

# **TOWN OF HOLLISTON**

## **SELECT BOARD**

December 21, 2020

Town Hall

6:30 P.M.

703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Michael Cassidy, Fire Chief; Linda Marshall, Senior Center Director, (remotely); Kenneth Onofrey, Business owner (remotely).

### **COVID 19 UPDATE:**

Chief Cassidy presented an update of the current status of Covid-19 cases which included graphs. There are 343 total cases, 273 recovered, 7 fatalities, 62 active cases spread throughout 48 addresses in Town. Holliston continues to remain in the Yellow status, however many surrounding towns are Red. The Chief shared illustrations of the Social Media messaging that will continue to be posted in an effort to keep the residents aware of safely measures recommended throughout the holiday season. He also presented a graphic outlining the 3 phases in which individuals may receive the vaccine. When asked if Holliston plans to hold a clinic to distribute the vaccines the Chief responded that Holliston would not meet the requirements. The plan to roll out the vaccine is continuing to evolve and it appears that the clinics will be set up regionally due to the storage requirements. In conclusion the Chief reminded people to continue to wear masks, wash hands and maintain social distance.

### **CARES ACT PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE:**

The Chief had intended to have an end of year update on the CARE's Act spending, however it appears that more government aid may extended so he will return to the Board next week. He did have 2 requests to be considered, both have been requested by the Facilities Manager.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve 10 air purifiers in the amount of \$2,710 to be used in municipal offices. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve \$600 for a program for air filtration for air handlers within the Town Hall and Senior Center. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

### **WARRANTS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Weekly Warrant in the amount of \$2,277,263.45. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

B. Sparrell wished residents a Happy Holiday and asked that they continue to stay safe.

T. Hein stated that she had attended a recent Finance Committee meeting remotely and is looking forward to the upcoming budget process. She would like to see more tax dollars be spent on Town operations. T. Hein also noted that she had received numerous complaints from residents regarding the snow removal during the most recent storm.

J. Cronin added that he too was disappointed in the job done by the DPW and that it fell below expectations. He noted that staffing is currently an issue, however it would be helpful to have a working management plan in place. T. Ahern will meet with the DPW director to address the issues and update the Board. T. Hein suggested looking to see if training is available to plow drivers as part of a plan.

J. Cronin relayed his sadness in hearing of a tragic passing of a young man who was a Holliston resident. He asked that people try to find help for those we see struggling. This would be a way to honor his memory. T. Hein stated #MoreToTheStory, which was mentioned by Senator Spilka at a recent Board Meeting may be a helpful resource.

J. Cronin went on to thank the Holliston Lions for all their efforts in delivering holiday gifts to seniors, as well as the Holliston Police Department in conjunction with Ashland Police Department who sponsor "Fill-a-Cruiser" to support Toys for Tots.

Linda Marshall, Senior Center Director reported that over 250 isolated seniors will receive gifts over the next week. Many thanks go to Girl Scout troop 75346 for organizing the gift drive. She also pointed out that the Holliston VFW delivers meals to 40-45 seniors one Sunday a month. Andres Vargas a resident called into the meeting and thanked the Board for their response to the negative feedback regarding the snow removal last week. He added that he thought that the private plows were counterproductive to what the Town plows were attempting to accomplish by inadvertently piling snow onto roadways.

## **COMMENTS FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:**

T. Ahern stated that on Friday December 18, 2020 the Board signed a contract for the DPW to get through this fiscal year FY21, ending June 30, 2021.

T. Ahern noted that only one quote for the design and engineering was received from PARE for 9 Green Street. He is looking to the Board for their feedback. B. Sparrell commented that he would like to see the project move forward. T. Hein will forward her question regarding the project after consulting her notes from a previous meeting.

The schedule for Town Meetings will be as follows barring any State of Emergency. Monday May 10, 2021. Monday October 25, 2021 and Town Election Tuesday May 25, 2021. All are scheduled to be held at the High School Auditorium.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the dates of Monday May 10, 2021 and Monday October 25, 2021 for Town Meetings. Also Town Election to be held on Tuesday May 25, 2021. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

## **FY22 BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

T. Ahern has asked all Department Heads to prepare a “level service” FY22 budget. This is not a 0% increase budget however, as costs for the same services can increase with time. He is looking for all departments to eventually have a 5 year capital plan.

At 7:30PM the Board decided to hold the FY22 discussion to open the Public Hearing for Alcohol Enthusiast.

## **7:30 PM HEARING FOR THE ALCOHOL ENTHUSIAST FOR CHANGE OF LICENSE:**

B. Sparrell read the notice to open the Public Hearing, then made the motion to open. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

T. Ahern explained that the owner of the Alcohol Enthusiast d/b/a Crafted was looking to change his current license from Wine and Malt to an All Alcohol Package Store. K. Onofrey joined the meeting remotely to state that the hours of operation will not change. Andres Vargas who is a direct abutter of the store called in to voice several concerns. He started by stating that he and K. Onofrey have spoken on many occasions and that he has nothing but respect for him as a business owner. He is however concerned with the additional volume of customers and what that means for vehicle activity and the issues with traffic going the wrong way on Curve Street which is one way. He is also concerned with the lights in the parking lot that shine directly into his home. He also expressed his concerns over the landlord's lack of snow removal which is blocking the access of pedestrians which now are walking on the street causing a safety hazard. K. Onofrey responded by stating that the expectation is to offer more product for the volume of customers that currently frequent the store, and even though he owns the business the other concerns that A. Vargas voiced need to be addressed by the landlord. After some discussion it was noted that the Board's responsibility is to make sure the business owner does not violate any laws, (ie. Selling to minors and or intoxicated individuals) which K. Onofrey has not. The Building Department would need to address other issues mentioned such as lighting and snow removal. T. Hein suggested A. Vargas submit a petition to the TAC for his concerns regarding the one-way traffic issue.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the change of license for the Alcohol Enthusiast d/b/a Crafted from Wine and Malt to All Alcohol Package Store. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

At 8:05 PM B. Sparrell made a motion to close the Public Hearing. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

## **FY22 BUDGET DISCUSSION CON'T:**

Discussion continued regarding the FY22 budget. B. Sparrell opened conversation around Free Cash and the Stabilization Fund. How should the Town be approaching estimating revenue, and how to best use such funds. Also look to review guidelines for non-union employees salaries in an effort to fairly compensate and retain the best staff available. J. Cronin would like to look at a master plan as well as a strategic plan. T. Ahern added that a 5 year capital improvement plan

is essential and will look to develop a 3 year budget to revenue projection. Also the available revenue should be maximized and optimized in the annual budget. The Board and T. Ahern look forward to working with the Finance Committee on the process.

**BOARD BUSINESS:**

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve a gift of \$1,000 from Wolf & Co. to Youth & Family Services. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the ABCC Seasonal Population Increase Estimation dated July 10, 2020 showing Holliston has 15,189 residents. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

T. Hein made a motion to approve Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2020. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

T. Ahern presented a revised agreement with Town Counsel which would include a flat fee of \$5,000 per month for litigation purpose.

T. Hein made a motion to approve a revised agreement with Town Counsel to include a flat fee of \$5,000 per month as described by T. Ahern for litigation. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

The DPW is looking to install signs at various locations throughout Town to indicate the streets that will now be 25mph. The locations are to be determined by the Police Chief.

T. Hein approved the installation of 25mph signs by the DPW at locations to be determined. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

Chief Cassidy presented a certificate of authorization to the Board requesting the Chair be allowed to approve the replacement of 24 existing storage tanks at a local business.

B. Sparrell made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the documentation presented by the Fire Chief to allow a local business to replace 24 storage tanks. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

At 8:52PM B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0. The Board wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Respectfully submitted;

Margaret M. Driscoll

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

