

Holland Finance Board
27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521
Holland Town Hall – Community Room
Meeting Minutes for Thursday, February 2, 2023
Virtual and Physical Meeting of the Board and Guests

Meeting Attendance –

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

Members attending remotely: Robbin Lauzon, Karen Peret

Member Absent: None

Guests in person: Clelland Johnson – Select Board; Brian Johnson from Highway Department, Cemetery Commission and Tree Warden; Diane Gregoire, Cemetery Commission.

Open Meeting –

The Chair called to order at 6:00pm.

1. Approval of 1/12/23 meeting minutes.

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

2. Review of Cemetery Commission Budget request.

Brian requested level funding for the Cemetery Commission stipend. He requested an increase of \$1,204 for Maintenance wages in order to increase the hourly wage from \$16 to \$20 per hour. For Cemetery Expenses, he requested an increase from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Brian will be submitting three articles to the ATM; one for \$30,000 for the repair of broken headstones, \$6,000 for a new mower and a yet unknown amount for installation of a water line from the Community Center to the cemetery. He added that the Town should start thinking about expanding the cemetery, as it is 90% sold out.

3. Review of Tree Warden Budget request.

Brian requested that the Tree Warden stipend be increased from \$100 to \$2,500, particularly if a new individual were to run for election. Andy asked if all of the funds allocated in 2023's budget will be spent this year, as last year there was \$79,525 left unspent for tree management and transferred to a Highway account at the end of the fiscal year. Brian responded that he will look into this question. Paul asked about the responsibilities of a tree warden; Brian commented that a tree warden determines if a

particular tree is on public or private property. The priorities for tree removal are 1) school bus roads, 2) main roads and 3) secondary roads. Brian requested \$100,000 for tree removal. He also noted that he is staying away from private road tree removal, but he thinks it's time to start looking into making Sandy Beach Road into a Town road. The Select Board needs to meet with the Town attorney to determine the proper procedure.

4. Review of Highway Department Budget request.

Brian submitted a budget request of a five percent increase for the Surveyor Salary and the Highway Clerk wages. He also requested a five percent increase in the Full-Time Highway Wages account and to add a new, full-time maintenance employee, to support catch basin cleanouts, at a cost of approximately \$50,000/year plus benefits. Brian proposed that the Part-time Highway Wages account be increased by \$4,493 to accommodate extra hours often required for grant work and to increase the Highway Fuel account by \$5,000. He requested a 40% increase in Highway General Expense account and a yet unspecified increase in the Highway Road Improvement account, which he said he will submit later. Finally, he said that his capital purchase request articles would be the following, in prioritized order: (1) \$265,370 to replace the loader used for primarily for moving salt, as the current loader is 23 years old, (2) purchase a used skid steer for under \$75,000, (3) replace the 2006 F350 diesel pickup, which has a broken frame (awaiting a welding repair estimate for repair), and (4) replace the 2011 Ford F350 pickup. Both F350s should be equipped with new plow packages.

There was a discussion regarding the timeframe in the Town's replacement plan for major capital vehicles. Andy indicated that Brian had agreed, years ago, that the F350 pickups would be on a tentative replacement schedule of 20 years, which is the timeframe for full depreciation recommended by the Department of Revenue.

5. Budget Development Activities.

Andy will provide numbers to Robbin for the three charts that are planned for the Annual Report.

6. Expenditure Report – comments/questions.

There were no questions/comments.

7. Select Board updates.

Clelland noted that the VPN upgrade will cost an additional \$500, so it will have to be voted on again by the Select Board. Andy mentioned that a plan should be developed prioritizing the use of ARPA funds. Clelland stated that the fire department buildings need to have some repairs completed

8. Roundtable comments.

None.

9. Next meeting: February 9, 2023

Adjournment –

Karen made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Robbin seconded; approval was unanimous. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Peret