

**HOLDEN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
May 4, 2020**

6:30PM

Zoom Meeting

Present: Anthony Renzoni, Tyler Gibbs, Robert Lavigne, Geri Herlihy, Chiara Barnes

Others Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager
 Stephanie King, Assistant Town Manager
 Brian Falk, Town Counsel
 Liz Fotos, Town

Chairman Renzoni called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. The Board waived the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Citizens Address

None

2. Appointments, Licenses, Permits

None

3. Selectmen Miscellaneous

Sel. Lavigne thanked Ms. King for her work on celebrating the graduates.

Sel. Herlihy: none

Sel. Gibbs: none

Sel. Barnes: none

Chairman Renzoni stated that he had heard that the district was discussing opening up school choice again; he asked if the Town Manager had heard anything about that.

Mr. Lukes replied that he had heard it from the rumor mill but nothing has come through via the Superintendent. He stated that he thinks it is a poor decision. He stated that in the short term it may be profitable but it would put a great burden on the Town because once you are in the school system you are there until graduation.

Sel. Lavigne suggested sending a letter via the Chair outlining the Boards concerns. He stated that the schools are already at max capacity and he does not think this is a great time for an increase in numbers.

Sel. Herlihy stated that they spoke about it at the last two meetings and were looking at it as an additional budget item. She stated that they wanted to see the states numbers and bring in additional revenue. She stated that she agrees that it is not a great idea and she hopes that none of the Boards support it.

Chairman Renzoni stated that they did not need to vote for him to send correspondence. He stated that judging from the atmosphere he can pen something. He stated that if they are trying to bring in additional students to generate revenue it will force the town to build a new school with an estimated cost of around \$70 million.

Mr. Lukes stated that the district predicts a much higher number than the Town so there is some discrepancy.

Chairman Renzoni asked if anyone objected to him generating a letter to the School Board; no one objected.

4. Citizen Address

Chairman Renzoni opened it up for Citizens Address and once again provided his cell phone number for any participates unable to join via Zoom.

No members of the public were present on Zoom or via cell phone.

Misc. Cont.

Sel. Lavigne asked if they had heard back from the district with regards to cost savings.

Mr. Lukes replied that he had not heard back and he is unsure if they have the numbers yet. He stated that he had asked the Light Department to look into the electricity and they estimate it to be around a \$10,000 decrease for the utilities for the month of March.

Chairman Renzoni stated that March would only be a half a month. He stated that the savings were significant and that using last years numbers he estimated it was about a \$25,000-\$30,000 cost savings per month in Holden alone.

5. Celebration for Graduating Wachusett Students

Chairman Renzoni asked Ms. King for an update.

Ms. King stated that she was working with Jamie Brennan and Megan Grady, the Vice President and Secretary of the Class of 2020. She stated that they had brought it up to their Senior Advisor and came up with a route so that the entire class can have a car parade together. She stated that Chief Sherblom was helping set up traffic routes to ensure the flow of traffic and that one police from each town would accompany the entire route.

Chief Sherblom stated that right now it sounded like they would have each town with a cruiser in the parade and a few to assist with traffic.

Ms. King stated that the date of graduation was June 4th but they changed it to June 6th to be able to have a family member drive each graduate around safely. She stated that there were some dangerous spots so they were looking at the route again.

Sel. Lavigne asked if 8th graders were being included in the plan.

Ms. King stated that they have not touched on 5th, 8th, or private schools yet. She stated that they were not sure how many additional students that would incorporate.

Sel. Lavigne asked if Monty Tech would be included.

Chairman Renzoni stated that this could evolve from here. He stated that it seemed as though it could be easy to add on to as the schools want to help and make sure the seniors are treated right.

Ms. King stated that a lot of this would fall on the police.

Chairman Renzoni stated that there was an LCD Board that they wanted to add to Town to display a slideshow for the seniors. He stated that he suggested that they could use Hancock Common to display the seniors.

Sel. Lavigne asked if there was anything in the bylaws that prohibited this.

Mr. Lukes stated that it was a temporary sign and that he could speak with the Planning Board. He suggested possible use of the Senior Center.

Chairman Renzoni stated that may be a better place; he stated that there would be another meeting and they could take vote at that time.

6. Annual Town Election Warrant, Jeanne Survell, Town Clerk

Jeanne Survell, Town Clerk was present at the meeting in case there were any questions.

Mr. Lukes stated that they were trying to push a lot of absentee voting and they want to let as many people know as possible.

Ms. Survell stated that they wanted to get the warrant out so they could start to advertise.

Sel. Lavigne asked how the signatures would work on the document.

Mr. Falk, Town Counsel, stated that the Board would need to sign the document but they could do so individually at Town Hall. He stated that they needed at least three signatures. He stated that they could do electronic signatures but preferred ink.

