



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
FEBRUARY 10, 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 (20-33) in the amount of \$1,363,204.78. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: J. Cronin thanked the Department of Public Works for assisting in the removal of an old structure off Woodland Street.

3.) Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said last week staff held a very successful meeting with Standard and Poor's the Town's rating agency. We should here this week if the bond rating for Holliston will be increased from AA+ to AAA.

The Commonwealth has notified the Town about the importance of taking the online conflict of interest training. Additional information can be gotten by contacting the Selectman's Office or the Town Clerk's Office.

Last week a check was received in the amount of \$118,380 from Mayflower Medicinal. These revenues are part of the Host Community Agreement between Holliston and Mayflower Medicinal a medical marijuana grower.

The Town has been awarded a \$100,000 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness action grant. Work has started in preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a consultant to assist the Town.

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Work has started on completing the performance evaluations for department heads.

J. Ritter said he plans to retire in July.

J. Ritter said he held his monthly meeting with the Superintendent of Schools last Wednesday.

Removal of an old building is nearly complete at 310 Woodland Street.

4.) Board of Library Trustees – TD Bank Property: Leslie Mc Donnell, Librarian; Nancy Baron, Library Trustee, and Chris Canney, Building Inspector were present. L. McDonnell said the former bank is for sale as a result she has been in the building twice.

The Library has a serious parking problem acquisition of the property would go a long way to solve that problem. The current children's room is too small. The thought would be to move the children's room to the former TD Bank building most likely in the basement area.

C. Canney said some of the systems would have to be upgraded and the building would have to be renovated and updated. There are hurdles to overcome the building was constructed as a church to hold three (300) people. Bathrooms would have to be made handicapped accessible

M. Ahronian asked if a cost estimate could be prepared along with a scope of work.

T. Hein said the project would significantly increase the footprint of the Library.

L. McDonnell said based on the results of a recent survey people would like more space for the children's room. Storage is also very important.

T. Hein asked about revenue generation, the bank is currently paying like \$12,000 per year an expanded Library would bring more people into the downtown and asked about planning grants.

L. McDonnell said the State Board of Library Commissioners oversee a grant program but the timeline for that is like eight (8) to then (10) years.

J. Cronin asked if we should simply blow up the Library it appears to be a money pit. L. McDonnell said no there is strong community interest in investing in the Library. The report from the planning consultant should be ready around April 20th.

J. Cronin said based on the consultant's findings alternatives might be needed.

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L. McDonnell said there is an increase in the use of e-books and we currently have over 7,000 card holders. But there is also a need for dry storage for example, when there are book sales.

T. Hein noted there are other vacant properties in the downtown area.

M. Ahronian asked C. Canney to look into the costs and scope of work. We need to understand the expense and costs.

T. Hein suggested a working group be established.

5.) Facilities Manager Position: James Keast was present. J. Cronin recused himself and left the room. M. Ahronian asked about J. Keast background.

J. Keast said he has lived in Holliston for the last fifteen (15) years and has thirty (30) years' experience in 2016 he left the corporate world and joined Mr. Handyman.

J. Keast said he was involved with five (5) building projects in Hopkinton and he has a lot of hands on experience.

M. Ahronian asked about his educational background. J. Keast reviewed where he attended High School and college.

M. Ahronian said the town is gathering data on our assets it is important to get to know the buildings and their conditions. Working with the Finance Committee will be important.

J. Keast said one the first things he would undertake is an assessment of the buildings and establish a routine maintenance schedule.

T. Hein asked about his professional experience and what would be the most important qualification for the position. J. Keast said communication is key. He is good with technology including the use of software programs such as "School Dude."

T. Hein asked about his experience working with the trades. J. Keast said he has been working with the trades since 2016. He has worked with home renovations and is a home inspector.

T. Hein asked about procurement, bidding and capital planning. J. Keast said he has worked in the private sector with the procurement process.

T. Hein asked about working with other departments and how he would approach them to advance your agenda. J. Keast said safety is a common theme.

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T. Hein asked how he would deal with an underperforming employee. J. Keast said you have to hold employees accountable for performance and hold them to their job description.

T. Hein asked about the development of a work plan. J. Keast said it is important to have a three (3) year and six (6) year plans in place.

T. Hein asked which his favorite park was. J. Keast said Stoddard Park.

M. Ahronian asked about his management style. J. Keast said he was a team player and he likes a hands on approach.

M. Ahronian reviewed the selection process. We are seeking an excellent communicator. J. Keast said as a resident of the Town he understands which buildings need attention.

M. Ahronian asked how we would measure success a year from now. J. Keast said you would have to measure his knowledge. He would like to establish a work order system.

T. Hein reminded J. Keast that he would have to secure certain licenses and certificates.

The Board decided to wait a week and make a decision at that time.

8.) Youth and Family Services Budget and Drug Free Community: Jaclyn Winer, Director of Youth and Family Services and Katie Sugarman Board member were present. They reviewed the FY21 budget. They are seeking a \$27,869 increase.

They reviewed a PowerPoint proposal for a Holliston Drug Free Community.

J. Cronin asked if they are working with the School Department. J. Winer said yes they are working on a drug awareness educational program to help educate students. They are working together to gather data. K. Sugarman said they are supporting the schools developing benchmarks and working with a coalition based on Dow Research standards.

J. Cronin asked about the baseline as it relates to the Holliston Police Department and the Holliston Fire Department and the numbers.

K. Sugarman said the most recent information is from 2018 as a measurement.

J. Cronin asked how much a Drug Free Holliston would cost. K. Sugarman said about \$125,000 but they could seek a matching grant.

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J. Cronin said this would be a perfect use of the Host Community Agreement revenues. Now those revenues go to the General Fund and are not being isolated.

