

## **TOWN OF HOLLISTON**

### **SELECT BOARD**

November 22, 2021  
7:00PM

Town Hall  
703 Washington Street

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

**Also Present:** Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Michael Cassidy, Fire Chief; Kathryn Peirce, Principal Assessor; Jeffrey Marshall, Mary Greendale, Peter Barbieri, Board of Assessors; Karla Alfred, Library Trustee Chair, Gwenyth Swain, new member of the Library Trustees.

At 7:03pm T. Hein called the meeting to order.

#### **COVID-19 / ARPA UPDATE:**

Chief Cassidy joined the meeting with a Covid-19 update. There are currently 20 active cases. The total number of cases stands at 1,015, with a 2.34% positivity rating. Holliston now has 95% of its resident's partially vaccinated and 82% fully vaccinated. As always the Chief continued to encourage residents to get vaccinated and all those eligible to receive the booster to do so. J. Cronin asked the Chief if he had any information regarding the new medication in conjunction with Covid-19 treatment. The Chief stated that this particular medication is similar to Tamiflu and would be taken to mitigate symptoms, not prevention, and is months away from being available.

The ARPA Steering Group will meet on Wednesday December 1, 2021. T. Ahern presented the agenda for the meeting which included several requests from the Council on Aging, Historical Society, and the Economic Development Committee. The ARPA request forms are located on the Town's website.

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

The Tree Lighting will be held on Saturday November 27, 2021 at 3:45pm in Blair Square. On Monday November 29, 2021 at 6:00pm the Menorah will be lit in front of Town Hall. Also on Monday November 29, 2021 at 6:15pm the Humanitarian Awards will be presented in the Upper Town Hall. Each of the Select Board members have selected a recipient. On Monday December 6, 2021 Stantec will present the final Water Study report as well as the final report on the Sidewalk Study. T. Ahern stated that the fencing project behind Casey's Crossing has been completed in response to an inquiry from T. Hein.

#### **WARRANTS:**

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$1,748,216.94.

B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

J. Cronin asked residents to stay vigilant and stay safe, Happy Thanksgiving.

B. Sparrell also wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

T. Hein asked Chief Cassidy to speak to the house fire that occurred earlier in the morning on Washington Street.

Chief Cassidy stated that all residents had been safely evacuated. Several family members were transported to the hospital and released. The house itself was a total loss. At this point the fire is not considered to be of a suspicious nature. Medway and Hopkinton Fire Departments both assisted. A Go Fund Me page has been started by members of the community to aid the family. The Chief also expressed his gratitude to those in the community that helped in various ways throughout the day, such as Basils and the Friends of the Holliston Fire Department.

T. Hein noted that the fact that everyone remained relatively safe speaks volume to the training of the individuals responding to fire.

**BOARD BUSINESS:**

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 25, 2021. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to accept the Chapter 90 reimbursement in the amount of \$595,079.10 for the Mudville drainage and resurfacing project. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

At 7:27pm the Board took a 3 minute recess.

**TAX RATE HEARING FY22:**

At 7:30pm J. Cronin read the "Notice of Hearing" to open the FY22 Tax Rate Hearing.

At 7:32pm J. Cronin made a motion to open the FY22 Tax Rate Hearing. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

K. Peirce the Principal Assessor explained that the tax rate is established based on FY22 values and the overall levy. She and the Board of Assessors also look at the options of a split tax rate as well as the various exemptions available. K. Peirce went over each option and exemption and noted the pros and cons. It was determined that a single tax rate of \$17.38 would be applied to the full and fair value of all properties in all classes to determine the taxes due.

After some discussion it was also determined that none of exemptions available would benefit the Town of Holliston.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the FY22 single tax rate of \$17.38. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion not to adopt the Open Space Exemption. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion not to adopt a Split Tax Rate. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion not to adopt the Residential Exemption. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion not to adopt the Small Commercial Exemption. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Excess Levy Capacity in the amount of \$321,236.00. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

J. Cronin stated on a personal note that K. Peirce will be retiring this May 2022 and had nothing but high praise for all her hard work over the years. He also thanked P. Barbieri, whose term on the Board of Assessors will expire in May 2022 for all his years of dedication to the Town.

At 8:08pm J. Cronin made a motion to close the FY22 Tax Rate Hearing. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

#### **BOARD BUSINESS CONT'D:**

Karla Alfred, the Library Trustee Chair introduced Gwentyth Swain whom will be taking the seat on the Board that Bob Malone has vacated. G. Swain was selected due to her experience.

J. Cronin made a motion to appoint Gwentyth Swain to the vacant seat on the Board of Library Trustees with a term to expire May 2022. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

T. Ahern added that there is plenty of opportunity to volunteer within the Town for those whom may be interested.

#### **9 GREEN STREET TRAFFIC STUDY:**

T. Ahern stated that the updates for the various ongoing projects in Town, (Water, Mudville area and 9 Green Street) can be accessed on the Towns website.

Pare Corp, the original consultant for 9 Green Street brought in Costello Company to facilitate the demolition.

The RRP (Request for Proposal) for the construction will be the next step. An Invitation for bid will be going out shortly.

A RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for the upcoming project, renovation at Goodwill Park will also be going out in the near future. This is related to the \$100,000 which has been earmarked in the FY22 budget.

There was discussion among the Select Board regarding the impact on traffic in the area once the projects are completed. The Board will include the owners as well as welcome input from local businesses as to the best way to handle any traffic issues which may be a result of the changes. The Board will also invite PARE Corp to attend a meeting as the conversations regarding the site evolve. J. Cronin noted the importance of the Town being in compliance with the DEP around the groundwater.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

B. Sparrell encouraged all residents to take the time to complete the survey which is online to assist Envisioning Future Holliston. Currently there have been 105 participants.

J. Cronin read the Fall Curbside Leave Pickup memo for the week of November 29, 2021 and the Winter No On-Street Parking Ban memo which has been in effect since November 1, 2021. Each Select Board member wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

At 8:32pm J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn. B. Sparrell second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;

Margaret Driscoll

Approved \_12/20/21

