



TOWN OF HOLLIS SELECT BOARD

August 31, 2026

PUBLIC MINUTES 7:30 AM

DRAFT

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS

Select Board Present: Chair David Petry; Vice Chair Tom Whalen; Erin Hubbard; Will Walker
Select Board via Zoom: Susan Benz
Staff Present: Chrissy Herrera, Town Administrator; Deb Padykula, Finance Director; Robert Boggis, Fire Chief; Brendan LaFlamme, Police Chief; Joan Cudworth, DPW Director; Erica Crea, Recreation Director; Dawn Desaulniers, IT Director

LOCATION

This meeting commenced in the Hollis Town Hall Community Meeting Room, located at 7 Monument Square, Hollis, New Hampshire.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND AGENDA REVIEW

D. Petry called the meeting to order at 7:30am and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Petry stated that this meeting of the Select Board is a workshop session, and there will be no Public Comment. The Department heads are here for this meeting.

1. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and approve 2026-2027 Budget Schedule

MOVED by Tom Whalen seconded by Will Walker that the Select Board accept the 2026-2027 Budget Schedule, as drafted. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

D. Petry asked whether, now that the budget schedule was approved, the Department heads had any problems with the dates. No problems were mentioned.

b. Review Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) & Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expandable Trust Fund

i. Approve new project requests to be placed on the CIP

D. Petry stated that the Board has the latest CIP, and that he is making the assumption that everything on it has been discussed and approved by the Select Board. D. Padykula confirmed that that is correct, for pages 1 and 2. She was hoping that that Board could go through new requests, on pages 3 and 4. The Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC) is looking for an updated CIP list by September 22nd. They have only been given what has been approved by the Select Board.

Per a question from D. Petry, D. Padykula confirmed that the new requests are things directly from the Department heads, and not from the CEAC. The CEAC was looking for items 10 years out. Most of the new items for the CIP are for DPW and Police, and it is just for planning for 10 years out – what they believe they will need.

Per a question from D. Petry, J. Cudworth confirmed that the backhoe had not been on the CIP. She did not have any of these items on there; she added them when asked to look at a 10-year plan. S. Benz added that it is understood that, in looking 10 years out, these items are guestimates.

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46 D. Petry stated that the backhoe and tractor make sense; the two dump trucks seem very expensive. He
47 asked whether that is just a projection, or whether J. Cudworth really thinks they're going to be \$260k.
48 J. Cudworth replied that she thinks they will be quite close to that by that time.
49

50 S. Benz asked about the escalation of the cost for the cruisers. E. Hubbard asked whether there is an
51 accepted economic formula for such projections. D. Petry answered that we could use an escalation
52 rate.
53

54 D. Petry asked what the current price for dump trucks is, through the State. J. Cudworth stated that
55 right now the State bid price is \$238k.
56

57 D. Petry stated that the items are all proposed as warrant articles, so we will deal with them when they
58 hit in those years.
59

60 In terms of the police cruisers, D. Padykula stated that that is just planning out; they typically purchase
61 two a year. D. Petry asked her whether, in her opinion, it still makes sense to be leasing them rather
62 than buying them. D. Padykula answered that she goes both ways. She has looked at how it would
63 work to purchase them, every year. If we did that, we would take a hit for the first year of purchasing
64 outright. It would be a hit of about \$80,000.
65

66 D. Petry stated that the last item is for Little Nichols Field, and pointed out that there is not an
67 associated number listed. E. Crea stated that she does not know how to start with that. D. Petry asked
68 whether this item is for rebuilding it, reconstructing it. E. Crea stated that it is to bring it up; the
69 drainage has been flooding. The field floods, and it is starting to push up against the new playground.
70 Her concern is the structure of the playground shifting. If they have to replace that playground again,
71 they will have to pour a solid surface – which is \$300,000. That is a new requirement of the State.
72

73 W. Walker stated that there is also a problem with the Library flooding; it has to pump out from its
74 basement into Little Nichols Field. E. Crea concurred, and stated that the flooding is because of the
75 water collecting in Little Nichols Field. J. Cudworth added that there are pictures of water from the late
76 1800s; this is nothing new. D. Petry wondered whether, if we fix the issue with the field, it could also
77 solve the Library's problem.
78

79 D. Petry further stated that if we bring the field up, we would have to do something with the rock wall,
80 too. E. Crea stated that at this point, it is just something to be made aware of.
81

82 E. Hubbard asked whether, if the field has been flooding forever, we picked the wrong spot for a
83 playground. D. Petry stated that the brook behind it has been cleaned out before, which results in the
84 problem not being as bad.
85

86 T. Whalen stated that this is part of a much bigger discussion in terms of downtown drainage.
87

88 D. Petry suggested that perhaps the first thing to do would be to have some engineering study funds put
89 into the issue. S. Benz concurred.
90

