



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON  
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street  
Holliston, MA 01746**

**508-429-0608**

**SELECT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL  
MARCH 30, 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.) Coronavirus Update:** Michael Cassidy, Emergency Management Director and Fire Chief was present to provide a community update regarding the response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

M. Cassidy there was one (1) positive case reported last week for a total of seven (7) cases in Holliston.

There are nine hundred eighty eight (988) cases in Middlesex County. The peak should come in about four (4) to seven (7) weeks and then it should trail off. It is very important to continue social distancing.

The parks are closed and most are complying with the rules. There are good lines of communication between the Health Department, Police, and Emergency Management.

First responders are following protocols as appropriate. Two (2) have been deployed to the military.

M. Cassidy reviewed the expenses for departments to date. \$2,500 for equipment, \$600 for clothes, \$16,000 for computers and food.

T. Hein asked how the enforcement in the parks was going. M. Cassidy said it is better so far this than last week.

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J. Cronin asked about the supplies of personal protection equipment. M. Cassidy said they have a good supply chain and they should be in good shape for now.

**2.) Warrants:** T. Hein made a motion to approve and sign the weekly expense and vendor Warrant (20-40) in the amount of \$134,839.69. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**3.) Public Comment:** T. Hein noted that citizens are really stepping up during this pandemic. Donations can be made to the Holliston Community Action.org.

J. Cronin thanked all the first responders they are all heroes.

M. Ahronian thanked residents for preparing and distributing food and all their volunteer work.

**4.) Report of the Town Administrator:** J. Ritter reported the Cedar Street water main replacement will proceed as scheduled. Water mains will be replaced along Cedar Street, Cheryl Lane and portions of Turner Road. Work is scheduled to start on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Residents will be notified and kept informed about the progress.

There was a good conference call last Friday with the new Facilities Manager and we plan to have that call each Friday morning at 8a.m.

The Finance Committee is meeting tomorrow evening.

A resident asked if the Marshall Street Recycling Center could be reopened. He consulted with M. Cassidy and it was agreed to reopen at this point in time due to the pandemic.

Town Hall remains closed to the public. Staff is generally working from home. The virus is consuming all of his time.

M. Ahronian asked J. Ritter to present to the Finance Committee the Select Board's budget tomorrow evening.

T. Hein asked for an update from the Sustainability Coordinator as part of a future Agenda item for the Select Board.

**5.) Annual Town Meeting & Election Change of Dates:** Town Counsel, Jay Talerman and Town Clerk Liz Greendale were on the conference call.

J. Ritter has recommended that Town Meeting be rescheduled until Monday, July 15, 2020 and the local election be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2020.

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J. Cronin asked if this was pursuant to M.G.L.45. J. Talerma said yes and there is legislation being prepared to allow towns to even move Town Meeting beyond June 30<sup>th</sup> if there is a need for more time but that is not ready yet.

The Select Board can make this decision if the Town Meeting is more than thirty (30) days away. If the Town Meeting is less than thirty (30) days away the Town Moderator is able to make that decision.

L. Greendale asked that voters vote by mail if possible.

T. Hein asked about the deadline to run for the election. M. Ahronian said he would be on the Board until the end of June.

T. Hein said the June 15, 2020 Annual Town Meeting date makes sense. J. Talerma noted it is still possible that it might get pushed out again.

J. Cronin asked about M.G.L. 45 and the Special Act of 2020 and the role of the Moderator. J. Talerma said the role of the Moderator comes into play if a decision needs to be made with thirty (30) days of the Town Meeting. At the moment the Moderator has no role.

T. Hein asked about have the election on Tuesday, May 19, 2020. J. Ritter noted that the Warrant for Town Meeting must be posted and the meeting must be held before the election because the Warrant includes the public notice about the election and includes a ballot.

T. Hein asked if there would be any change to the start time. J. Talerma said it would remain the same at 7:30p.m.

M. Ahronian asked how was the June 15, 2020 date determined. J. Talerma said he was available on that date.

L. Greendale said there might be a reduction in the quorum. J. Talerma said yes but that is not currently part of the enacted legislation.

J. Cronin said it would be difficult to get a quorum during the middle of June.at the end of June.

T. Hein made the following motion, Pursuant to Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020, *An Act Granting Authority to Postpone 2020 Municipal Election in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Increase Voting Options in Response to the Declaration of Emergency to respond to COVID-19*, the Board votes to postpone the town election currently scheduled for May 19, 2020 to be held on June 23, 2020. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

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T. Hein made the following motion, Pursuant to G.L. c. 39 §9, due to the Governor's Declaration of Emergency to Respond to COVID 19, the Board votes to postpone Annual Town Meeting from May 4, 2020 at 7:30 pm to June 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. to be held at Holliston High School. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

It was also noted this would allow the Finance Committee more time to prepare.

