



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
JANUARY 7, 2019**

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

Also present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

1.) Executive Session: J. Marsden made a motion at 6:30p.m. under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21A (6) to enter into Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, taking, lease or value of real property. The Board will return to open session at approximately 7:00p.m. Second, M. Ahronian.

Roll Call Vote: Marsden – Yes; Ahronian – Yes; Cronin - Yes

At 7:06p.m. J. Marsden made a motion to exit Executive Session. Second, J. Cronin

Roll Call Vote: Marsden – Yes; Ahronian – Yes; Cronin - Yes

J. Marsden called the regular meeting to order at 7:07p.m.

1.) Warrant: J. Cronin read the Warrant and made a motion to approve the weekly vendor (expense) and payroll Warrant (19-28) in the amount of \$365,910.41. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: None

3.) Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said the Request for Proposals for the solar project at the landfill has been drafted and is circulating among staff for review and comment. The projected publication and advertising date is next week. All indications are there are real financial opportunities for the project to benefit the Town.

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The Solid Waste and Recycling Request for Proposals response time had to be extended until January 24th. The Town received like thirty (30) questions in writing. The questions have been answered but as a result the timeline to receive responses had to be extended.

There will be a community conversation about the future of the High School on Tuesday, January 15th starting at 7p.m. at the High School.

As a reminder, there will be "Coffee with Selectman Marsden" on Saturday, January 26th at 10a.m.

J. Cronin asked about the status of the Library ceiling project and when the anticipated completion date might be. J. Ritter stated the engineering firm discovered several more cracks in the trusses which has result in more needed engineering work. He is hopeful the engineering plans will be provided to the contract and the Building Inspector this week and the project will be completed with thirty (30) days.

4.) Blair Square Committee Update: Peter Barbieri and other members of the Blair Square Committee were present. The Committee is looking at Casey's Cross and the Blair Square. They will be working to make several improvements to the area.

Specifically, the Committee is looking at the parking situation around Casey's Corner and how new parking would benefit the recently completed Rail Trail.

P. Barbieri said GLM Engineering has completed a preliminary design of the area that would accommodate parking for about twenty-one (21) vehicles and work has started on a grant application to assist the Town with the redevelopment of the area. There was a meeting this morning with the DPW Director and Highway Superintendent, Town Planner and Town Administrator to review the concept.

There is not enough room to do back to back parking. The vision is for a one way system and two (2) easements would have to be secured from Casey's. We would like to see this part of the project completed this Spring.

Shaw Lively (Parks Representative on the Committee) said it was a good group to work with and we agree we want to see this move along but there are still things that need to get resolved and addressed.

M. Ahronian said this would appear to be the final part of the Rail Trail project and is pleased to see it coming together.

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P. Barbieri said they are working with private volunteers and many donations are anticipated so the Town does not have to raise a lot of money. Still there is a public responsibility to add to the project.

Herb Brocket (a member of the Committee) said we like the concept and preliminary plan. However, we would like to see parking on both sides of the Rail Trail if possible.

Kevin Conley (a member of the Committee) said the important part of the concept plan is to protect the Rail Trail from vehicles and that is being accomplished with this plan.

J. Cronin asked about the impact on the business community. P. Barbieri said Casey's would have a positive impact given its close location to the Rail Trail and the opportunity to add additional outside tables. Also, with the possible introduction of much needed bathrooms the Town could structure an agreement with a bicycle repair shop to maintain the bathrooms. Just as one example of what might be possible.

He would love to see a map with all the businesses on it to draw those using the Rail Trail into the downtown to shop or eat. Signage is critical. He cited the Ashland experience and what they are doing in the downtown

Shaw Lively said there are a lot of fund raising ideas and opportunities to host events outside.

M. Ahronian said we do not have a Town Green and these are the first steps toward achieving that goal as a gathering spot and over time the area will continue to develop as a place to meet.

H. Brocket said if you build a field people will come.

K. Conley said the Askin property has good potential for redevelopment.

M. Ahronian said there is an immediate need for a port a potty this Spring and Summer and the trash barrels have to be emptied routinely. S. Lively pointed to the Natick example there are many options to consider.

J. Cronin asked S. Lively if the Rail Trail would be something ultimately be part of the Parks Department. S. Lively said he was unsure about the scope of what that means but they already do scheduling for parks but he can bring this information back to the Parks Commission for further discussion.

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J. Cronin said the Rail Trail needs a "Town Government Home." That could either be parks or DPW.

5.) Board Business

Meeting Minutes of January 2, 2019: M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and release the meeting minutes from January 2, 2019. Second, J. Marsden. Voted 2-0-1 (Cronin)

Purchasing/Reimbursement Procedures: J. Ritter explained the Town Accountant and Treasurer/Collector prepared the revised policy to include a new section for the purchase of items using Amazon.

J. Cronin asked who the gatekeeper was. J. Ritter said the Treasurer/Collector.

J. Cronin said it was a little too open and he would like to see more controls in place. For example a \$1,000 limit and any amount over that J. Ritter would have to approve of in advance.

J. Ritter will work with staff to propose more internal controls and place the item back on the Agenda in two (2) weeks.

Budget Review – Street Lights and Solid Waste: J. Ritter presented the guideline budget at \$62,430 and provided an overview of the budget. J. Cronin said there appears to be some excess built into the budget since historically we have not exceeded the budgeted amount.

J. Ritter said there can be at times unforeseen expenses. For example, there was an emergency repair to a signal light at Concord Street this year.

J. Cronin said there is almost a \$9,000 surplus and level funded budget would be \$61,509 and we are tracking expenses after the first six (6) months of the year at \$53,308.

M. Ahronian made a motion to approve a FY20 Street Light budget at \$58,000. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Solid Waste: J. Cronin asked about the liquidated damages and if that number was including in the expense to date. J. Ritter said in June the Town withheld a \$54,000 payment due to poor service. So far in FY19 the Town has withheld about \$11,850 for the same reason and that number has already been deducted from the expense to date.

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Further, J. Ritter explained the service is currently out to bid with responses due January 24th at which time they will be reviewed and a recommendation provided.

J. Cronin made a motion to table this budget until February 4th. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

Grant Acceptance Form - Fire Department: M. Ahronian made a motion to accept a \$3,754 Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E) grant and a \$2,400 Senior SAFE grant. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Donation Acceptance Form – Senior Center: M. Ahronian made a motion to accept a donation in the amount of \$400 from Holliston Superette in support of the “Senior Nutrition Program.”

Performance Evaluation Process: J. Marsden outlined how the Board completed the evaluation on the Town Administrator. Individual members of the Board would complete the form and provide the comments to the Chairman who would then compile all the comments into a single document. The Chairman would meet with the Town Administrator to review the findings.

J. Cronin asked if his comments to the Chairman would be considered a public document. J. Ritter said it was his understanding that they would be considered a public document.

M. Ahronian said he agreed with that approach as did J. Cronin.

J. Cronin said this is an important public discourse and it encourages professionalism and the public has a right to know.

J. Cronin questioned the evaluation tool to be used. J. Marsden reviewed the categories. J. Cronin said that was a useful tool for Department Heads. But the Town Administrator is a special and unique position and there be a tools used that also reflects the Special Act and the job description.

J. Cronin will send a template. J. Marsden said we can use both tool and then work to tie them together.

J. Cronin asked J. Ritter pursuant to his Contract he would have to agree to this process and asked if he had any problems with it. J. Ritter stated no problems.

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Adjourn: At 8:14p.m. M. Ahronian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second, J. Cronin.
Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator