



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
MARCH 25, 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 (19-39) in the amount of \$3,403,778.29. Second, M. Ahronian. Voted 3-0

2.) Public Comment: J. Cronin thanked the Police Department personnel for their commitment to the community. Specifically, he recognized the death of John Johnson on August 31, 1981. He thanked Chief Stone for providing recent testimony at a parole hearing.

M. Ahronian said he recently attended a Lion's Club Dinner. There was a fundraiser for various community based organizations including eight (8) scholarships for the Holliston High School.

Also, the Lions support the local Boy and Cub Scouts with projects such as the installation of air conditioner units at Cole Court.

He also attended the High School Pops and Chorus concert which is very popular and there was a very large crowd. Holliston has many very talented young people it is a great cultural program.

Utah Nickel, 129 Locus Street, thanked the Board for supporting the establishment of a Sustainability Coordinator position at the Board's March 11th meeting. He noted there will be a meeting Sherborn on the evening of Thursday, April 4th with area Sustainability Coordinators.

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The purpose of the meeting is to hear what they do and how they have assisted their communities. There will be a panel discussion about grant opportunities.

J. Cronin asked J. Ritter to post the Selectmen in the event there is a quorum.

Warren Legee, 43 Travis Road said he was not in favor of the larger trash cart senior citizens and those with disabilities will find the larger carts difficult to use. The larger the cart will result less recycling.

Tina Hein, 142 Union Street said in reference to the Annual Town Meeting Article regulating speed limits. She thought the Article should include M.G.L., Chapter 90, Section 18B which give the power to the Selectmen to establish 20 MPH speed limits in certain neighborhoods. Currently as written it reads M.G.L., Chapter 90 Section 17C which allows the Selectmen to establish 25 MPH speed limits in certain areas.

Elizabeth Dembitzer, 45 Franklin Street said speed is linked to enforcement. She also supports the smaller carts for trash. She has never had to use a larger cart.

3.) Report of the Town Administrator: J. Ritter said the 1750 Washington Street roof replacement project is about to get under way. This is a \$200,000 project we are waiting for the architectural drawings and the building permit to be issued.

The Annual Town Meeting Warrant should be ready for signature in the next couple of weeks.

There will be a meeting with an installer for the Town Hall doors this week. We are starting with the rear door at a total estimate expense of \$10,600.

Regarding the Senior Center doors and window replacement, the Notice to Proceed has been sent to the contractor and there is a Contract in the to be signed folder. There will be a project meeting this Thursday morning with the contractor. Total project cost is anticipated to be \$58,500.

There will be a joint meeting of the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen this Thursday evening to discuss the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

4.) FY20 Solid Waste Budget: J. Marsden provided a summary to date regarding the ongoing community discussion about the 35 gallon trash carts and the 64 gallon trash carts.

Members of the Sustainability and Recycling Committee were present as well as Kathi Mirza from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

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Christine Beling, 31 Franklin Street and a member of the Committee said Holliston has been a Pay As You Throw community since the 1990's and in order to support sustainability the 35 gallon cart should be used.

Last week DEP increased the grant program to support the use of the 35 gallon carts that would mean about \$230,000 for Holliston over five (5) years. The 64 gallon cart would equal about \$46,000 over the same period.

It is not only an environmental issue but also an equity and financial issue. She suggested providing some additional stickers for seniors who might have extra bags. Education is a key part of implementing any new program.

U. Nickel said they are exploring the implementation of a food composting program which would reduce the trash flow and lower tipping fees at Wheelabrator. This program has been on the back burner until the carts issue can be resolved.

M. Ahronian said he has been hearing a lot of public comments about the need to purchase additional stickers if the 35 gallon carts are to be used. He is concerned about senior citizens and those who have low and moderate incomes. Also, the 35 gallon carts would make it harder on families.

He thanked the Committee for all their hard work. He likes U. Nickel's idea about food composting and that approach should reduce the waste stream.

Michael Lavin, Chairman of the Committee said it has been his experience that during the first month of the program there tends to be a 30% increase in the sale of bags and then it level out over time. Textiles is another area and opportunity for savings and reducing the flow of trash. They are exploring this approach with E.L. Harvey.

J. Marsden asked about the grant program and if there was a \$150,000 limit on the amount a community could receive.

K. Mirza said DEP has doubled the grant award it is now up to around \$300,000.

J. Marsden said based on the audit completed by Republic last year about eleven (11%) percent of the community purchases stickers based on the 35 gallon scenario.

C. Beling said about forty (40%) percent follow the rules about fifty (50%) use the 40-50 gallon containers for trash now.

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K. Mirza added grants maybe be conditionally awarded to PAYT communities. The trend is for communities to move to the 35 gallon carts.

M. Ahronian made a motion to go with the 35 gallon trash cart and the 64 gallon recycling cart. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

5.) Landfill Solar Panel Article Discussion: J. Ritter provided a summary to date. The RFP has been prepared and abutters have been invited this evening to receive the benefit of their input before the RFP is issued.