91 J. Cudworth pointed out that the water line is in that area, as well – that is something to keep in mind.
92

93 No members of the Board had any issue with adding the new items to the CIP.

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94
95 *MOVED by Tom Whalen seconded by Will Walker that the Select Board adopt the new requests to the CIP,*
96 *to date 8/31/2026.*
97

98 E. Hubbard asked whether, by approving adding Little Nichols Field to the list, we are adding engineering
99 money to study downtown. D. Petry answered that E. Crea will have to come up with a number after
100 speaking with Town Planner Kevin Anderson. This is a placeholder for now, and the Board can have a
101 follow-up discussion once we get some numbers.
102

103 D. Petry stated, to be clear, that these items are being added to the CIP for planning purposes and for
104 projections. The majority of these will be approved by warrant article.
105

106 *Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The*
107 *motion PASSED 5-0-0.*
108

109 In terms of the Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expendable Trust Fund, D. Petry asked whether it is the
110 case that the DPW fire sprinkler system and pump have not yet been done. Chief Boggis confirmed that
111 they have not. D. Padykula stated that those are two new requests to take out of the Fund, for this year.
112 The current balance is \$84,943.
113

114 Chief Boggis stated that a few years ago we did some sprinkler inspections, and the pump room needed
115 significant repairs. It is coming time again to do the annual inspection, and he knows that there will be
116 deficiencies. With employees sleeping there for plowing, etc., it is a good time to make these fixes. It was
117 about \$4,500 - \$5,000 a couple of years ago. His estimate is that it will be about \$6,000 to correct the
118 deficiencies at this point.
119

120 Chief Boggis added that he would also speak to the Fire Department heating system at a future Select
121 Board meeting. Work had to be done this year, which was unexpected – he had to replace a boiler and
122 other items. He was going to request that \$7,928 from the Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expendable
123 Trust Fund. He did save a fair amount of money on their roofing project; that was budgeted at about
124 \$60,000 and it came in at a little over \$37,000.
125

126 Other new items and projection placeholders on the Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expendable Trust
127 Fund list were briefly mentioned, including finishing the floor at the Lawrence Barn, the Farley Building
128 fire protection, Police Department maintenance that will be needed over the next 10 years, and some ADA
129 compliance. The need to replace the septic tank at the Town Hall was also mentioned.
130

131 In terms of the Farley Building fire protection, the \$40,000 is a close estimate from a preferred vendor who
132 does all of our fire alarm systems for the Town buildings. Chief Boggis stated that a private Town citizen
133 has been trying to get him to look at an alternative system; D. Petry stated that the citizen needs to work
134 through C. Herrera, and come to the Select Board if need be. They cannot work on this independently, for
135 a Town building. We do not want to receive an invoice for something that was not officially approved.
136

137 D. Petry added that he is not sure whether the Farley Building alarm system should stay on the Municipal
138 Buildings and Facilities Expendable Trust Fund, or go on the CIP and become a warrant article.
139

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Per a question from J. Cudworth, it was confirmed that the paving for the Police Department parking lot and the re-paving for the Town Hall parking lot after the septic repair are to be rolled into the DPW paving for 2027 – not in lieu of what the DPW has planned, but added, so that we can get a better price.

Per a question from W. Walker, D. Padykula stated that the items on the list without associated values are placeholders for now, until we get quotes.

In terms of the Town-wide ADA compliance, following the study, D. Petry stated that we need to check whether it is correct that, unless we are going to do a major renovation on a building, we are grandfathered. We should differentiate between what is really needed and what is recommended.

C. Herrera stated that we are grandfathered to an extent; the ADA assessment being done is only for the Town Hall. The Town-wide compliance item on the list is more of a discussion placeholder.

MOVED by Tom Whalen seconded by Will Walker that the Select Board adopt the Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expendable Trust Fund projects as requested, to date 8/31/2026. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

c. Review year-to-date budget performance

D. Padykula stated that she wanted to give a quick update on where the budget is, because it is looking extremely tight for getting through the end of the year. We have a few items that we know are over-budget, such as road rebuilding. The salt line is overspent by \$69,675. Overtime for Public Works is also overspent, by \$26,419. We will need to purchase more salt, and both of those items could go up depending on weather toward the end of the year. D. Padykula stated that we do have some surpluses that she anticipates, in the health insurance and retirement lines, due to open positions. We will probably have \$85,000 extra in health insurance, and \$55,000 extra in retirement. The Police Department salaries are running low, because we currently have four open positions; their overtime is 75% spent. The Fire Department vehicle maintenance is over budget by \$35,000 already, and that is due to the major repairs to their ladder truck. Communications union salaries are running low – they are only 41% spent, but their overtime is 83% spent. Vehicle fuel is also extremely high. She estimates that, for all Departments together, the vehicle fuel will probably be over-spent by \$24,000. She has been working with all of the Department heads, and they are all watching their budgets closely. We still have a Contingency Fund available; we have only spent about \$9,500 out of it.

