



## **Town of Holland, MA – Finance Board**

### *Meeting Minutes*

January 28, 2015

#### **Call To Order**

The Chairman called to order a meeting of the Holland Finance Board at 7:30 PM on January 28, 2015 at the Holland Town Hall.

#### **Roll Call**

Finance Board members present: Andrew Harhay (Chairman), Ernest Fancy, John Phelps, John Ebersold and Mike Brady. Also present was Select Board Chairperson Lynn Arnold.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 21, 2015 meeting were approved.

## New Business

### Review of Highway Department and Police Department Budget Requests for FY16:

Due to the significant amount of time that the Highway Surveyor and Police Chief spent dealing with the blizzard during the week, they did not attend the meeting.

### Review of Select Board Budget Request for FY16:

Select Board Chairperson Lynn Arnold had provided the FY16 Budget Request. Overall the request is about 3% greater than the FY15 approved budget. Expenses were higher than the FY15 amount by \$650, about 28%. Details of the expense items were not provided, but Chairperson Arnold indicated that part of the increase is due to an increase in travel expenses. Details of the expense items will be provided.

Legal expenses are about 14% greater due to the expectation that more issues will have to be referred to the Town's Legal Counsel.

The increases in the Street and Public Building Lighting Expenses are due to the increase in the Supply charges from the electric company.

The amount requested for Dam and Boat Ramp Maintenance is the same as the amount in the FY15 Budget although it is recognized that more expensive repairs to the dam might be required in the future, based on ratings performed by the State. An RFP for repair work is being prepared and should be sent out within the next two weeks. The application for a Grant for Dam Repairs was denied; Select Board Chairperson Arnold will try to determine the specific reasons for Holland falling short in the selection process.

The Total Insurance amount in the Budget is the same as last year's amount because updated amounts are not yet available.

The Emergency Management/Code Red line item will be split into two separate line items.

### Review of the Veterans Department Budget Request:

The Budget Request for the Veterans Department was distributed at the meeting. The Amount for 'Veterans' Benefits' is substantially larger than the amount in the FY15 budget. This is due to the increase in veterans benefits being provided and is a result of more aggressive outreach by our new Veterans Agent.

A transfer of \$4,765.94 from the Finance Board Reserve Fund to Veterans Benefits was approved unanimously. Because of the increase in the utilization of Veterans Benefits, the funds included in the FY15 budget have been exhausted.

### **Open Issues:**

#### **FY16 Levy Limit:**

The Chairman prepared a revised 'guestimate' of the FY16 Levy Limit for the Town. An updated amount of 'Cherry Sheet Receipts' and a reduction in the amount of the Tantasqua debt assessment were applied. The revised estimate provides a potential increase in the operating budget of about \$145,000 over FY15.

### **Action Items Being Carried:**

The Select Board Chairperson indicated that she will follow through with others on the following:

- secure an estimate for the cost to complete the repairs to the Town Hall flooring.
- request from the Town's Insurance consultants the date when we will receive the FY16 insurance premium amounts.
- obtain a copy of the denial letter for the Grant Application for Dam Repairs so that the Town can determine the reason(s) for the denial and decide how to strengthen a possible future application.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be at 7:30 on February 4, with the key items being review of the Police Department and Highway Department Budget Requests.

### **Adjournment**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:45 P.M.

Minutes submitted by: Mike Brady, Secretary