

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN – Retreat
APRIL 26, 2013**

The Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 3:04 p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2013 with David Neill, Marc Johnson, Jennifer Scuteri, Jeff Hubbard and Scott Maddern present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo also present.

Call to order

Chair Marc Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Public Comment

None.

Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary update

Jennifer Scuteri updated the Board about the successful meeting she and Jeff Hubbard had with GCTS president and CFO. She noted that GCTS has a board meeting in three weeks where ideas discussed at this meeting would be presented. Scuteri will contact GCTS on May 15 to set up the next meeting with Town officials.

Board of Selectmen Communications discussion

Marc Johnson outlined the importance of Board members communicating uniformly on topics and ideas that the Selectmen address as a Board including more Council on Aging services, Recreation Master Plan, Patton and Pirie properties.

Jeff Hubbard concurred when communicating where the Board stands but noted that he would share the minority opinion (i.e., when Board votes 4 to 1 on a topic) to educate people so they can make their own decisions.

Johnson said there are instances when disunion in the Board creates agitation making it difficult for other Boards to rally with the Selectmen. Scuteri mentioned how Board members could review code of conduct for other similar boards as part of how the Selectmen represent the entire community. She noted

members can find themselves making spontaneous heartfelt comments and that they have to be careful about what they say.

Goals and Objectives

Johnson summarized that the Board's goals and objectives categories are planning, increase revenue, reduce costs, manage Town assets and other initiatives. Secondary responsibilities done in concert with the Town manager include managing people and departments.

Discussion ensued about short term goals such as reduce costs, increase revenues, add or reduce services, and make Hamilton a better place to live that could be done in one year's time or a slightly longer period.

Johnson reviewed list of short term objectives from last June: create a calculation for the school budget, upgrade Town website, set goals for Patton property, begin marketing plan for Hamilton, develop educational campaign for new trash plan, start open production budget process for schools, increase services to seniors, increase communication to public, develop recommendations for school based on benchmarking, form HDC, fund downtown enhancements, sell Town parcels, get Town manager's plan to improve efficiencies, and enhance website.

Discussion ensued about how Neill's short term goals and objectives were probably outlined in June 2012 retreat meeting minutes. Board addressed short term revenue objectives such reduce costs, increase revenue and how to improve Town services.

Ways to reduce costs included DPW cost share with Wenham and schools, support HWRSD efficiencies, control budget items, implement trash program, identify unfunded mandates, and decide future of ECO (since there is no long term plan and current increased cost associated with this service).

Also addressed was importance of consideration of shared services for fire, police, ECO, DPW, health departments, and building permits. Discussion ensued with League of Women Voters' Carin Kale on this issue. Maddern mentioned work done with Town manager on library and ECO regarding joint agreements. Neill mentioned how Town Hall needs to be made handicapped accessible upstairs.

Lombardo raised the issue of how the zoning in Town needs to be revisited for Hamilton to move forward effectively with development. Scuteri suggested a consultant be hired for this purpose.

Selectmen analyzed objectives for making Hamilton a better place to live including improving the Patton Park pool and sidewalks, implementing Cutler Park gardens, creating beautification nuisance by-law, expanding scope of Recreation Department to work with Town boards and orchestrate turf field and pool, get Patton property development going including access to river (this would need coordination with Essex County Greenbelt Association and could be a CPC project), serve empty nesters, increase Council on Aging services (i.e., kitchen at senior center), increase housing options (i.e., Pirie property), enhance trail network (i.e., public access to Pirie property for more than equestrians).

Town officials discussed general government including having a better Town Hall building, addressing personnel issues with a human resources administrator (i.e., HWRSD is moving forward to hire an HR director and this could be done collaboratively with Town) who would focus on personnel policy draft and effort to improve employee morale, continuing improvements to Town website to keep information timely, and continuing effective use of technology at Town Meeting.

Hubbard suggested that review be done of Town departments for how they could be reorganized or redirected (i.e., Recreation Department). He described how he had supplied a list from Town and HWRSD on unfunded mandates to State Representative Brad Hill and Senator Bruce Tarr for their assistance. Also, he suggested work be done with Town manager, Selectmen and Finance & Advisory Committee to identify areas where outsourcing could be used.

Scuteri suggested that letters written by Board relative to legislative action should be considered based on what actions are occurring at the state level (i.e., as the Board did regarding changes in CPA legislation). Discussion ensued about grassroots effort in Town to change Chapter 70 legislation and that the Board needs a status report. Also mentioned was for Board to keep lines of communication open regarding policy versus management issues. Scuteri suggested that a written liaison policy for the Selectmen would be useful.

Discussion addressed better use of Town buildings (i.e., having library available for evening meetings) for entities in Hamilton. Also discussed was the Selectmen's responsibility to identify residents willing to serve on Town boards

Scuteri also noted that Chebacco Lake beach is an underutilized asset and the need for a cell phone tower in Town. Johnson said he would consolidate the list of goals and objectives for the Board with names and assignments and circulate it to Selectmen so they could offer ideas to rank priorities and benchmark. Lombardo suggested that other boards and committees could also take the lead on some of the goals and objectives developed by the Board.

Johnson entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn at 4:45 p.m. Maddern so moved. Hubbard seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST:


Clerk