



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON  
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street  
Holliston, MA 01746**

**508-429-0608**

**SELECT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL  
AUGUST 5, 2019**

**Present:** Mark Ahronian, Chairman; John Cronin, Vice Chairman; Tina Hein, Clerk

**Also Present:** Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator; Mary Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector

M. Ahronian called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

**1.) Executive Session:** At 6:01p.m. J. Cronin made a motion under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21A (3) to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy to collective bargaining or litigation or potential litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigation position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel; to actually conduct collective bargaining and contract negotiations with non-union personnel.

The Board will re-enter open session at approximately 7:00p.m. Second, T. Hein.

Roll Call Vote: Hein – Yes; Cronin – Yes; Ahronian – Yes

The Board returned to open session at 7:16p.m.

**2.) Warrants:** T. Hein read the weekly expense and vendor Warrant (20-06) in the amount of \$1,135,346.26 and made a motion to approve. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 2-0-1 (Hein)

**3.) Public Comment:** J. Cronin provided the Board with an update on the Facilities Manager position. Last week he and Ben Sparrell a member of the Finance Committee met with Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Melissa Kaspren and Parks Director Mark Frank about how the new position would benefit the Parks and Recreation Department.

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There will be another meeting with the Chair of the School Committee shortly.

D.P.W. Director Sean Reese has done a good job in gathering information for an article at the Special Town Meeting to address a town-wide water infrastructure study, a sidewalk improvement plan, and a new D.P.W. facility.

Ron Gray, the owner of Keystone Automotive, Inc. was present and said the Town has been picking up his trash for twenty (20) years and now that service has stopped and the program has changed. He was told that the service is included in his property taxes.

J. Cronin agreed with R. Gray, but he also understands it is currently only a residential collection service. He asked J. Ritter to evaluate the number of small businesses by developing a list and what the additional cost would be for E.L. Harvey to provide this service to the small business community as well as condos located public ways, draft a Special Town Meeting Article to fund the service and to provide this information within two (2) weeks.

M. Ahronian said some small businesses buy for a private hauler to remove their trash and recycling but over the years some small business have received this service and they should not have. But we also been told by E.L. Harvey they are not interested in providing this service to the small business community and as well as condos.

**4.) Report of the town Administrator:** J. Ritter said there is an interest for the Selectmen to meet at the Senior Center. He proposed Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon at which time there will be a “Luau” taking place. The Board agreed to meet at the Senior Center for the purposes of viewing the recently completed improvements and to hear of any issues or concerns from the senior citizen community.

**5.) Public Hearing – Holliston Wine and Spirits:** T. Hein read the legal notice and made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

M. Ahronian welcomed the applicant Mr. Oatel and his attorney Matthew Porter. M. Porter asked the Board to allow Mr. Oatel to change Officers and Stock of interest in the company, Holliston Wine and Spirits.

J. Cronin asked if there were any complaints either locally or with the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) and what he was planning to sell. Mr. Oatel said there were no complaints and they planned to continue selling wine and spirits.

T. Hein made a motion to transfer the Change of Ownership Interest and Officers to Mr. Oatel. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0.

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T. Hein made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**6.) Community Farm Update:** Kriss Westland and Dennis Serocki were present and proposed a new signage plan for the Community Farm. They also noted there are more children on the property and vehicle traffic on the driveway travel too fast. It would be a good idea to place a sign at Rt. 16 and Whitney Street directing people to the Community Farm.

T. Hein asked who plows the snow. K. Westland said the D.P.W.

K. Westland said perhaps the Town would consider installing speed bumps we want to make it safe. M. Ahronian suggested they reach out to the D.P.W. for a recommendation.

D. Serocki said there are more dogs on the property and a sign should be installed similar to the one on the Rail Trail reminding people to pick-up after their pets.

