

SELECT BOARD MEETING

Select Board present: Chairman Mark Le Doux, David Petry, Frank Cadwell and Susan Benz
Select Board absent: Peter Band
Staff present: Lori Radke, Town Administrator; Rachael Gosselin, Finance Officer; Todd Croteau, DPW Director; Rick Towne, Fire Chief; Joe Hoebeke, Police Chief; Brendan LaFlamme, Police Captain; Paul Armstrong and Bill Moseley, Camera Operators

COMMUNITY ROOM

Hollis Town Hall Community Room, located at 7 Monument Square, Hollis, New Hampshire.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

SELECT BOARD PUBLIC SESSION

1. Professional Services Agreement-Engineering Services for Hollis, NH

Dennis La Bombard, Town Engineer will be retiring after many years of working for the Town of Hollis. The Hollis Planning Board and town staff conducted the lengthy processes for Mr. La Bombard's replacement and recommends KV Partners LLC as the new consultant for engineering services.

KV Partners LLC is a civil engineering firm that has been in business since 2005 and is based in New Boston, NH. The firm only works on municipal contracts to avoid any conflicts of interest. The Planning Board decides on a case by case basis if the Town Engineer's services are needed to review a project. Fees for the Town Engineer services are paid for by the applicant as part of the project review process.

MOVED by David Petry seconded by Susan Benz that the Select Board approve the Professional Services Agreement with KV Partners LLC for Engineering Services. Voting in favor of the motion were Le Doux, Petry, Benz and Cadwell. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

2. 2020 Petition Warrant Article Review/Final Recommendations

ARTICLE 15 – Petition Article for Veteran's Tax Credit

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to RSA 72:28, to modify the All Veterans property Tax Credit from the existing \$500 to \$750 as currently allowed by RSA 72:28. Said credit shall take effect in the tax year beginning April 2020.

The Petition Warrant Article was previously voted by the Select Board on January 27, 2020. It was not recommended by the Board of Selectmen with a 2-3-0 vote. Please see minutes from 1/27/20 for reference.

ARTICLE 16 – Petition Article for New Hampshire Resolution to Take Action on Carbon Pollution

We the town of Hollis call on our State and Federal elected representatives to enact carbon-pricing legislation to protect New Hampshire from both the costs and environmental impacts of continued climate inaction. To protect households, we support a Cash Back approach, that places a fair price on the cost of pollution and uses the money raised to give equal cash-back rebates to residents. Enacting a Carbon-Cash-Back program decreases long-term fossil-fuel dependence, aids in the economic transition for energy consumers and keeps local energy dollars in New Hampshire's economy. Carbon cash-back has been championed by US economists (Jan 17, 2019 WSJ) as the most effective way to deliver rapid reductions in harmful carbon emissions at the scale needed to address rapidly accelerating climate pollution.

We expect our representatives to lead in this critical moment for the health and well-being of our citizens and for the protection of New Hampshire's natural resources upon which we all rely.

The record of the vote approving this shall be transmitted by written notice to Hollis' state legislatures and Hollis' congressional delegation, and to the President of the United States, informing them of the instructions of their constituents, by Hollis Board of Selectmen within 30 days of this vote.

The Select Board did not take a position on this Petition Warrant Article as it has no impact on the town budget, at this time.

ARTICLE 17 – Petition Article for Proposing Bylaw

To see if the Town, in accordance with NH RSA 31:39, will adopt the following bylaw: "The discharge of any firearm on Town-owned land other than during the course of lawful hunting shall be prohibited. This prohibition includes (but not limited to) target shooting, gun siting, recreational shooting, or shooting competitions".

Attorney Drescher reviewed the article and did not express any concerns with wording of the article. The Board requested clarification on whether the article would be advisory or binding, in nature. Town Administrator, Lori Radke was directed to consult with Attorney Drescher for clarification.

ARTICLE 18 – Petition Article for Adoption of SB2

"Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB2) to allow official ballot voting on all issues before the Town of Hollis on the 2nd Tuesday of March?"

It was explained that Senate Bill 2 (SB2) creates a deliberative session, which is similar to a Town Meeting but votes are not taken at the deliberative session. The budgets are set, then at a later date, are voted on in an all-day voting scenario. It could be argued that this process would result in greater participation. However, once the article is on the ballot, it cannot be changed.

Since it is required that a public hearing be held by the local governing body before it is voted on, the Board agreed to set the public hearing date to February 24, 2020.

MOVED by Frank Cadwell seconded by Susan Benz that the Select Board set a public hearing date of February 24, 2020 to receive feedback regarding the Petition Article for Adoption of SB2, pursuant to RSA 40:14. Voting in favor of the motion were Le Doux, Petry, Benz and Cadwell. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

ARTICLE 19 – Petition Article for Preservation and Protection of "Passive" uses on town own or steward Properties.

“To see if the town will vote to adopt the preservation and protection of “Passive” uses and other Recreational Activities for its Conservation Lands, Trails or other town owned or stewarded properties (similar to forests, fields, wetlands or unimproved lands in a natural state, etc.). The named “Passive Uses” of these lands shall be as similarly outlined under RSA 79-A (specifically referencing “Current Use, but here relevant for naming Passive Uses) and consistent with similar US Environmental Protection Agency provisions for Passive Recreational Use for Conservation Lands. As defined therein and in the order there listed but not limited to, these Use activities shall include: Hunting, Skiing, Fishing, Snowshoeing, Hiking and Nature Observation. Other uses shall include, Snowmobiling (seasonally and conditions permitting). Further, and not limited to the above activities, any legal Recreational Activity permitted on current Conservation Lands and Trails as of January 1, 2020 as hereby ‘grand-fathered’ and protected from infringement.”

The Board was concerned that this article may contradict previous warrant articles to procure land, which included specific uses, identified within those individual articles. The Board requested clarification and confirmation of the legality of the petition warrant article. Petition warrant articles 17 and 19 seem to contradict each other, so the Board requested legal counsel’s guidance, should both articles pass at Town Meeting. The Board also inquired whether this petition warrant article was advisory or binding, in nature.

ARTICLE 20 – Petition Article for New Hampshire Resolution for Fair Redistricting

“To see if the town will urge that the New Hampshire General Court, which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the 2020 census, will do so in a manner that ensures fair and effective representation of the New Hampshire voters. That in order to fulfill this obligation the New Hampshire General Court shall appoint an independent redistricting commission that draws the new district maps in a way that does not rely on partisan data such as election results or party registration or favor particular political parties or candidates.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from the selectmen to the town of Hollis’s state legislators and to the Governor of New Hampshire informing them of the instructions from their constituents within 30 days of the vote.

The Board reviewed the petition warrant article and did not take any action.

3. Unassigned Fund Balance

Chairman Le Doux suggested the Board increase the amount relieving the Unassigned Fund Balance from \$300k to \$400k, in the fall of 2020, in order to lower the tax rate further. The Board felt it appropriate to relieve the fund balance down to a level that would be commensurate with our stated policy of 10% of operating budget

MOVED by David Petry seconded by Susan Benz that the Select Board approve increasing the amount to relieve the Unassigned Fund Balance from \$300k to \$400k to apply towards the tax rate. Voting in favor of the motion were Le Doux, Petry, Benz and Cadwell. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Drew Mason (Baxter Road and Moderator of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District) confirmed that the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District (COOP) has an article on the warrant for SB2. The Town of Brookline has an article on their warrant for the removal of Brookline from the COOP. Should this article pass, a study committee would be formed to work through the dissolution process. M. Le Doux added that according to state law, both parties no longer need to agree to a dissolution. D. Petry also added that the Superintendent

will need to reconcile the value of the assets from when the COOP was created. Since there is a warrant article for SB2 on the town warrant, a public hearing is required. M. Le Doux added that the public hearing is scheduled for February 24, 2020. Additionally, an hour long ballot vote at Town Meeting is also required. In order for the warrant to pass, 60% of the total votes are necessary.

Tom Gehan (Broad Street) spoke in regard to the Brookline warrant article to withdraw from the COOP. He was under the impression that Brookline is not the host of the capital assets and buildings of the COOP and if they chose to withdraw, they would surrender all claims equity and would be liable for all capital obligations incurred while a member. They would also be required to pay off their portion of the remainder of the Hollis Brookline Middle School renovation and turf field.

PUBLIC HEARING (SELECT BOARD)

At 6:27PM Chairman Le Doux opened the Public Hearing for the purpose of hearing input on whether or not to add the Keno Game question to the official ballot to be voted on March 10, 2020 or the Town Warrant to be voted on March 14, 2020.

Andrea and Francesco Mannino (Evelyn Circle, Nashua and owner of Pizzeria Zacharia Bar & Grill, Hollis) are in support of Keno as it would promote the business by encouraging people to visit the restaurant.

The Board agreed to wait and review the level of interest from the community and bring it to the board for consideration next year. The petition warrant article did not have the required 25 signatures to be included on the Town Warrant.

With no further discussion, the public hearing was closed at 6:36PM.

PUBLIC HEARING & MEETING (BUDGET COMMITTEE)

Review of 2020 Budget and Proposed Warrant Articles

For more information, see Budget Committee minutes dated February 10, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Frank Cadwell seconded by Susan Benz that the Select Board adjourn the meeting. Voting in favor of the motion were Le Doux, Petry, Benz and Cadwell. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

The Board adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Herrera, Assistant Town Administrator