

## **Holland Finance Board**

27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521

Holland Town Hall – Community Room

### **Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, February 10, 2021**

Physical and virtual Meeting of the Board and Guests

#### **Meeting Attendance:**

- In person: Members Sharon Ashleigh and Ernie Fancy; Town Administrator Stacy Riley.
- Remote: Members Kelli Robbins and Andy Harhay; Selectman Clelland Johnson.
- Others remote: Town Clerk Jennifer Mott and Select Board Chair Bettina Schmidt attended only that portion of the meeting involving review of their individual department budgets.

**Open Meeting:** Chair Sharon Ashleigh opened the meeting at 6:35 pm.

Ms. Ashleigh opened by indicating that Joe Yisnitsky will be resigning from the Board due to the new demands of his job and that the situation can be discussed later in the meeting. She asked if someone would offer to do the minutes for the meeting and Andy offered.

#### **Review Town Clerk Budget Request:**

Ms. Mott experienced technical difficulties remotely joining the meeting; a successful connection was made using cell phones.

- Ms. Mott reviewed her request for FY22, indicating that she incorporated a 3% salary increase for her position and that of the Assistant Town Clerk and had reduced the dollars in the Election Wages and Expenses due to fewer planned elections. Town Clerk Expenses were increased slightly from \$2,500 to \$2,600 to enable purchase of a new printer.
- In reviewing the dollar amounts, Mr. Harhay noted that the 3% salary adjustments being requested were based on the amounts requested in FY21, rather than the amounts approved at the ATM; the COLA needs to be modified so as to be based on the approved dollar amounts.
- Ms. Mott also said that the salary requested for her position also incorporated an increase in work hours. It was initially conveyed to her the position would generally require working 12 to 15 hours per week. The posted office hours are currently 13 hours per week, but she feels that a regular 15 hours a week is required.
- Mr. Harhay inquired about his hearing that the software service related to dog licenses had been dropped and wanted to know if that was reflected in the Town Clerk Expenses

line. Ms. Mott indicated that the service had actually been dropped by her predecessor. Ms. Mott felt that the software was definitely worth the \$600 fee and did incorporate the cost in the FY22 request.

**Review Select Board Budget Request:**

- Ms. Schmidt joined the meeting at 7:09 pm and opened a meeting of the Select Board, making it a joint meeting for reviewing the request.
- Mr. Fancy asked about the increase from \$29K to \$50K in Lake Maintenance. Mr. Johnson said that the increase was to allow treating the reservoir with a product expected to be more effective in treating milfoil. It is anticipated that the use of the Procellacor will allow for milfoil treatment every 2 to 3 years, rather than annually.
- Mr. Fancy asked if the LOC Expense was a new line in the budget. Mr. Johnson indicated that funds for that line had not been requested for FY21, but the line had existed previously. LOC requested that the line be funded at \$1,000 for FY22.
- Mr. Fancy asked if the Legal Expense line could be reduced, as work on the Sichol property purchase has been completed. Ms. Robbins indicated that she didn't think it wise to reduce the \$30K being requested, as it's impossible to project what legal issues might come up in FY22. The \$30K is level funded from FY21.
- Mr. Harhay questioned the doubling of the Grant Writer line, from \$20K to \$40K. Ms. Schmidt thought that funding of the position has been very cost effective in acquiring grant dollars.
- Ms. Robbins requested a summary showing what grants have been successfully pursued and would also like to see the contract that Holland has with the grant writer. Ms. Schmidt said she would provide that information.
- Mr. Harhay commented that the amount being requested for the Electricity line and Heating Public Buildings line seem low and suggested that the Select Board take another look at those expenses.
- Mr. Harhay commented that he had expected that a request would be made to increase the salary for the Town Administrator position. Given the changes that have or will be seen in the Town Administrator, Town Clerk and Principal Assessor positions, it seems appropriate that Holland perform a new salary/wage survey; Mr. Harhay said that this type of survey was performed back around 2013. There was general agreement by Select Board and Finance Board members that performing a new survey was a good idea.
- Ms. Schmidt closed the Select Board meeting at 7:24 pm.

**Review Draft Minutes from 11/11/21, 1/6/21, 1/20/21 and 2/3/21:**

There were no minutes available for review. Ms. Ashleigh indicated that we need to discuss how the Finance Board will handle drafting minutes in the future... do we continue a rotation?

**Follow-ups from previous meeting, if any:**

- Ms. Ashleigh indicated that the budget review meeting for the Library has been rescheduled to 3/10/21; Tracy will attend.
- Mr. Harhay indicated that Chief Gagne will attend the Fire Department budget review meeting rescheduled to 2/24/21.

**Expenditure Report Review:**

Mr. Fancy questioned whether the Fire Department Expenses line includes the Firefighter turn-out gear approved at the STM. Mr. Harhay indicated that the \$50,600 for the turn-out gear is shown as a separate Article line and the Expenses line for \$56,000 is for other annual expenses.

**Review any additional correspondence not previously covered:**

None.

**Roundtable:**

- Ms. Riley asked how the Board would like to address Mr. Yisnitsky's resignation, as she is about to post opening on a few other committees. After discussion, the Board agreed to inform the Moderator of the resignation, ask Mr. Yisnitsky to formalize his resignation in an in a letter/email and then post the position. Ms. Ashleigh asked members to think about how we want to pursue the Alternate Member position also vacated by Ms. Robbins becoming a full member.
- Mr. Fancy indicated that he received the budget packet for Tantasqua, but has not yet reviewed the details.
- Mr. Fancy showed us a spreadsheet he has developed that shows the progression in salary/wages for Town employees over a number of years; he is still looking for employee benefits data.
- Mr. Fancy also requested that members closely look at the budget spreadsheets he is maintaining. All members need to understand the numbers, check that they are correct and provide him with input.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Fancy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Ashleigh; all in favor by roll call vote.

Respectively submitted: Andrew Harhay, Acting Secretary