Mr. Lukes asked the Board if they were comfortable stopping in individually.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE TO SET THE WARRANT AS PRESENTED(attached)**. (Herlihy: yes; Gibbs: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

7. Town Manager Update

Attached

Mr. Lukes stated the Town was not imposing fines and they are largely leaving it up to businesses to enforce social distancing protocols.

Chairman Renzoni asked how much 911 traffic they are receiving that are reporting violations.

Mr. Lukes replied that it was not a lot and some of it may be legitimate but there was a lot of emails and social media posts regarding social distancing violations. He stated that they are not going to react to those as they are an emergency venue.

Chairman Renzoni thanked the police. He stated that they can not police neighborhoods and that he was at Jed's over the weekend and it was packed and with the exception of two people, everyone was masked and waiting with space. He stated that Jed's was controlling it's customers and doing the right thing. He stated it was crowded but that he felt safe.

Citizen Address Revisit

Chairman Renzoni opened it back up for Citizens Address via cell phone and Zoom; no members of the public were present.

8. Open, Set, and Close Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Lukes stated that there was nothing out of the ordinary with this. He stated they did want to swap articles 19 and 20 because it made more sense to do so. He stated additionally there were some housekeeping issues from Mountview to address as well.

Chairman Renzoni stated that it was unclear how the pandemic would impact the budget next year. He stated that they need to review and have the debates about the articles. He stated that he thinks they should break it up over the next three meetings.

Mr. Lukes stated that worked for him. He stated some of these items were borrowing items and it may be smart to do them now because it was a good time to borrow and each of the items were identified as projects that needed to be done in the next 1-3 years. He

stated it was important to look long term as there are low interest rates currently and the projects needed to be addressed.

Chairman Renzoni asked if there was any opportunity to restructure current debt.

Mr. Lukes replied there was not yet but they always keep an eye on it.

Mr. Lukes stated that they had a warrant article to address the bylaw amendment for the Nuisance Bylaw. He stated that they have worked this out so that it is legal and gives the Town some leverage if need be.

Mr. Lukes stated that the Zoning Bylaw was regarding the Jefferson area along with the Adams Road and dealt with the Village Concept.

Mr. Lukes stated that the Erosion Control Department met with the Stormwater Management to ensure that the Town met current standards.

Mr. Lukes stated that there was also a petitioned article raised by the Board of Health and asked that the Town put it on as a Warrant Article. He stated that it would be for \$150,000 for the Town to be a member of a coalition and would involve mosquito mitigation and eradication and spraying. He stated that he will have something to say as time goes on but he is unsure that the investment is worth the return in this situation.

Chairman Renzoni asked if they could have someone prepare a cost/benefit analysis.

Mr. Lukes replied that this was in response to EEE. He stated that Holden had no humans or animals test positive for this and at the end of the season a small number of mosquitoes did. He stated that in addition to that, there is a lot of mitigation that the Town is unable to do based on water and proximity to water sources. He stated that he will put something more together for the Board.

Chairman Renzoni stated that this was the first correspondence he had regarding this. He stated that he does not like how this got to the Selectboard's decision making and does not feel as though this passes merit. He asked if there was a reason it occurred like this.

Mr. Lukes replied that it got to him late as well.

Chairman Renzoni recommended that the Board strike this from the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Mr. Lukes replied that he did not object but asked for Town Counsel's opinion.

Chairman Renzoni asked if the Board had an obligation to put this on from the Board of Health. He stated that the Warrant was not yet opened and he suggests setting the warrant without this matter.

Mr. Falk stated that there is no obligation. He stated that some other Towns have it by charter but that Holden does not so if the Board of Selectmen chooses not to put it on they can.

Mr. Lukes stated that he agrees and is unsure of the benefits of this.

Sel. Herlihy asked if there was time to have the Board of Health come in and discuss the matter at the next meeting.

Chairman Renzoni stated that Mr. Lukes' office was asked to put this on by the Board of Health. He stated we are weeks out from Town Meeting and that he supposes that they can ask but he recommends against it. He stated that they could come in next year and then a cost benefit analysis could be done but as per the Town Manager it did not seem as though there was a lot of benefit in joining this.

Sel. Herlihy stated that we don't know anything about it right now.

Chairman Renzoni agreed and said the limited information they have is from the Town Manager.

Mr. Lukes stated Warrant Article 40 was for Boarding and Lodging. He stated that there is not many houses in Holden that this pertains to but there has been a slow creep and they want to ensure there is something in place if need be.

