

Holland Finance Board

27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521

Holland Town Hall – Community Room

Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, September 29, 2022

Virtual and Physical Meeting of the Board and Guests

Meeting Attendance –

Members in person: Andrew Harhay, Robbin Luzon, Cara Bogacz and Karen Peret.

Members attending remotely: None

Member Absent: None

Guests in person: William Hardy-Town Moderator; Clelland Johnson – Select Board; Stacy Stout - Town Administrator; Cynthia Poirier - Board of Assessors; and Paul Tortolani – prospective member.

Open Meeting –

The Chair called to order at 6:34pm.

1. Update on Board of Assessors activities - Cynthia Poirier.

Cynthia requested a meeting with the Finance Board for an update of Assessor Board activities and financial needs. At the end of FY2022, all funds from the Assessors budget had been turned back. Bishop & Associates have been hired to perform the reval field work and data entry for \$20/parcel, which is less than previously estimated. Cynthia will talk to the accountant to see if the reval maintenance account can be used for the work. The Assessors will likely be requesting a transfer from the Reserve Fund for on-going training of the Principal Assessor for \$550, general office supplies for \$500 and \$290 for envelopes.

2. Approval of 8/17/22 Minutes.

The draft minutes for August 17, 2022, had been previously distributed for review. Karen made the motion to approve, and Robbin seconded. All approved.

3. Meet prospective new member Paul Tortolani.

Paul Tortolani introduced himself as a volunteer to serve on the Finance Board. He saw in a FHRA newsletter that the Finance Board needed additional members and decided to try to help. His resume indicated that he has degrees in Public Administration and many years of experience in financial management of academic programs. He has lived in Holland for twenty-two years. After responding to questions by the members and the Town Moderator said he would appoint Paul to the Finance Board. Membership will be effective when Paul is sworn in by the Town Clerk.

4. Discuss budget development topics.

Andy presented two possible winter/spring meeting schedules for weekly or biweekly meetings. The consensus was to maintain a weekly schedule during the meetings with the various depts/boards/committees and to start meetings at 6:00 pm rather than 6:30 pm.

Robbin indicated that she and her husband plan to buy a second house in Wilbraham to be closer to her daughter during some of the week as she attends school at W&MA. The Luzons will continue to maintain to their permanent home and voter registration in Holland.

5. Roundtable comments.

Karen raised a question regarding the recent Expenditure Ledger Report, showing that the Highway Road Improvement account has been entirely expended. She was concerned that the Highway Department may not have enough in other accounts to operate during the year. Comments were made that there were multiple funding sources for road work and that it was up to the department head to manage costs. Karen also asked about several accounts that had a zero-dollar allocation. Clelland indicated that that the funds came from Cherry Sheet dollars that went directly to these costs.

Cara questioned department head responsibility for anticipating cost increases during the year. Andy indicated that expense lines in many departments were adjusted upwards to reflect expected inflationary pressures. The Finance Board worked with the various departments and Select Board to recommend the adjusted expense line to ATM.

Clelland discussed the potential for piggybacking on State contracts for commodities and invited any one to work with the Select Board on this project. Karen volunteered to assist.

Andy had previously recommended doing a salary survey of town employees in Holland compared to comparable towns in MA and that it appeared that funds might be available through the Community Compact Grant Program. Stacy said that she has asked our Grant Writer to pursue that potential opportunity.

Stacy discussed options the Select Board is reviewing to increase revenue for the Town and indicated that the positions of All Boards Clerk and Assistant Town Administrator have been filled.

6. Next meeting: October 20, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment –

Karen made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Robbin seconded; approval was unanimous. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Peret