

HAMILTON - WENHAM



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Veterans Memorial Pool Question and Answer Sheet

Q: Didn't Hamilton already vote for the pool? Why are we voting for the pool again? What's changed?

Yes. Now the pool has the support of **both** Hamilton and Wenham Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committees, Community Preservation Committees and the Joint Recreation Committee. The two towns have signed a 25 year partnership to support the pool if you approve it at Town Meeting.

In November of 2013, a Special Town Meeting was held and Hamilton voters were asked to vote to approve a \$2.5M, debt-financed pool - alone, as Wenham had not provided any financial commitment. The vote required a 2/3 (super majority) approval and despite the large request and the fact that Wenham was not contributing, the vote was very close 219 for and 112 against. The message from Hamilton Town Meeting was clear – we all want a pool that is smaller, costs less and also involves Wenham. So, the H-W Joint Rec Board went to work and reduced the size, the cost, and Wenham voters will be asked to approve their share of the funding.

The new pool request is an amount not to exceed \$2M and Wenham voters are being asked to pay their share. Hamilton's share of the cost is approximately 1.4 M, which is over a million dollars less than the original request of \$2.5M, while Wenham's share is approximately 700K.

Q: Can't we cut the cost by renovating the existing pool?

A: If you look closely at the cost estimates you will find that the actual pool only accounts for 30% of the total project cost. The lack of the current infrastructure has the greatest impact on the overall project cost. In addition to the pool itself, the proposed project includes a bathhouse with private changing areas and private showers in contrast to the open changing areas and the open community showers that is currently present. It also provides two fully handicapped accessible bathrooms that will also be available for park users in the Spring and Fall. The proposed project also includes new pool decking, fence, sick bather area, and proper lifeguard office, all of which are code complaint. The project also includes items that lead to a more efficient way to operate the facility; a controlled access point for safe entry and exit, a small office for the Summer Park Program, a separate and secure place for staff to use the restroom, and a safe and properly ventilated storage area to store pool chemicals and supplies. All of the aforementioned features are either insufficient or completely non-existent in the current facility.

Q: Is there a fundraising campaign for the pool project?

A: Yes, we currently have monetary pledges from members of the community. If you are interested in making a pledge to the pool project you can contact the Recreation Department.

Q: Can CPA funds even be used on the pool?

A: Yes. In 2012 an amendment was made to the CPA to allow for the rehabilitation to outdoor recreational facilities. In fact, Belmont, East Longmeadow, Lincoln, and Newton have all used CPA on municipal swimming pool projects

Q: Will non-resident pool passes be needed in order to financially support the operation of the pool?

A: No. One of the items put forth to the Recreation Committee by the pool working group was to develop a pro-forma budget for revenue and expenses of the new pool. The Recreation Committee has determined that only resident passes will be sold, making this a TRUE community pool. Guest passes for visiting family and friends will also be available for purchase

Q: Will this project increase my property taxes?

A: No. The pool will be built with CPC funds from both towns and operating costs will be covered by Recreation fees. Although, the accumulation of CPC funds comes from property taxes, the CPA funds to be used for the project were already collected from you, over the years. These funds have also been boosted by State matches, on average, over the last five years; the State has matched 33% of Hamilton funds and 61% of Wenham funds.

Q: By voting yes for the pool, will a turf field at the HS not become a reality?

A: The Recreation Committee is very much committed to seeing a community pool and turf field come to fruition as they both were identified in the Recreation Master Plan as high priorities. In fact, Hamilton community members will have an opportunity to vote for \$500,000 of the proceeds of the sale of the Patton Estate to be moved into a Recreation Stabilization Fund. This Stabilization Fund has the potential to act as seed money as the turf project moves into the next stage.

Q: How much will it cost to operate the pool? Where is that money coming from?

A: Based upon preliminary numbers the Recreation Committee expects the pool to operate at an annual cost of between \$75,000 – \$85,000 a year. These costs will be paid for from the fees collected from swim passes, swim lessons, swim team, aquatic programming and a portion of the funds collected from the Summer Park Program.

Q: Why is the project being paid for in a cash payment from CPC funds?

A: The CPC has chosen to pay for the pool project in cash in order to preserve maximum debt capacity for any larger projects that may be needed for the use of CPC funds in the future.

Q: Do we really need to have the buildings as part of the pool plan?

A: Yes. Due to the state code for swimming pools, the buildings are a must in order for the pool to be deemed operational by the Health Inspector. The Recreation Committee has been hard at work making sure the buildings size and scope stay as minimal as possible while also providing the functionality that is needed. The Recreation Committee has also decided to pursue wood framed buildings that not only reduce the cost but also provide a more attractive appearance.

Q: Will there ever be time at the pool for adult or senior exclusive use?

A: The goal of the Recreation Committee is to make this a multi-generational facility. Various programs will be offered to ensure that community members of all ages and skill levels will be able to use the facility. If approved the Recreation Committee would love to hear more from the public about the types of programming they would like to see at the facility.