

Holland Finance Board
27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521
Holland Town Hall – Community Room
Meeting Minutes for Thursday, January 26, 2023
Virtual and Physical Meeting of the Board and Guests

Meeting Attendance –

Members in person: Andrew Harhay, Robbin Lauzon, Cara Bogacz and Paul Tortolani.

Members attending remotely: Karen Peret

Member Absent: None

Guests in person: Select Board - Clelland Johnson, Chair and Ernie Fancy, member; BOH - Charles Furst, Chair and David Kowalski, Agent; Planning Board - Charles Furst, Chair and Bill Robertson, member; Trails Committee - Dick Haller, Chair.

Open Meeting –

The Chair called to order at 6:02 pm.

1. Approval of 1/19/23 meeting minutes:

Karen made the motion to approve the minutes and Robbin seconded; approval was unanimous.

2. Review of Board of Health FY24 Budget request:

The Board of Health requested an increase in the budget for the Board's stipend line from the \$1,500 in previous years to \$6,000 for FY24, representing a 400% increase. Although no group has previously asked for an increase in their stipend, the rationale provided by the BOH was that members were devoting an increased amount of time on Board work. Clelland commented that he thought that all board and committee members essentially volunteer their time to support the Town, with stipends hopefully not being a big consideration. Andy felt that any change in policy regarding stipends, whether changing amounts or eliminating them, should to be approached on an across-the-board basis. Further discussed was the line item listed by the BOH as '*Wood Re-cycling Wages and Expense*'. Andy indicated that wages have come from the BOH revolving account. In past years, the only expense has been periodic chipping, with those funds coming from the Cyclic Stabilization Fund. It was agreed that the '*Wood Recycling Wages and Expense*' would not be carried in the operating budget.

3. Review of Planning Board budget request:

The Planning Board also requested an increase in that Board's stipend line from \$2,500 to \$10,000, also because of the increased time being spent by members on zoning issues. With money for a consultant being carried in the operating budget for the past two years, but not utilized, it was suggested that the Planning Board consider whether it appropriate to move forward, at least on a trial-basis. Although the Board did not request funds for a '*Planner-Consultant*' in their FY24 request, as it was recognized that \$12,500 had been approved in a FY22 article, with that money being available until spent or transferred out of that special account.

4. Review of Trails Committee Budget Request:

To benefit our new members, Dick reviewed the work that has been performed by the Committee and volunteers in recent years. The major activities in upcoming years will be work on school property which was recently acquired by the Town. Planned work includes building a kiosk and bridge over a stream, installing trail signage and adding trails, with one designed for handicap accessibility. The Trails Committee submitted a level funded budget of \$2,350 for FY24, with the key reason for having funds in the Town budget being to show resident support of trails work, which the Committee can leverage to pursue grants.

5. Budget Development Activities:

The Town Clerk is scheduled to present the 2024 budget on February 2, 2023. *(Note: Subsequent to the 1/29/23 meeting, the Town Clerk was rescheduled to attend our 2/23/23 meeting.)*

6. Annual Report for Calendar Year 2022:

There was a general discussion of the 2022 annual report. Clelland suggested that it include a breakout on the total amounts spent on schools and highway taking all grants into account. These two departments represent 80% of the town budget.

7. Expenditure Report:

No comments/questions.

8. Select Board updates:

Clelland indicated that he had visited the Highway Department. He noted also that James had developed a spreadsheet for all ARPA requests. He reviewed the commitments for funding that were approved by the Select Board. There have not yet been firm estimates provided to the Select Board to consider spending more funds at this time.

9. Roundtable comments:

No comment from the attendees.

10. Next meeting: February 2, 2023

Adjournment: Paul made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Robbin seconded; approval was unanimous. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7.33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Peret and Andy Harhay