

MINUTES
Tues, Dec 19, 2023
Select Board Meeting – 5:00PM
Town Hall Community Room 1st Floor & Virtual
27 Sturbridge Rd.
Holland, MA 01521

Select Board Members in attendance: James Whalen, Ernie Fancy

Select Board Members in attendance Remote: Kate Landers

Others in attendance: Stacy Stout (Town Administrator), Valerie Lundin (Town Clerk), Karen Peret (Finance), Ed Ward (PD), Bryan Haughey (Police Chief), Cari Robertson (Finance, LOC), Bill Robertson (Planning Board)

Meeting called to order by Chair at 5:02 pm

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Cemetery Commission Headstone Restoration bids. – There were two bids received from
 - a. Ludlow Memorial Company sent their bid pricing. They also included that they have prevailing wage, an insurance policy and that they are bonded along with quotes for other services.
 - b. Gravestone services of New England sent their bid pricing but no other information.
3. Police Department Position – Ed Ward talked about open P/T positions at the police department. The department is having difficulty filling roles. They have lost 6 P/T officers, 4 of which went to F/T positions with other town, one retired and another was just doing detail. Prior to 2022, there were no issues filling shifts, in 2022 they were unable to fill 11 shifts and in 2023 they were unable to fill 56 shifts. There has been no lake patrol since June 2023. They have had to prioritize road control over lake patrol. The reason they are having trouble filling the shifts is the qualifications prior to the police reform bill only allow them to work P/T with that training standard. With this post-standard, it has been mandated that P/T and F/T officers must have the same level of training. Now P/T officers are eligible to work in F/T departments, so small departments are losing P/T staff to larger departments that offer F/T positions. They would like to create a P/T benefited position for an officer for 21 hours per week with health insurance benefits. They have spoken with the Treasurer about the Health Insurance costs and the salary would come out of the Police Department budget. This would be until June 30, 2024 only. The position would have to be included in their upcoming FY 25 budget to continue.

Motion to approve the Police Chief to post for the part time benefited police officer position through June 30th by E Fancy, 2nd by K Landers; All in favor, Yes

4. MVP/HMP update – Chief Haughey said it is taking longer than they had hoped because the company they are dealing with has had changes in personnel, as well as changed to the hazard mitigation system by law that they are trying to incorporate. We have completed our work as a core team. That draft document is in the final stages and we should have a final document in the next few weeks.
5. MMA Annual Meeting/Tradeshow - Stacy wants to attend the annual conference which will be held January 19–20, 2024. The cost to attend meeting \$240.00 and the hotel stay is \$222.00/night (2 nights) for a total of \$644.00. The Select Board expenses spent are at 26% at this point. The organization advocates on behalf of municipalities throughout the Commonwealth. There will be workshops, speakers, exhibitors and more. Stacy went last year and brought back a lot of valuable information for the Board to use.

Motion to approve Stacy to stay 2 nights and attend the MMA meeting by E Fancy, 2nd by K Landers; All in favor, Yes

6. Approval of Minutes - 10-5-2023 and 11-21-23

Motion to approve the minutes from 10/05/2023 as submitted by K Landers, 2nd by E Fancy; All in favor, Yes

Table the minutes from 11/21/2023 to next meeting.

7. Appointments - Jim Belisle of 3 Sandy Beach Rd has requested to be appointed to the Lake Oversight Committee.

Motion to approve the appointment of Jim Belisle to Lake Oversight Committee by E Fancy, 2nd by K Landers; All in favor, Yes

8. Hamilton Reservoir Special Use Permit Requests

- a. 05/25/2024 – Bass Fishing, Aluminum Fishing League, 6:00am – 1:00pm, 8 veh/boats
- b. 09/21/2024 -Canoe/Kayak, Goldfishdan llc, 7:00am – 3:00pm, 8 veh/boats

Motion to approve Special Use Permit Requests by E Fancy, 2nd by K Landers; All in favor, Yes

9. Capital Planning Committee - Re-establishing in January. Discussing who from the Select Board will be a representative on it. Kate will be the representative. Ernie feels this committee's threshold for review is too low (expenses over \$50,000 per our bylaws). He said they should review expenses over \$250,000 or \$500,000.
10. Business License Process – Reviewing the draft Town of Holland General Business License. The formatting has changed. Stacy clarified that DBA's fall under Town Clerk domain whereas Business Licenses will fall under Select Board to close the gap between MGL and town bylaws. We should send the draft forms to the Board of Health and Planning Board for their input. Keep

the Town Clerk in the loop since the processes overlap. Also keep the Assessor Office in the loop re: taxes. It would be convenient to have a shared drive with all relevant departments.

11. IT Infrastructure Planning – Ernie will look at the past invoices from the IT and see what our cost has been. The current IT vendor is not meeting the needs of the town in terms of responsiveness and meeting our needs. We do not have an active contract with the current vendor as the contract period has expired. We would not be in breach of contract if we pursued another vendor. James recommends the town put it back out to bid. Also issues with Cox Communications changing the town’s Static IP address and other outages on their end. The town’s contract states the IP address must be static but they are not honoring that. Cox’s 25-year contract is coming up in 2024. They gave their notice to negotiate in 2022. Cox owns the lines. Over the last 3 years James has reached out to Charter, Verizon, Go Net Speed, AT&T, Google, Starlink. He learned about the ownership of lines and why providers stick to the territories where they own the lines. There would be a significant investment on the part of the town if they want to change providers. But there needs to be some accountability from Cox for all these issues. James knows of only one company (Go Net Speed) that will consider making the investment, but it would require additional funds from the town. Go Net Speed said the buy-in for fiber internet and DirectTV would be \$2.5 million. James asked Charter to connect from Wales to Holland but they refused.

12. Board/Committee/Department updates

- a. Finance Board update –Committees, Boards and Departments have all received their paperwork for budget requests. They approved going forward with the Collins Study proposal at the last meeting.
- b. Lake Oversight Committee update – They have a new member. They are starting to look at weed treatment for next year. Looking into separate companies for testing and treating to avoid conflict of interest. There will be a joint meeting to discuss the dam. At the FHRA meeting, there were residents upset about hydro raking versus dredging. They were trying to share information from a webinar they attended. It is a very expensive process and requires permits.
- c. School Committee – Cancelled
- d. ByLaw Committee update – Ernie said he is awaiting minutes from the Special Town Meeting to be posted to the website. The minutes are on the front page of the town website but should be on the Town Meeting page. Ernie is waiting on the Attorney General for acceptance. Stacy wants to add to the agenda removing anything that is not governing from the bylaws. Things like traffic regulations should be in policy, not bylaws.
- e. Planning Board update – They approved a lot plan for subdividing to two lots on Wales Rd. How is the Assessor informed this happens? The Assessor can get this information from the Hampden Registry when the deed is recorded.

The Cannabis site plan was approved. A special permit document about the site plan approval was submitted to the Town Clerk to be sent to the Attorney General. The language in the final document that was presented was not valid and the Planning Board

Chair told the Town Clerk not to sign and not to forward the document. They would like to get a consultant to help finish the process.

- f. PVPC – They presented an overview of commercial, residential and large-scale battery backup energy systems. Solar, wind, other renewables. Overview of existing technology. Most installations are in central and eastern MA. They are putting together a template that Towns can look at to implement changes.
- g. Cable Commission – Kate would like to change the agenda headings going forward from Cable Commission to Cable Commission/Website. Stacy says they are two separate things and should not be combined on the agenda. Kate asked for a separate line for Website be added. Stacy says that topic can fall under the Town Administrator Report section. James mentioned someone contacted him with interest in being on the commission and will forward information to Stacy.
- h. Road Communication – No Update.
- i. Town Administrator Report - This is a new Agenda Item. The last Department Head meeting covered IT, Finance, Capital Planning Committee, and Police Department Issues. Fire Department is collaborating with a new district (state-approved) that will provide better access to collaboration and training. It is a monthly meeting, whereas the prior district was not meeting at all. New district is Worcester district, was previously Hampden County. Fire department needs to move their oil tank closer to their heat source (\$3,000 expense – funds area available for this). James agrees the oil issue needs to be taken care of because it keeps freezing. Fuel assistance outreach is ongoing. Highway department will be storing their snow blower at the library to make it easier to clear the snow at the library and town hall.

13. Select Board Communications

- a. There was an emergency meeting called yesterday due to the storm. They need to formally terminate the State of Emergency as of today. Still in compliance moving forward as far as reimbursement for damages. The Highway department is working on an extensive list with photos of the damage. No word from the Commonwealth as to whether there will be any funds available. Police and Highway should gather lists of damage, especially road closures and forward to them to State Rep Todd Smola and State Senator Ryan Fattman. Two Residences on Maybrook Rd have damage to their properties due to the overflow. Stacy noted that the owner of 1 Leno Rd reached out regarding flooding. DPW had cleared out the storm drains prior to the storm. The causeway pipe became clogged and was cleared quickly. Cari Robertson (LOC) was driving around assessing and noted the roads that are hardpacked appeared to hold up better than the asphalt roads. In between the storm last week and this week, we had a drawdown on the lake of ~5-6'. She drove down to CT and saw their overflow basin was practically empty and thinks communication needs to improve between CT and Holland. Major part of the damage seen was from the overflow at Maybrook. There was about 3' of water at one point.

Motion to close the Holland State of Emergency on December 19, 2023 at 7:40 pm by E Fancy, 2nd by K Landers; All in favor, Yes

- b. Kate suggested revising the Agenda. The new template is broken down by Old Business, New Business, and Ongoing Business. The sub-list of boards/committees and all updates are combined under one heading now. We will update the Agenda as needed.

14. Bi-Weekly Warrants for Approval

- a. FY24-11 Payroll \$151,968.86
- b. FY24-11 AP \$319,695.61
- c. FY24-12 Payroll \$154,776.73
- d. FY24-12 AP \$68,572.63

Motion to approve all Warrants as read by Ernie Fancy, 2nd by K Landers: All in favor, James – Yes, Ernie – Yes, Kate - Abstain

15. Upcoming Meetings

- a. January 2, 2024
- b. January 16, 2024

16. Public Comments – None

Chair Closed Meeting - Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 pm

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Gumlaw