

Holland Finance Board

27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521

Holland Town Hall – Community Room

Meeting Minutes for Monday, June 13, 2022

Virtual and Physical Meeting of the Board and Guests

Meeting Attendance –

Members in person: Andrew Harhay, Ernie Fancy and Karen Peret.

Guests in person: Bill Hardy, Town Moderator, Stacy Stout, Town Administrator and Robbin Lauzon, potential new member.

Open Meeting –

The Chair called to order at 6:33pm.

1. Approval of previous minutes.

Karen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 3/30/22, seconded by Ernie, all approved.

Ernie made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for 5/11/22 draft minutes, seconded by Andy, all in favor.

2. End-Of-Year transfers were discussed.

Karen moved to approve the transfer of \$1,148.60 from the Audit account to the Snow & Ice account (001-423-5700-0000) as the full-time wages and highway clerk wages fell short due to pothole filling and repairs of street sweeper & other equipment, seconded by Ernie, approved by all.

Karen moved to approve the transfer of \$16,044.15 from the Tree Warden Expense to the Highway Road Improvement account (001-422-5240-0002), seconded by Ernie. Motion approved by all. Previously approved funds were unable to be used as the actual service was not performed by the one named in the original encumbrance.

Karen moved to approve the transfer of \$734 from the Assistant Town Clerk Wages to Town Clerk Expense account (001-161-5700-8001, seconded by Andy, to pay for permanent record retention materials. All approved.

Karen moved to approve the transfer of \$2,500 from the Election & Registration Wages to the Town Clerk Expense account (001-161-5700-8001), seconded by Andy, to pay for town election wages. All approved.

Karen moved to approve the transfer of \$2,569.11 from the Audit account to the Heating Public Buildings account (001-192-5400-0001), as heating costs had increased substantially; motion seconded by Ernie, approved by all.

Highway requested the transfer of \$866.98 from Clerk wages to Part-Time Wages (001-422-5110-0002), with the deficit resulting from the continuing need to repair numerous potholes. A transfer of \$4,608.47 was requested from Full-Time Wages to General Expenses (001-422-5700-0000), due to

repairs on the sweeper and other equipment. Andy said he thought that the Finance Board should have been notified of this before this date that Highway was operating at a deficit, as it appears to be illegal. In asking this question of our accountant, Laurie conveyed that in the case of earned wages, she is required by MA Labor Law to pay the individual, even though the wage account is in deficit. With that information, Ernie made the motion to approve both of the Highway transfer requests, Karen seconded and all voted in favor. It was noted that this is the second year that Highway has had a surplus in its full-time wages account. Andy indicated that in FY21 the reason was attributed to an employee leaving due to the pandemic, but we don't currently know the reason for having a full-time wages surplus in FY22 and will ask for details.

3. Encumbrances.

Ernie had made us aware that the most recent *DLS City & Town* had an article on Encumbrances. The topic has been a subject of interest, as the accountant has indicated she has the sole responsibility to make decisions on whether to encumber funds to satisfy a contract made during the final two weeks of a fiscal year. Andy felt that the transfer of funds from one year to the next should also be approved by a second official body. Any contract signed during the last two weeks of a fiscal year should reasonably have been incorporated into the next year's budget. Andy noted that he read a newspaper article about Monson's approach. They have a STM on the same night as their ATM, with the purpose being to ensure transparency of encumbrance-type of transfers... it is the voters that approve or disapprove these transfers. Bill Hardy indicated that having voters decide on these transfers was the approach many years in the past. Such a change may need to be reflected in the Town Bylaws.

4. Roundtable comments.

Andy updated the Finance Board member 'Job Description' write-up developed to assist in the search for additional members and will send it to Stacy for posting.

There was a discussion of changing the Finance Board meeting schedule during winter and spring months to consolidate time spent by its members and town staff in the budget development sessions with the various Town departments and committees. Stacy will research the provisions of the Open Meeting Law regarding our potentially meeting with multiple groups on a few Saturdays.

There was a brief discussion with Robbin Lauzon regarding the functions of the Finance Board, as she is interested in becoming a member. Bill Hardy confirmed that Robbin is now a voter in Holland and provided his thoughts on the importance of having an independent board work with other Town officials in bringing a balanced budget to ATM.

5. Next meeting- Not Scheduled

6. Adjournment – Andy made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Ernie seconded; approval was unanimous. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Peret