



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
MARCH 11, 2019**

Present: Jay Marsden, Chairman; Mark Ahronian, Vice Chairman; John Cronin, Clerk

Also present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

At 7:00p.m. Chairman J. Marsden called the meeting to order.

1.) Warrant: J. Cronin read the Warrant and made a motion to approve the weekly vendor (expense) and payroll Warrant (19-37) in the amount of \$1,531,663.46. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: J. Cronin recognized Fire Chief Michael Cassidy for series of speaking engagements at the following events and locations:

Lead Kids, March 16th Shrewsbury, MA

Fireside, March 27th Alton, New Hampshire

Conference of the Rockies, April 24th Estes Park, Colorado

Pitching the Message of Fire Safety, May 3 Montour Falls, New York

All Hazards Preparedness Conference, June 18th Marlboro, MA

The Fire Chief is very active and a credit to Holliston.

M. Ahronian agreed that the Fire Chief is an exceptional employee. He also noted that Mary Bousquet, the Town's Treasurer/Collector, who was present, is also an exceptional employee.

J. Marsden announced the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast scheduled for this Saturday at the Senior Center has been cancelled.

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3.) Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said the 9 Green Street Committee notice of vacancies and Committee Profile/Charge has been advertised.

The Affordable Housing Committee Profile/Charge has been prepared and is on the Agenda this evening for the Board to review.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant, a date needs to be set to meet with the Finance Committee to review the Warrant.

A letter has been prepared to go to Congresswoman Katherine Clark regarding two (2) important projects. First, is the replacement of the water infrastructure. Second, a new DPW facility.

He is working with the Fire Chief to get town staff trained with the use of CPR. That should be completed by the end of June.

There was a Department Heads Meeting last Thursday with fourteen (14) attending.

The next Green Communities grant application will be on the Board's Agenda for next Monday. This will be a \$249,000 application for work to be done at the schools, 1750 Washington Street and Town Hall.

There will be a public discussion about the proposed solar field at the former landfill site as part of the Board's regular agenda on Monday, March 25th. Notice will be sent to abutters.

Contract documents will be ready for the \$1.0 million water replacement project in Mudville next Monday.

There is one (1) more performance evaluation to be completed and that is for the Youth and Family Services Director.

The School Safety Zone improvements will be rolled out once the weather breaks.

The Library ceiling project schedule has been posted to the Town's web site. The project was far more extensive than first thought. The projected completion date is June.

The windows and doors replacement bids for the Senior Center will be opened this Thursday morning at 10a.m.

Finally, there will be a regional selectmen's meeting this Thursday in Medway.

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4.) Annual Town Meeting – Petition Article – Sustainability Coordinator: Joan Levinsohn, 66 Jarr Brook Road and Utah Nickel, 129 Locus Street were present.

J. Marsden said the last time they were before the Board they were asked to try to locate a funding source that would not impact the budget.

J. Levinsohn said they looked at the Green Communities program but it was determined that those funds must be used only for pre-approved Green Communities projects.

Kim Lundgren, CEO with KLA briefed the Selectmen on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program. The Town can submit an application to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to become a certified MVP community which would open the door for further grant funding.

J. Levinsohn asked for the support of the Selectmen and the Finance Committee for their Article.

J. Ritter said the MVP program is a good start and 75% would be funded by the state and 25% by the Town through in kind services.

U. Nickel said there is also a Green Plus program being developed which State Representative Carolyn Dykema is supporting. Also, the House Speaker is advocating a \$1 billion program so we are trying to set a foundation so that Holliston will be ready and positioned to apply for future funding.

J. Levinsohn said it is a bold idea to take on climate change but there are students in Sherborn working on this as well as the Holliston Environmental Club.

M. Ahronian asked K. Lundgren about various state programs. K. Lundgren said there is the MVP program and three (3) rounds for planning grants. The grants would assist the Town in developing focus groups, look at strengths, weaknesses and solutions. Planning grants are up to \$400,000.

K. Lundgren said we will need to identify an action plan, funding, measure success annually, and develop a climate action plan and pull all that together by June 2020. Private funds could be used as well or perhaps help from the MAPC.

J. Cronin said the Article addresses the desire to hire a person. The incremental approach is best for now.

U. Nickel said it is good to educate the public as to what is going on and this is one way of doing that and for the Town to demonstrate support.

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J. Cronin asked about the timing of the Phase I grant. K. Lundgren said currently it on a rolling basis but the application would have to be submitted by May 3rd if not sooner. The planning grant will take between four (4) and six (6) weeks to prepare with the completion by June 2020.