J. Cronin asked if there were any issues or concerns during the evening hours. K. Westland said not yet. J. Cronin said he would recommend some type of sign that indicates the Farm is public property.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve a sign indicating the Farm is public property, that dogs must be on a leash, and that signs be placed at Rt. 16 directly the public to the Community Farm similar to other signs on public property. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**7.) Host Community Agreement – Good Chemistry – 390 Hopping Brook Park:** Meg Collins, Vice President Public Affairs, with Good Chemistry and presented a PowerPoint presentation about Good Chemistry. Good Chemistry is seeking a letter of non-opposition from the board of Selectmen.

M. Collins said they have a grow facility in Bellingham and a retail operation in Worcester so the Holliston site would work perfectly into their business plan. They are seeking a location in an existing 16,000s/f building.

T. Hein asked about the use of town water and the amount they would be using and the number of plants they would have. M. Collins said the facility would need to be designed first then we would understand the number of plants possible. But the plants are not place into soil they are placed in “Rockwool.”

M. Ahronian noted the Water Department looked into this question and it was determined the amount of water used was pretty minimal.

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J. Cronin said he had the same concern about water usage about a year ago but after his research he concluded it was not an issue at this point in time.

T. Hein said it might be a good idea to have a water audit completed.

J. Cronin said is there any possibility of expanding beyond the 16,000s/f. M. Collins said the Bellingham facility is about 10,000s/f. This one is a bit larger and they are looking to create about 70 new jobs.

J. Cronin asked about the type of jobs. M. Collins said there would be trimmers, dry room production workers, re-bone workers who remove the bud from the stems, they have 25 turning employees in Denver.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and sign a letter of non-opposition. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**8.) Lenard Engineering Dam Inspection Reports:** David Battista, Principal Engineer and Doug Bush, Project Engineer with Lenard Engineering were present.

D. Battista provide a summary of the status of all four (4) dams in town including the status of inspection reports on the dams. There was a meeting a couple of week ago with T. Hine and J. Ritter they requested a cost proposal and report on the feasibility of removing some of the dams.

D. Battista said in most cases the cost to remove a dam is about the same as making the repairs.

The Lake Winthrop Dam may be eligible for removal but it needs to become exempt from regulations. A title exam will need to be completed, as well as a topographical survey these are both important to get an exemption as well as a property survey and a determination of water rights.

Regarding the Weston Pond Dam it appears this structure is owned by either the Commonwealth or the federal government.

Title exams need to be completed on the dams to understand who owns what

J. Cronin asked about the condition of all the dams. D. Battista said they were all in poor condition. Some require inspections every six (6) months.

J. Cronin asked what leads to a rating for a dam to be in poor condition.

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D. Bush said embankment vegetation is an operational maintenance issue that needs to be scheduled. Factory Pond and Houghton Pond Dam are no longer serving its original operational purposes. When it comes to the removal the process is much more involved testing for contamination and erosion remediation would have to be addressed.

However, there are environmental benefits with removal. Water rights would have to be addressed. At the Weston Pond Dam a title exam will be required.

M. Ahronian said he notice space between the dam structure and the actual dam most likely caused by street run-off along the side of the pond there is rip rap and vegetation.

D. Battista said that project would cost around \$46,000.

J. Cronin asked about the conditions at the other dams. D. Bush said Houghton is rated as a high hazard as is Factory Pond both required inspections every two (2) years. Winthrop every five (5) years.

It was noted the Town submitted a request through the Environmental Bond Bill but have not heard back yet.

Robert Weidknecht asked about the status of the Linden Street Dam. It was agreed that the status of that structure would be investigated.

**9.) Special Town Meeting Articles:** Wendy Rezendes, 15 Bayberry Lane was present and reviewed with the Board a proposed Petitioner Article for the Special Town Meeting.

She purchased a puppy at Pick a Pup and it died very shortly after the purchase so she sought the medical records. She was told that it was not Parvo related but it is common for puppies to come there by way of puppy mills.

Gretchen Caldwell, 121 Underwood Street read a statement about the Parvo disease a friend recently purchased a puppy and now it is sick with Parvo disease.