**6.) Board Business**

**Annual Town Meeting Warrant Discussion about Articles and Recommendations:** J. Ritter presented and reviewed Articles that should be considered to be removed from the Warrant.

J. Cronin said the Town Accountant should provide the Finance Committee and the Select Board a report showing the unencumbered fund balances. There are already signs of declining revenues and the Select Board should consider a spending freeze and communicate that to departments. This is a limited step the Board can take immediately.

Due to the shut-down, for example, the Parks Department is seeing a decline in revenue of between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

J. Cronin noted that a local aid payment was received yesterday. But revenues are down at the Library, building permits are down, as well as Fire Department revenues.

T. Hein suggested Departments be advised to freeze spending. J. Cronin said he has identified \$62,600 in reductions by reducing the purchase of office supplies in FY21 but more thought has to go into this and there should be a stop to non-essential spending.

T. Hein and J. Cronin participated in a March 24, 2020 State level conference call where information was shared that local aid would continue for the foreseeable future. J. Cronin noted there may also be Federal assistance and that might be enough.

J. Cronin made a motion to ask the Town Accountant to send a notice to all Department Heads to only do essential spending. Second with comment that motion will be revisited as needed , T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Appointment of Elaine Doyle – Registrar:** J. Cronin made a motion to appoint Elaine Doyle as a Registrar with a term to expire on June 30, 2023. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Community Traffic Safety Projects Grant Program:** T. Hein made a motion to accept the \$16,500 grant but noted the grant money will not be received until October 2020. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

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**Donation from the Holliston Grill (First Responders):** T. Hein made a motion to accept a donation of food for active first responders. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**Good Chemistry Change of Name & Host Community Agreement:** T. Hein made a motion to approve the change of name to be Good Chemistry of Massachusetts and approve the revised Host Community Agreement accordingly. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2020 and March 13, 2020:** T. Hein made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2020 and March 13, 2020. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**MVP/RFP Award:** T. Hein said we can either turn down the grant or ask for an extension until the fall. Discussion followed that raised the need to change the project manager from Technology Director to Sustainability Coordinator as the direct contact for the grant program.

T. Hein said she would be in favor of asking for an extension. J. Ritter will follow-up.

**Governance Committee:** T. Hein made a motion to appoint Samuel Tyler to the Governance Committee for a term to expire on June 30, 2023. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**Town Administrator Screening Committee:** J. Cronin said appointees should have broad areas of expertise. The Board should identify people and ask them to step up. Areas of expertise might include business, financial, and a background in senior or public management. Human resources and leadership are would also be important.

M. Ahronian said he agreed with all of those qualifications.

T. asked J. Ritter we have received two (2) letters of interest so far. J. Ritter confirmed this.

T. Hein asked if the Board should wait and make all five (5) appointments at the same time. M. Ahronian said if someone volunteers they should be appointed. J. Cronin said he agrees with the approach outlined by T. Hein.

T. Hein said we can wait a week or two. There was further discussion about the process.

**7.) Any Other Business:** J. Cronin asked if the sidewalk reconstruction article for the Annual Town Meeting could be revisited as well as the DPW facility, water main project. There should be a new article for the location of a new well water location.

Regarding the recent Tri-Board meeting it is understood that we can't have it all but a ten (10) and twenty (20) year plan is needed to better understand priorities. We will then identify funding sources and take it all to the Finance Committee.

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M. Ahronian said this is organized approach is what the Finance Committee asked for.

T. Hein said the timing is good there is a need for a long term approach to strategic planning.

T. Hein made a motion to accept the March 26, 2020 Stantec planning proposals for water main replacement, sidewalk, DPW, and water source studies and to support the four (4) articles currently in the draft Warrant. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Joan Levinsohn called in remotely to the meeting. She thanked the Select Board for their hard work during the pandemic as well as Emergency Management Director Cassidy and State Representative Dykema. Also, the two (2) tiered approach toward the purchase of electricity provides the consumer more options.

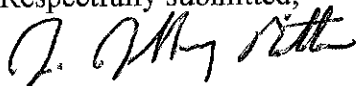
She said regarding the MVP/Grant the Sustainability Coordinator could be the manager of the grant.

Finally, the new Town Administrator should be sensitive to the Town's sustainability efforts.

T. Hein said there will be an opportunity for the public to provide input regarding the Town Administrator search.

**Adjourn:** J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25p.m. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,



J. Jeffrey Ritter  
Town Administrator