Mr. Lukes stated that Article 41 was regarding Eagle Lake Dam and is a Citizen Petition

Chairman Renzoni stated that the Town will submit its own Warrant Article for Eagle Lake that will function better. He stated that he thinks that this will be fine with them as it is essentially the same but has the verbiage that the Town needs. He stated that he thinks this will ultimately be passed over.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE TO OPEN THE 2020 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT.** (Gibbs: yes; Herlihy: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

Motion by Sel. Herlihy, seconded by Sel. Barnes, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE TO SWITCH WARRANT ARTICLE 19 TO ARTICLE 20 AND VICE VERSA.** (Herlihy: yes; Gibbs: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

A Motion to strike Warrant Article 39 was made by Sel. Herlihy and seconded by Sel. Lavigne. The motion was opened up for discussion.

Sel. Herlihy stated that she wanted more information on this matter. She stated that she knew last year a lot of things needed to be put in place and evening games needed to be cancelled. She stated that many people were asking why we were not a part of something

and while she was not sure the specifics of this she would like the chance to find out more.

Mr. Lukes stated that when you hear you are a part of something it gives people a false sense that you are protected. He stated there were towns in the program that fared far worse than Holden and that he had a folder full of information he could provide to the Board.

Sel. Lavigne stated that he does not think there is enough time to look at this. He stated that the conversation should have happened months ago and he does not feel there is enough time for this to be at this year's Town Meeting.

Sel. Gibbs stated that the Board of Health is recommending it and while he knows we have not heard from them, there is a reason they are doing so and he would like more information about it.

Sel. Barnes agreed and wanted more information.

Chairman Renzoni stated that he agreed and felt that it was the people's responsibility to make a decision but is concerned with what the Board would tell people in the future regarding procedures. He stated that this is the first time they are hearing about it and moving forward like this puts people on a slippery slope. He stated that he does not think this is deserving of Town Meeting at this point. He stated they don't have the information they need and this is not the process in which the Town does business

Sel. Herlihy stated she agrees about the process but that the Board relies on the Board of Health as this is not their (BOS) area of expertise. She stated she does not know if this could remedy the problem but she would like more information.

Chairman Renzoni stated he would feel bad for Eagle Lake if this moved forward. He stated that they have gone through the process and it took them several years to do so. He stated he is also unsure if this fixed the problem or was beneficial.

Mr. Lukes stated that this was a ground solution not an aerial one and would be in addition to what the Town already did. He stated that he thinks this would give people a false sense of security and protection.

Chairman Renzoni called for the vote. He stated that an aye vote meant it was removed a nay vote meant it stayed on.

Motion by Sel. Herlihy, seconded by Sel. Lavigne, it was **VOTED TO STRIKE WARRANT ARTICLE 39 FROM THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING BY A ROLL CALL VOTE OF 3-2.** (Gibbs: nay; Herlihy: nay; Barnes: aye; Lavigne: aye; Renzoni: aye).

Chairman Renzoni stated that the motion carried and the Article was removed from the 2020 Warrant.

Chairman Renzoni asked the Town Manager to send correspondence to the Board of Health and get the process sorted out.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE TO SET THE 2020 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT AS AMENDED.** (Gibbs: yes; Herlihy: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO CLOSE THE 2020 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT BY A ROLL CALL VOTE.** (Gibbs: yes; Herlihy: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

Sel. Lavigne asked Mr. Falk what happened if they were unable to reach a quorum.

Mr. Falk stated that the moderator could push it to another day and time. He stated that some bills were presented that had provisions that the town could opt to reduce quorum but it did not make it to final bill. He stated that they could proceed to court to do that if they wished.

Citizen Address

Chairman Renzoni opened it back up for Citizens Address via cell phone and Zoom; no members of the public were present.

9. Water and Sewer Rates

Mr. Lukes stated that the Board should have received the memo from Mr. Woodsmall. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Woodsmall and Mr. Mouradian who were in attendance on Zoom.

Mr. Woodsmall asked if there were any additional questions.

Chairman Renzoni stated that he suggested that they pass these as presented. He stated that it can be opened back up in the future if need be but that after 4 weeks of back and forth his suggestion is to move forward.

Sel. Lavigne stated that he appreciated their patience. He stated that he thinks that most of his questions were answered with the data provided. He stated that one thing he thought would make sense would be to have more regular updates around the financials for the enterprise fund which may smooth the process going forward.

Sel. Herlihy agreed with having more information earlier.

Motion by Sel. Gibbs, seconded by Sel. Herlihy, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADOPT THE WATER/SEWER RATES FOR FY21 AS PRESENTED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE.** (Gibbs: yes; Herlihy: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

10. Selectmen Minutes

None

11. Selectmen Subcommittee

None

Citizen Address

None

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN THE MAY 4, 2020 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING BY A ROLL CALL VOTE AT 7:28PM.** (Gibbs: yes; Herlihy: yes; Barnes: yes; Lavigne: yes; Renzoni: yes).

APPROVED: _____ **June 8, 2020** _____