D. Petry asked when the new ladder truck is due; Chief Boggis answered August 2027.

Per a question from W. Walker, D. Padykula stated that she thinks there will be some money left in the salaries, even with the overtime. There will be surpluses in those salary lines.

E. Hubbard asked how the Department heads are doing, being so short on people. She is worried about burnout. Chief LaFlamme replied that burnout is always a concern. The people that we have are outstanding, and are rising to the challenge. They are doing ok, and are using some creative scheduling.

W. Walker asked whether, with burnout or exhaustion, we are risking safety. Are we risking people getting hurt? Chief LaFlamme answered that that is always a concern, but, as he said, they are getting creative with the scheduling to give people breaks and not over-extend them.

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S. Benz asked whether they are able to work the schedule such that employees are able to take vacation time. Chief LaFlamme replied that they have done very well with managing the employees' time off; they've only denied one shift that he is aware of – and that was not vacation, but just one shift.

Per a question from W. Walker, Chief LaFlamme confirmed that a shortage of employees is a nation-wide problem and has been a problem for a long time.

E. Hubbard asked the same question of the DPW – how are their people doing, and where are they on staffing? J. Cudworth replied that they are fully staffed; their biggest problem is fatigue, with a lot of overtime. There are demands in terms of burials, Old Home Days, setting up for the primary election. She is keeping her fingers crossed that they don't lose anyone, but they are fully staffed.

T. Whalen asked C. Herrera whether there will be heat in the Town Hall this winter. C. Herrera replied that she hopes so; we had some repairs done. D. Petry suggested testing it sooner rather than later.

D. Petry stated that, with the Budget Committee meeting coming up, the sooner we get guidance percentages the better off we will be with budget planning. He wanted it to be made known that the Select Board is expecting that as soon as possible. D. Padykula stated that she thinks they typically do that at their October meeting. D. Petry stated that he feels as if it was a struggle to get it, last year.

T. Whalen added that it would be helpful to have that before the warrants have been completed, as well. We are expecting the warrants to be in by October 15, and we need to have some guidance as to what we can spend.

D. Petry asked what warrants we are thinking about, other than the items that are on the CIP for 2027. Are we ready for the field, or not? E. Crea indicated that she is working on potential warrants, and possible numbers.

C. Herrera stated that the only other one that comes to mind is whether we will need to consider some architectural services or repairs for the Town Hall in 2027. We will know more after we get the structural report for the building.

d. Budget Planning for 2027

i. Guidelines for salaries and wages

D. Petry listed: union contracts in place for Police, Fire, and Communications. He stated that the Town Hall and DPW are out; there is no longer a union, so they should be in line with the rest of non-union staff. C. Herrera stated that we do need to talk a little bit more about that officially, and where they would be placed. That needs to be formalized. She confirmed that we would do that as part of the budget planning for the coming year.

C. Herrera further stated that, for planning purposes, they are looking for some guidance as to what the Select Board feels is an appropriate amount to budget for salaries and wages. This would just more or less be so that they can have numbers to work with; it would be a jumping-off point which they could adjust as they go.

D. Petry asked D. Padykula whether there were any one-time expenditures in the budget for 2026 that are going to come out for 2027. D. Padykula replied that there were a couple, including the 250th celebrations, and the software for the Building Department.

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D. Petry stated that he was recently made aware that the Town has to be ADA compliant with their website. Any website, any social media that the Town runs has to be compliant by April of 2028. This will include screen reading capabilities, closed captioning over video streams. This is Federal law.

2. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel, (c) reputation, (l) legal

MOVED by Will Walker seconded by Tom Whalen that the Select Board enter Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel, (c) reputation, and (l) legal. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

The Board entered non-public session at 8:18am.

3. CONCLUSION OF NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOVED by Tom Whalen seconded by Will Walker that the Select Board come out of Non-Public Session and seal the minutes, in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel, (c) reputation, and (l) legal. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

The Board came out of non-public session and entered back into public session at 8:48am.

4. PUBLIC SESSION

MOVED by Tom Whalen seconded by Will Walker that the Select Board approve paying \$3,700 for Welfare Case #2026-02. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Will Walker seconded by Tom Whalen that the Select Board adjourn the meeting. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Whalen, Benz, Hubbard, and Walker. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 5-0-0.

The Board adjourned at 8:50am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Aurelia Perry, Recording Secretary

NOTE: Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and who needs to be provided with reasonable accommodation, please call the Town Hall (465-2209) at least 72 hours in advance so that arrangements can be made.