Beth Greenblatt, with Beacon Integrated Solutions, the Town hired consultant for the project was present and provided a further overview of the project. Potential revenues would include the annual lease payment for the footprint, payment on personnel property, and the annual cost savings for the electricity.

The project is all subject to DEP approval and oversight. The entire parcel would be enclosed by a fence and the grounds would be maintained by the lessor. There is also an educational opportunity for students.

J. Marsden confirmed the property would be maintained by the lessor and the cap would not be placed into any kind of jeopardy.

J. Cronin said the Board of Health has been actively involved with the project and the lease would be similar to the nearby soccer field.

B. Greenblatt said DEP would act as a third party and would help to oversee the construction.

J. Cronin asked about the potential financial savings for the Town. B. Greenblatt said the savings are projected to be significant.

J. Cronin said sometimes these facilities are known to generate noise. B. Greenblatt said the inverters will only be active during the day when the sun is shining and every effort will be made to locate them as far as possible from residential homes. Conditions can be placed on the facility by the Planning Board such as further screening.

J. Marsden said permitting would be required by the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. B. Greenblatt said that DEP will also require studies to be completed.

J. Cronin asked about property values some think that solar installations reduce property values.

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B. Greenblatt said not studies have been completed that she is aware of but they can look into that question.

M. Ahronian asked about how the interconnect to the grid would work. B. Greenblatt said there are really two (2) options. First, an underground connection or second an above ground connection both leading to Marshall Street.

M. Ahronian asked who would make that decision given Marshall Street is a scenic road. B. Greenblatt said that would be part of the negotiation process.

Katherine Cunningham, 309 Marshall Street asked about the exact footprint and what appeared to be a small parcel of wooded land and if that parcel would be impacted. B. Greenblatt said there would be very minimal impact on that parcel.

J. Cronin asked about the impact on the residents along Marshall Street. B. Greenblatt said once completed there would only be the random pick-up truck to complete like weekly inspections.

Brian Moran, 267 Norfolk Street asked if this was a design build project and the total number of acres. B. Greenblatt she could get the total number of acres and insert that information into the RFP document and yes it is proposed to be a design build.

M. Ahronian made a motion to issue the RFP. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

6.) Town Meeting Article – Consolidated Personnel By-Law: J. Cronin asked about the need for a Personnel Board given we are having so much difficulty locating volunteers. J. Ritter said the purpose for the Personnel Board would be to provide an avenue for employees to appeal any personnel decision made by the Town Administrator.

J. Marsden said topic has come up several times with the MetroWest communities and it is always good to understand the pros and cons of having a Personnel Board and the question always ends up with the organizational structure.

J. Cronin said the lack of a Personnel Board is frustrating and it provides a false sense of expectations.

The Board to ask for a written explanation from Special Labor Counsel as to the pros and cons of having or not having a Personnel Board for further discussion at the Board's next meeting.

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7.) Town Meeting Article – Accept Mass General Law Chapter 90, Section 17C – Speed

Limits: J. Marsden provided a summary and asked the Board if they want to consider including 18B in the Article.

J. Cronin said he understands the community needs but would like to give the measures already approved a chance to work before further actions are considered.

It is possible that we might end up there down the road but he wanted the opportunity to take it step by step.

M. Ahronian agreed and said we need to give the recommendations from the public safety team a chance to work before further adjustments are made.

J. Marsden agreed.

T. Hein, 142 Union Street said this is a town-wide issue not an issue only for Mudville. There are lots of areas that would benefit from a 20 MPH speed limit such as the downtown. This is an opportunity.

8.) Board Business

Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2019: M. Ahronian made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2019. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Annual Town Meeting Warrant: The Board decided to wait until this Thursday when the Warrant will be reviewed with the Finance Committee.

Sign Request – St. Michael's: J. Ritter said this item should be placed on hold. The Board agreed.

9.) Any Other Business: M. Ahronian said there are a couple of dead and dangerous trees at Pinecrest between holes 8 and 10. The trees have been tagged and asked if DPW could schedule to have them removed.

J. Marsden asked why New England Golf could not arrange for their removal. M. Ahronian said the grounds are the Town's responsibility the greens belong to New England Golf.

J. Ritter will discuss with Sean Reese.

J. Cronin said he and the Chairman of the Finance Committee are meeting tomorrow evening for the purposes of discussing department head or managerial compensation. He wanted to know if

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the Board had an opinion about compensation if we should be at the high end low end or the middle. His thinking was somewhere in the middle in comparison to surrounding communities.

M. Ahronian said he agreed with that approach and thought some positions need to be looked at more closely.

J. Marsden said he likes to bring in new people who are up and comers. Like a second in command who is seeking an opportunity. Holliston is a good place to work. People decide to take positions for several different reasons.

J. Cronin said for now we are looking only at existing employees. Or more specifically we are looking at the outliers on the staff.

We are working on establishing expectations going forward so staff understand the work plan and structure.

Adjourn: At 8:26p.m. M. Ahronian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator