahronian asked about the salary level and qualifications. J. Cronin said in the range of \$90,000 to \$124,000 based on what surrounding communities are paying.

T. Hein asked about how the Towns were selected. J. Cronin said J. Ritter used the same towns that were used for the managerial comparison. Most communities the size of Holliston have a Chief Financial Officer.

T. Hein said the person could also serve as an assistant Town Administrator. We should review the by-laws. I envision that this person would look at long term investment policy, J. Cronin said also the capital improvement plan.

T. Hein said she learned the school budget might also include a human resources function.

J. Cronin said there would be regular updates with the Treasurer/Collector regarding payroll as one (1) example. He will provide another update in two (2) weeks.

7.) Any Other Business: T. Hein one (1) thing she learned at the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting is that most Select Board hold their executive session at the end of their meeting.

T. Hein asked about a Tri-Board meeting with the Finance Committee and the Select Board and the School Department's Statement of Interest (SoI). We need to discuss priorities and wait for the Treasurer/Collector spreadsheet. This could happen on a Saturday afternoon. We should wait until after February 5th when the rating is completed then have the Tri-Board meeting.

T. Hein said regarding the Annual Town Meeting Warrant there should be two (2) articles included in the Warrant. One (1) to address Holliston's contribution to the Middlesex Retirement System and a second to create a stabilization account for the Host Community Agreement (HCA) revenues.

J. Cronin agreed, the rating agencies would like to see this happen. Now the HCA revenues go into the general fund and the revenues should go into a dedicated fund and should be used for public safety. There needs to be more accountability.

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T. Hein said this would support police, fire and Youth and Family Services.

J. Cronin said it would be structured like the OPEB Trust Fund. We need to set aside like \$50,000 annually.

J. Cronin said he would like to hear from the Board of Library Trustees and the results of their study and how that relates to the TD Bank building.

T. Hein said she would like to a traffic safety article for Annual Town Meeting.

Adjourn: J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20p.m. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jeffrey Ritter".

J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator