

Holbrook Board of Selectmen

Minutes of the Regular Session of

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

Present: Matthew V. Moore, Chairman  
Kevin J. Sheehan, Vice-Chairman  
Daniel F. Moriarty, III, Clerk  
Richard B. McGaughey, Associate

In attendance: Timothy J. Gordon, Town Administrator  
Marjorie E. Godfrey, Assistant Town Administrator  
William Smith, Chief of Police  
Luke McFadden, Fire Chief  
Benjamin Ecord, Superintendent of Public Works  
Stephan Hooke, Director, Communications Department  
Jeanmarie Tarara, Town Clerk  
Paul Digirolamo, Town Treasurer/Collector  
Cynthia Brennan, Town Accountant  
Diane Haley, Assistant Town Accountant  
Kevin Costa, Chairman, Finance Committee  
Finance Committee members Peter Mahoney, Patrick Duggan, Paul Lynch  
Daniel Lee, Chairman, Board of Assessors  
Patrick Haring, Principal Assessor and Pamela Holt, Assistant Assessor  
School Committee Chairman Arthur George, and members Beth Tolson, Barbara  
Davis, Nancy Alterio, School Superintendent Dr. Patricia Lally, Business  
Manager Patricia Lugo  
Public Library Director Donald Colon  
Library Trustee Kenneth Howley

Town Administrator Gordon introduced Peter Brown, Esq. of D'Ambrosio Brown, LLP, the TOWN'S TAX TITLE ATTORNEY. He advised that a property with unpaid taxes for a year should have a lien placed on it to secure the amount due the Town. 16% interest is charged on overdue taxes, per state law. Ultimately, the goal is to get the taxes paid, not to take the property. Atty. Brown reported that of \$2.1 million worth of outstanding taxes, between \$1.3 million to \$1.4 million is owed on properties that have value. About 35% of the \$2.1 million are of questionable value and require an alternative approach. Another \$685,000 are properties that have to be evaluated, of which \$378,000 is in the Edgewood Park area. This law firm is 50 years old, and, by helping people to find alternative solutions to foreclosure, less than 1% of the properties go to foreclosure. \$160,000 has been collected for Holbrook so far. Atty. Brown explained a RECEIVERSHIP PROGRAM available for problem properties that are not up to Code or have public safety violations. Fines can be given and added to the tax bill, the owner can be made to fix the property, or it can be taken, restored, and sold.

Town Administrator Gordon presented a draft FY17 Town budget for review and discussion. It is anticipated that some departments will receive less of an increase than they have requested. School Committee Chairman Arthur George spoke about the 3% increase included in the budget for the School Department, and indicated that the School Department will accept the numbers. The School Department is trying to build the curriculum by adding new course choices. Communications Director Hooke responded to questions about the funding available for the regional dispatch services, including the negotiated increase in the fees other Towns are paying for the services, and the obligations of the department to maintain equipment and properly staff the department. Mr. Gordon offered brief

comments on other areas of the budget. Unfortunately, this budget does not allow for funding for capital improvements or for adding a human resource employee. However, Snow and Ice Expense will be covered using Free Cash, the local receipts are steady, and this budget allows the Schools to be funded with a 3% increase. Capital Improvements that will be funded in FY17 include a dump truck for Public Works, Tasers for the Police Department, and new financial software for the Town. The Board indicated support for the budget, but agreed that they would delay a vote to recommend the budget to the Finance Committee, in order to encourage dialog to continue. Mr. Costa said the Finance Committee will vote a recommended budget by April 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Board of Selectmen has received a letter from TOWN ACCOUNTANT CYNTHIA BRENNAN, notifying them that she will be leaving her job and retiring from the Town, effective June 30, 2016. Ms. Brennan has been working in various capacities in the Town Accountant's office since 1997.

The contract for the MASONRY REPAIRS on the outside of the Town Hall was before the Board. The bid award, to CD Masonry Restoration, Inc., was made at the last meeting. The scope of work was read.

MOTION: By Mr. Moriarty, second by Mr. Sheehan, to approve and execute a contract between the Town of Holbrook and CD Masonry Restoration, Inc. of Oxford, MA, for Services Related to Masonry Repairs to the Exterior of the Holbrook Town Hall, in the amount of \$26,800

VOTE: 4:0

It was announced that the ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION will be held on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. Seniors needing transportation should call the Council on Aging.

MOTION: At 8:45 pm, to adjourn to executive session to discuss strategy as it relates to collective bargaining with union personnel (Firefighters), and not return to open session

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Moriarty – Yes  
Mr. Moore – Yes  
Mr. McGaughey – Yes  
Mr. Sheehan – Yes

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Daniel F. Moriarty, III, Clerk

Documents:  
FY17 proposed (draft) budget  
Masonry contract