Leslie Doyle a resident of Sherborn was present and said they would like to do something similar that was done in Stoneham, Cambridge and Medford.

J. Cronin asked for Dona Walsh the Holliston ACO to weigh in he is compelled to hear both sides of the story. In general, Selectmen do not take a position on Petitioner articles.

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The Board will take up the question again once when the Petition is received and the Special Town Meeting Warrant is prepared.

T. Hein asked that the Animal Control Officer follow-up on the presence of Parvo in the community as well as know violation of quarantine or reporting standards.

**10.) Board Business**

**Meeting Minutes of June 24, July 22 and July 29, 2019:** J. Cronin made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from June 24, 2019; July 22, 2019 and July 29, 2019. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Executive Session Meeting Minutes of July 29, 2019:** J. Cronin made a motion to approve and hold the Executive Session Meeting Minutes from July 29, 2019. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Annual Appointment – Weighers – Covanta:** M. Ahronian read the list of appointments for the position of weighmasters for the scale operations at 115 Washington Street Covanta. J. Cronin made a motion to appoint the following scale attendants, Doug Cote, Sharon Leavitt, Michael Foster and Zach Quellette for a one (1) year term. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Event Permit – Cycle for Life – Cystic Fibrosis:** T. Hein made a motion to approve an Event Permit for the “Cystic Fibrosis Cycle for Life” starting at 7a.m. on Saturday, October 5, 2019. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

T. Hein made a motion to approve an Event Permit for neighborhood block party to be held on Sunday, September 15, 2019 on Dalton Road between the hours of 1p.m. and 3p.m.. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

**Donations – Holliston Trails and Elderly and Disabled:** Robert Weidknecht, Chairman of the Holliston Trails Committee was present. R. Weidknecht reported the **Friends of Holliston Trails** recently decided to fund the purchase of a solar “Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon for the South Street and the Upper Charles River Rail Trail intersection. Working with D.P.W. they will complete the installation.

J. Cronin made a motion to accept the donation in the amount of \$10,423.80. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

J. Cronin made a motion for the D.P.W to complete the installation. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

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R. Weidknecht said a private land owner on the Sherborn town line has offered a donation of approximately 4.5 acres. The land directly abuts the Rail Trail and can easily be linked to a Conservation area in Sherborn.

If the Conservation were to accept the donation no Town Meeting action would be required. They are not interested so the Selectmen accept the donation and place an Article on the October 28, 2019 Special Town Meeting to ask the Town to formally accept the donation.

It is a two (2) party ownership which Town Counsel will have to sort out those details. The Boy Scout could construct a bridge across the brook.

The Board agreed to place an Article on the Special Town Meeting Warrant and to include an estimate from Town Counsel to complete a title exam.

J. Cronin made a motion to advance the concept. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Fund,** J. Cronin made a motion to accept a donation from the Holliston Lions Club in the amount of \$1,000 to provide relief and assistance to the elderly and disabled. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**One Day Alcoholic Beverage Permit – Bridal Shower:** J. Cronin made a motion to approve and grant a One Day Alcoholic Beverage Permit Leena's Bartending and Catering from a bridal shower that will be held on August 10, 2019 from noon until 6:00p.m. in the Upper town Hall. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

**11.) Any Other Business:** T. Hein said she has continuing concerns about the amount of water being used by industries and there is a need for a water impact study. J. Cronin said he shared those concerns about a year ago and looked at some of the water bills.

T. Hein when that was. J. Cronin said like last July.

J. Cronin made a motion to approve and grant a One Day Alcoholic Beverage Permit for an event to be held at the Arcadia Farm on Saturday, August 10, 2019 from 11a.m. until 3p.m. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

J. Cronin asked J. Ritter to follow-up with State Representative Carolyn Dykema's office to see if the funding is really there for the Sustainability Coordinator position.

**Adjourn:** At 9:15p.m. J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

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Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Jeffrey Ritter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

J. Jeffrey Ritter  
Town Administrator