T. Hein thanked the Youth and Family Services staff for their hard work and the unpaid interns who support the Department.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and refer to the Finance Committee the proposed FY21 budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

9.) Board Business

FY21 Budgets – Council on Aging: Linda Marshall, Director of the Senior Center were present along with Linda Sottile and vice Chair of the Council on Aging Bob Hopkins, They are proposing to add a part-time nineteen (19) hour per week employee as a clerical position part-time.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and refer to the Finance Committee the FY21 budget in the amount of \$255,277. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

FY21 DPW Budgets: Sean Reese, Director of the Department of Public Works was present and reported the highway division is slightly under budget guideline.

J. Cronin asked about the upbranching line item and if he anticipates any surplus there. S. Reese said he anticipates spending every penny.

J. Cronin asked about the increase in the salary line. S. Reese said that was due step increases.

M. Ahronian asked about road salt. S. Reese said that is under the snow and ice line. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the DPW – Highway budget in the amount of \$1,378,579. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

S. Reese presented the **FY21 Water Department Budget**. J. Cronin asked about the \$35,000 increase. S. Reese said that for the replacement of the “Skata System,” lab testing equipment, landscaping and sprinklers.

J. Cronin asked what the \$700,000 is used for. S. Reese said that goes to retained earnings.

J. Cronin asked about the infrastructure improvements and the one (1) mile of water pipe replacements and the balance. S. Reese said the current balance is \$993,777.27.

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J. Cronin said if some of that money could be used to provide relief to the rate payers. S. Reese said if you reduce the water rates less can be done to maintain the water system such as well cleaning.

T. Hein made a motion to approve and refer to the Finance Committee the FY21 DPW Water Department budget in the amount of \$2,284,096. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

S. Reese presented a capital request for a \$166,000 mower. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the request. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

9.) Board Business

Reserve Fund Transfer: T. Hein made a motion to approve a \$21,075 Reserve Fund Transfer for well cleaning and refer it to the Finance Committee. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Contracts – AP Associates – Generator and Cedar Street Water Mains: T. Hein made a motion to approve the Notice to Proceed and Contract with PJ Hayes in the amount of \$1,199,047.30 for the water mains and appurtenances – Cedar Street areas and Hanlon Road. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

J. Cronin noted that as a result of rebidding the project the Town saved \$400,000.

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with AP Associates in the amount of \$25,000 for the bidding and construction tasks for emergency generator – water treatment facility for well number 4. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

T. Hein made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with AP Associates in the amount of \$146,200 for the bidding and construction phases of water mains and appurtenances for Cedar Street area. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

FY21 Budgets Fire, Ambulance, and Emergency Management: Fire Chief Michael Cassidy was present to review the Fire Department, Ambulance, and Emergency Management Budgets. The **Fire Department budget** is at guideline.

T. Hein asked about the Host Community Agreement money can be used to off-set expenses. M. Cassidy said yes that would be good especially for the acquisition of a special vehicle.

J. Cronin asked about any outstanding balances from previous Town Meeting unexpended balances. M. Cassidy said any unexpended balances will be used to outfit the existing firefighters.

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J. Cronin asked about releasing some of the previously approved funding at Town Meeting. M. Cassidy said those funding would be used to outfit firefighters.

J. Cronin said like gear drying. M. Cassidy said it his preference to use state funding first.

J. Cronin asked about the status of the traffic emitters in the Town Center. M. Cassidy said they are still installing.

J. Cronin asked about what the gift donation accounts are used for. M. Cassidy said training and equipment replacement.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve the Fire Department budget at \$884,363. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Regarding the **Ambulance Budget** M. Ahronian asked about the cost of going to a full-time department. M. Cassidy said the Police Department is usually the first responder which is followed by the ambulance staff. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the ambulance budget. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0.

Emergency Management budget. J. Cronin made a motion to approve the FY21 Emergency Management budget as presented. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Project Needs Priority List: The Board decided to keep the list as was submitted to State Senator Karen Spilka and Representative Carolyn Dykema.

Appointments - Memorial Day Committee: T. Hein made a motion to appoint Stephen Bradford, Stephen Napolitano and Walter McGrath to the Memorial Day Committee for a one (1) year term. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Crafted Liquor License: The Board reviewed State House Bill Number 4118 that is currently before the State Senate for the sale of all alcoholic beverages and there was no objection to the revisions proposed. J. Cronin made a motion to approve. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant: J. Ritter presented a list of potential articles for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Work on the Warrant has started and will be presented to the Board as the Warrant document is developed.

Event Permit – Touch a Truck: T. Hein made a motion to approve the Touch a Truck Event Permit to be held on Sunday, June 14, 2020. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

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Town Clerk Salary: The Town Clerk was not present due to a conflict. But has submitted a proposal to the Select Board for consideration based on similar communities the salary range is between \$80,000- \$90,000. Town Meeting approval is required.

J. Cronin said the Town Clerk has earned certificates and as a result he would be comfortable with a M-2 grade at \$84,715 and that should be inserted into the Town Clerk's budget for FY21.

Tri-Board Meeting: J. Ritter will work to coordinate a Tri-Board Meeting with the Select Board, School Committee and Finance Committee on a Saturday at noon at the High School Library. An Agenda will be prepared and Bill Mayer will be asked to moderate.

Finance Director Position: J. Cronin provided an update. He is working on the job description and will provide further update as part of a future Agenda.

Presidential Primary Warrant: J. Cronin made a motion to approve and sign the Warrant. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2020 and January 27, 2020: T. Hein made a motion to approve both sets of Meeting Minutes. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Adjourn: J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:56p.m. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator