

**Holland Finance Board**  
27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521  
Holland Town Hall – Community Room  
**Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, March 30, 2022**  
Virtual and Physical Meeting of the Board and Guests

***Note:*** *Subsequent to the meeting, it was realized that there had been technical difficulties and the meeting had not been recorded. Based on sparse notes taken during the meeting, these minutes constitute a best effort to provide an overview of the meeting.*

**Meeting Attendance –**

Members in person: Andrew Harhay, Ernie Fancy, John W Scott and Karen Peret.  
Member attending remotely: Lori Joulbert.  
Guests in person: Clelland Johnson, Selectman and Stacy Stout, Town Administrator.

**Open Meeting –**

The Chair called to order at 6:35 pm.

**1. Approval of Minutes –**

The draft minutes for March 2, 2022 and March 9, 2022 had been previously distributed for review. John made the motion to approve, and Andy seconded. All approved by voice vote.

**2. Finance Board member requirements –**

Discussed the possibility of proposing a bylaw change that would enable seasonal residents to be appointed to the Finance Board. The aim would be to increase the pool of prospective members, as we are having difficulty in attracting candidates. The members were favorable on pursuing the concept after formalizing the wording change.

**3. Assessor's transfer request –**

Principal Assessor Higgins indicated that she will be requesting transfer of \$4,500 from the Reserve Fund to support having a contractor to evaluate open building permits. Once we receive the form and review the details, the Board will act on the request.

#### **4. Review COLA and vote on recommendation –**

The Board discussed the range of COLA percentages being considered in a number of MA communities, based on communications with MMA contacts and publications related to the current inflationary situation. The Chair motioned to propose a 5.0% COLA for Town employees in FY23, up from the 3.0% approved for the current FY22. Karen seconded the motion and it was approved by a 4-1 roll call vote, with Lori voting against the proposed percentage.

#### **5. Review Board of Assessors recommendations –**

The members and guests discussed the approach proposed by BOA Chair Cynthia Poirier in last week's joint meeting of the Select Board, Finance Board and BOA. It was agreed that the primary approach would be attempting to fill a *Technical Assistant* position that would report to the current BOA Chair, who would serve in a position titled the *Director of Assessment*. Advertising for an MMA certified assessor would also be continued, although the pool is very limited.

#### **6. Budget review –**

The members reviewed the current draft and agreed that it was reasonably close to being balanced. The decision will be how to specifically direct operating budget dollars and free cash in supporting overall priority needs. The article proposed for a new fire truck will have to be carefully reviewed to determine how to most effectively fund the cost anticipated to be near \$800K. Ernie and Andy will continue to work on their drafts to achieve the necessary end-result of bringing a balanced budget to the ATM.

#### **7. Roundtable comments –**

Do not recall that there were further comments.

#### **7. Next meeting –**

April 6, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

#### **Adjournment –**

John made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Ernie seconded; approval was unanimous. The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Harhay