J. Cronin said there are planning grants and action grants and asked if it was a needs based grant. K. Lundgren said pretty much anyone who applies will get funded.

J. Cronin said this is a good opportunity to get a plan in place but the Article might be premature. If we can start with the Phase One (1) \$15,000 grant to get us going that would be a good start.

J. Marsden agreed as a start we could hire a consultant. J. Cronin read the text of the Petitioner's Article and noted that this is a little different but close. J. Ritter noted that once the Article is submitted it can't be withdrawn.

U. Nickel said we need to understand the return on the investment and then see where it goes.

J. Levinsohn said the State is working on getting these positions funded.

J. Cronin said once the Phase I assessment is completed then the Town could work toward the Phase II action grant and the design for the possibility of hiring a person. It is a matter of educating the public but the process will take years to complete but is worth exploring.

K. Lundgren said both Natick and Concord are good examples.

M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and submit a grant application. Second, J. Cronin.
Voted 3-0

Board Business

Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Ken Henderson and Robert Weidknecht both from the Trails Committee were present and reviewed their proposed article for Annual Town Meeting. The Trails Committee is requesting \$1,000 for maintenance and equipment in support of the recently completed Upper Charles River Rail Trail. It was noted the crossings have become much more safe with the installation of the flashing lights.

J. Cronin asked if the Trails Committee have looked at a long range trails improvement plans.

R. Weidknecht said they have been very fortunate to have the help of the Highway Department

J. Cronin said he thought the money would be well spent and there has been any discussion about the Parks Department taking on more responsibility.

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K. Henderson said that would be a conversation that we will be having down the road. It might be the Parks Department or the DPW we are working for everyone to recognize the expense of maintaining the Trail. While we continue to look for and seek grants there are still things that need to be accomplished.

M. Ahronian said \$1,000 is a small amount of money but it is a start.

K. Henderson asked about the next steps and if they should reach out to the Finance Committee.

J. Marsden said yes follow the same process they should contact the Finance Committee to get on their agenda.

M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and support the Article. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

5.) FY20 Budgets – Benefits: Mary Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector was present and reviewed in detail the proposed FY20 Benefits budget.

J. Cronin asked about the health insurance increase and worker's compensation expenses and wondered about what was driving the increases. M. Bousquet said regarding the health insurance that is most prescription drugs. Regarding worker's compensation the Town is responsible for the wages. J. Ritter added in any given year there are about three (3) to five (5) on worker's compensation.

M. Ahronian asked about the OPEB line item and the increase and asked if could be decreased going forward. M. Bousquet said we are now including the MetroWest Veterans District and the Water Department as offsets and at this point in time she would not recommend reducing the appropriation.

M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and refer to the Finance Committee the Benefits Budget in the amount of \$10,181,835. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Board Business

Reimbursement Policy: M. Bousquet noted the Town Accountant has worked on the draft policy. J. Cronin said very few of his comments were incorporated into the new draft and he was concerned about the lack of controls. J. Ritter said he would invite the Town Accountant to a future meeting to discuss.

Personnel By-Law Update: The decided to hold any discussion until Special Labor Counsel could be present next week. J. Cronin did ask M. Bousquet about the wage chart and if it was tied to the prevailing wage rates. M. Bousquet said seasonal employees start at the minimum wage as has been the custom over the years.

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Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2019: M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2019. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Vote to Overspend Snow and Ice Budget: J. Cronin requested additional information from the Town Accountant regarding the amounts appropriated and expend. The Board decided to hold this item until next week.

One Day Alcoholic Beverage License – Newcomer’s Club: M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and grant a One Day Alcoholic Beverage License to the Newcomer’s Club for a Rock and Roll Bingo to be held on March 30, 2019 from 7:00p.m. until 10:00p.m

Affordable Housing Committee Profile/Charge: M. Ahronian made a motion to approve the Profile/Charge for the Affordable Housing Committee. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Appointments – On-Call EMTs: The Board had no objection to J. Ritter’s recommendation to appoint Samuel Hartley and Alexander Smirnov as Town of Holliston Emergency Medical Technicians.

Resignation – Historical Commission: M. Ahronian made a motion to accept the resignation from Kim Sullivan with regret. Second, J. Cronin. Discussion: J. Cronin suggested an exit interview with Ms. Sullivan be done. J. Ritter will take care of that. Voted 3-0

7. Any Other Business: None

Adjourn: At 8:20p.m. M. Ahronian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator