

2018



TOWN MANAGER REPORT

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Housing: As the trend toward an aging community progresses, the need for more diverse housing stock will continue to intensify. While the Town's proactive efforts to produce additional housing units has met considerable resistance to date, it has raised awareness and an understanding of the challenges that we face, both in terms of housing units and the threat of a large-scale 40b project. We have no indication that similar projects would meet any less resistance and I strongly encourage the Town to undertake a broader community dialogue and housing master plan process to obtain buy-in as to the size and location of potential future projects.

HWRSD Budget: The proposed FY19 Schools budget raises concerns on multiple fronts. Foremost, the level of increase proposed (\$1.7 million) is unsustainable and will cause significant pressure on property taxes for years to come, in particular when you take into consideration the tremendous capital needs and deferred attention to OPEB. An additional concern is raised over the disparate treatment of Town employees as it relates to overall benefits and cost-of-living increases - sustained COLA's of 2.5% will continue to cause upward pressure on property taxes and will undermine the Town's ability to maintain tax rates at the target level set by the Board of Selectmen and Finance & Advisory Committee. It will have similar implications as the Town enters into collective bargaining with municipal employees.

Health Insurance: We are working with an insurance firm on a program that may save the Town and employees 10-15% on health care premiums without any changes to the insurance plan or carrier by establishing a Participating Funding Arrangement (PFA)

Landfill Solar Project: We received an updated fee schedule from Ameresco that would be much more lucrative to the Town; we anticipate a revised lease to be available within the next few weeks. In a recent conference call, the project managers from Ameresco and Cadmus indicate that they are making progress on the post-closure use permit with DEP and expect the project to move forward as planned this summer. I've asked for a revised schedule and project plan and will forward that when available.

Discrimination & Harassment Awareness Training: Supervisors and staff participated in recent training on this important subject. A few "take-aways" that I came away with have me following up on additional research and I will likely come forward with a few [modest] proposed changes at one of the March meetings.

Town Clerk Administrative Assistant Position: The Town Clerk, Andrea Carlson, and I completed interviews with five candidates for the position last week. A conditional offer of employment has been proffered pending the results of a CORI check.

Patton Homestead Director: I've recently become aware that there are individuals that believe the recruitment process for this position will move forward soon. As mentioned in a previous update, I am working with the Patton Homestead Inc. board on an alternate plan with Empower Success Corp (formerly the Executive Service Corp.) on an interim strategy that would forestall recruitment of a director for perhaps 12-18 months. A follow up meeting is scheduled for the week of February 12 to continue the dialogue.

Key activities/projects for the Council on Aging: January 31, 2018

- Spoke with Emily Kearns, Director of Dementia Friendly Massachusetts regarding the process of making Hamilton an Age/Dementia Friendly Community. I mentioned to her that I will be briefly discussing this topic with the Board of Selectmen at my department review on 2/6/18. We discussed the follow-up to this meeting and came to the consensus that a “grass roots” meeting should be planned for the spring to bring all stakeholders together for a presentation by Dementia Friendly Massachusetts and our Area Agency on Aging, Senior Care. This presentation will be an introduction to the concept of what an age and dementia friendly town looks like and what the process might involve for Hamilton.
- Director will be attending a quarterly regional Dementia Friendly Massachusetts meeting on February 13th.
- Director spoke with Susan Gillam of the Home Modification Loan Program regarding some of the changes that have occurred to this program. I have asked her to get back to me with a date that we can have her come to do a presentation to our seniors and also invite those town employees and others who would be interested in hearing about this program.
- The COA Board met with David Smith, Chairman of the Board of Health, to discuss the draft bylaw dealing with the treatment of abandoned and neglected buildings in Hamilton. The Board received a copy of this draft and will be forwarding comments and changes to the Chairman of the COA for the February meeting.
Update 1-29-18: Director met with David Smith to discuss the results of his public meeting held January 25th and any other feedback from residents who are aware of this forthcoming warrant article. David has been asked and will be attending the COA Candidate Debates which are going to be held 3/21/18 at the senior center. Along with those individuals running for contested seats, David will be asked to present this article to our seniors and inform them of what it means to them as homeowners in Hamilton.
- The Director met with the Nutrition Director at Senior Care to discuss some potential changes which might occur to enable the congregate lunch program to attract more diners. Some of the suggestions on the table include: flexible serving time between 11 and 12:30; serving a soup and sandwich entrée two times a month during the winter months and a cold salad with a protein item in the summer; allowing seniors to purchase a hot lunch “to go” rather than staying and eating at the senior center. Follow up with Senior Care will happen after Nutrition Manager has spoken with their caterer.

- At the recent COA meeting discussion began regarding what programming could be initiated to attract the 60-69 age demographic. Since the bulk of this group are still working, these classes would have to be held in the evening. In the event that the Finance Committee allows the construction of a permanent wall in the senior center, we would be able to provide one class a week on Tuesday evenings when we would switch our hours to those applicable to Town Hall employees. The feeling was that one class isn't enough. The drawback to having additional programming is that we have no additional personnel who could undertake to run evening programming for seniors during the week; current budget is underfunded to cover any additional expense to create and run programs for this demographic; space in the building is at a premium during current day activities and without the addition of an office/class room we can't attract those seniors who are in this age group and who would be available for day programming.

Discussion was held to possibly shift the full burden of Director's salary to town dollars and use Formula Grant funds (which currently are used to supplement funding for Director's salary) to hire an Activities Director for evening classes.

➤ **1099-MISC**

Update: Completed and mailed out approximately 85 of 1099-MISC forms by the deadline of January 31st. The Town must issue a 1099-MISC to each vendor to whom it has paid at least \$600 in rents, services, prizes and awards, or other income payments.

➤ **Joint Programs**

Update: Worked with the Town of Wenham, Recreation Department Head and HWRSD to finalize joint program reconciliations to be presented at the joint meeting scheduled for February 8th.

➤ **Annual Report**

Update: Completed Finance Department section of the Town's Annual Report.

➤ **Quarterly Report (FY18 2nd Quarter)**

Update: Quarterly Report for the 2nd Quarter of fiscal year 2018 has been completed and is posted on the Town's website.

➤ **FY19 Budget**

Update: As a result of the first budget workshop between Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee, the Finance Department continues to work on finalizing the updates for the FY19 Budget. The next round of budget deliberations is being scheduled for the week of February 12th. At the conclusion of this meeting, we anticipate that all decisions will be made to finalize the budget for presentation at Town Meeting.

➤ **Financial Policies**

Update: The Finance Department continues to work with the Division of Local Services (DLS) to facilitate the Financial Policies project. First draft is currently going through internal review and should be made available to the Town in the near future.

➤ **FY17 Audit**

Update: The second draft of the FY17 Financial Statements and Schedule of Federal Awards, have been received and Final Reports should be issued within the next couple of weeks. Once Final Reports are received the Town's independent auditors will be scheduled to present the reports to the Town.

FIRE PREVENTION:

INSPECTIONS: The following inspections were done between January 17 thru 31.

- (5) Smoke Detector and Carbon Monoxide inspection
- (3) Dumpster Permits
- (9) Propane tanks
- (1) Oil Tank
- (3) Preinspections (Detector locations)
- (1) Senior Program

CAR SEATS:

They did 13 car seat installations. We have 3 Firefighters that are certified to install car seats.

OPEN BURNING:

Open Burning Season started January 15 and will end May 1.

CALL FOR ASSISTANCE:

12 EMS 39 since Jan. 1
20 Fire Incidents 58 since Jan. 1

- 3 – Smoke Detector Activation
- 3 – Motor Vehicle Accidents
- 5 – Public Service
- 1- Gas spill
- 3- Carbon Monoxide Alarms
- 1- Odor of smoke
- 1- Fire Alarm
- 1- Mutual Aid (Essex)

Deputy Chief Brand saved a man that was choking while he was having lunch in Essex with the Essex Police Chief.

CITIZENS' FIRE ACADEMY

The Citizens' Fire Academy will start Wednesday March 21 and run through April 11 on Wednesday nights (6:30pm). Applications are available at the Fire Station, Town Clerk's Office, and On-line.

Staffing levels:

Planning – 1 FTE

Building – 1 FTE; 4 PTE

Health - 1 FTE; 3 PTE

Con Com – 1 PTE

CPC – 1 PTE

Minutes – 2PTE

Weights & Measures – 1PTE

Dept Issues:

Evaluating past inspectional services practice and how to deal with gaps in previous plan review, inspections, code enforcement, violations, permit processing, etc. Evaluating how electronic equipment could assist department. Evaluating department filing practices. Continuing to evaluate the anticipated demands on the department generated by two proposed articles (Demo Delay and Nuisance bylaw – neither of which address staffing demands generated by article substance and responsibilities which are largely placed upon the Planning & Inspections Department).

Prepared, submitted and reviewed with a Finance Committee member our FY 2019 departmental budgets for Con Com, Inspections, Health, and Planning. The largest single additional request includes a recommendation for full time Building Inspector staffing hours. Continuing to evaluate the magnitude of non-permitted construction work taking place in town and how to address. Evaluating seasonal demands for inspections and inspector responsibilities. Continue contributing to and evaluating the potential of undertaking a regional inspectional services system between Hamilton and Wenham with MAPC and counterparts at Town of Wenham.

Continue departmental budgeting process for FY19 budget as necessary.

Assist in review and preparation of staff evaluation documentation/process.

Ongoing and Pending Projects:

Continue addressing various demands generated by four separate legal actions involving the Planning Board. Requested status update from Counsel on all pending legal actions against the Planning Board so it may be provided to the Board.

Affordable housing related matters and involvement ongoing with HAHT, et al. Review multiple messages received from Harbor Light Community Partners.

Meet with developers relative to various projects they are pursuing.

Need to prepare or assist in the preparation scope of services draft for Owners Project Manager (OPM) work to Town Hall Committee for Town Hall project (with the benefit of approved CPC funding) in order to allow project to get started. Continued work to attempt to coordinate information, process and Committee involvement.

Continue participating in the Patton Homestead property future to the extent possible. Assist architectural team in project input. Assist in pursuit of grants as needed.

Planning Board Related:

Expecting Attorney General opinion/review relative to the two zoning articles that were passed by town meeting (Willow Street Overlay Amendments and Recreational Marijuana Sales and Cultivation Ban). Will have to order, reformat, re-print and make available new zoning bylaw documents.

With the Planning Board continue to review and discuss the board's intentions as to potential future actions on various zoning articles and bylaw modification efforts. Reviewing attorney's diagnostic of the zoning bylaw and discussing how to address remaining issues. Have received and begun review of a proposal from the attorney to continue adjusting bylaw elements.

Planning Board has taken up consideration of updating the 2004 Hamilton Master Plan specifically as it relates to the housing element. This specific element relates to what future zoning policy we should as a town pursue which would represent the types of physical development that the town would support. The CPC accepted a \$30,000 requested for funding to engage a consultant to assist with the updating work necessary. The rationale was that necessary funds to revise the entirety of the ZBL are unavailable at this time and with the upcoming FY 2019 budget. A selectman advised the Planning Board of that fact in early December. Having been made aware of that financial constraint the Planning Board saw the wisdom of pursuing the most difficult element of growth in Hamilton – which is fostering residential growth in the community in an appropriate fashion which *constituents would support*. They are convinced that a public engagement process focusing on this specific element of the Master Plan is highly necessary to address this largest of all local planning concerns. I agree with those positions - and personally believe engaging a complete revision of the Master Plan ***at one time*** would result in an unnecessarily slow and unproductive process, especially as we're trying to address appropriate growth in the community ***with public support***.

Continuing review of Hamilton Subdivision Regulations. Already received some engineering input to begin qualified review regarding roadway dimensioning. Received comment from HFD Capt. Brunet relative to potential impact on roadway dimensions. Evaluate other areas that may need to be modified including the likely addition of landscape requirements. Planning Dept. to prepare text, etc., for Board review.

Staffing (Police):

- Full-time: Fully staffed at 13 officers.
- Part-time: Staffed with 6 Reserve Officers

Note: We have 2 reserve officers in the Field Training program which are not part of the aforementioned number. Both reserve officers are progressing through the FTO program at an acceptable rate. I am also looking for more diversity within the department. As such, I will be commencing with a new recruitment campaign for qualified female reserve officers.

Staffing (ECO):

- Full-time: Fully staffed at 4 dispatchers.
- Part-time: Staffed at 2 dispatchers.

Note: We are reviewing resumes for a 3rd Part-Time Dispatcher. A 3rd Dispatcher will lower backfill overtime costs and reduce the order in list.

Equipment Issues:

- N/A

Union Issues:

- No Union grievances or complaints at this time.
- Current Police contract expires on June 30, 2019.
- Current ECO Contract expires on June 30, 2020.

Miscellaneous:

- I currently have one active Internal Affairs Investigation for damage to a cruiser.

Upcoming Police Related Events:

- N/A

Community Policing Events:

- N/A

Administration:

1. Staff

New: Russell Stewart has submitted his resignation from Highway Heavy Equipment Operator. DPW appreciates his time and efforts with the Town and wishes him good luck in his new position. DPW will begin the process to fill the vacant position.

Highway:

1. Snow Plowing and Roadway Repairs

New: The Highway Department has been busy treating roads, plowing roadways and sidewalks, and repairing road potholes and defects following the recent storm events.

2. Tree Services

New: Solicitation for Quotes will be distributed within the next few weeks for Tree Services for the Town of Hamilton.

3. Complete Streets Program

Update: Met with TEC Engineering to discuss program and project opportunities in the Town of Hamilton to formulate a prioritization plan. The MassDOT program could fund upwards of \$400,000 for roadway projects for the Town.

4. Small Bridge Program

New: Two bridges in Town qualify for assistance under the MassDOT Small Bridge Program. TEC Engineering has begun to evaluate the bridges for deficiencies to assist the Town in applying for a Small Bridge Program grant.

5. Patton Park Parking Lot

Update: The Highway Department has removed approximately 6 ft of asphalt berm at the Patton Park asphalt parking lot. DPW has evaluated the path of runoff and determined the proper location to remove the berm to help decrease the runoff to the swing set area. Additional work will have to be planned to remove the runoff to the play area completely.

Buildings:

1. Patton Homestead Designer Services

Update: DPW is working with Spencer and Vogt to schedule a presentation with the Board of Selectmen at their next scheduled meeting. Spencer & Vogt plan to present their conceptual drawings and plan to provide a few variations to the Board and public.

2. Town Hall Building Renovations

On-going: The Town Hall Building Committee plans to meet in the next few weeks to discuss the next steps in soliciting for OPM services and to collaborate on finalizing the RFQ for these services.

Water Distribution:

1. Water Meter Quarterly Results

New: The Town has conducted the quarterly water meter reading. Results are as follows:

Total Reads: 2513

Estimates: 65 (2.6%)

The Town utilizes an electronic meter reading system to approximately 99% of the water accounts in the Town of Hamilton. Due to various reasons i.e. environmental, meter location, inability to access a residence due to extended vacations or seasonal homes, it is not possible with the system we have to achieve 100% reads.

Water Treatment Plant:

1. Water Treatment Plant

Update: Dewberry has finalized the bid set for the Upgrades to the Idlewood Wellfield Water Treatment Facility. This project has been advertised. A pre-bid meeting has been scheduled and general bids will be due in early March. Construction is planned to start mid/late March.

2. Radio Connection Project

Update: The radio connection project is nearing completion. All the equipment has been installed and final programming should be completed this week.

3. Reaction Vessel Cleaning Project

Update: Waterline Industries will begin this project on February 12th and should finish on the 13th. This small construction project is still on schedule.

Water Supply

1. Well Exploration

Update: The Town has received a proposal for the exploratory work at the Ford Property located off Chebacco Road and Old Cart Road. DPW will review the proposals scope of work and fees.

Water Management

1. Order to Complete

Update: DPW continues to put together answers to the MassDEP Questionnaire as part of Hamilton's Permit Renewal Order to Complete (OTC) . Deadline for the OTC is March 6th.

2. ASR

New: Begin compiling reports and data to complete the MassDEP Annual Statistics Report. Deadline is April 30th, 2018.

Spring Swim Team

Our Department was able to secure pool time at Gordon College and for the first time will be offering a preseason swim program for members of our swim team. Due to the nature of the summer swim meet schedule, we normally only have a few practices before our first meet. The hope is that with this preseason swim time our team will be better prepared to start the season.

Summer Employment Opportunities

We will be starting our application process for our camp counselors and pool position. We will post our job opportunities on both our website as well as the towns.

Pool and Camp Information Packets

We will be releasing pool and camp information packets next week. These will include all pertinent information for the upcoming seasons.

Spring and Summer Brochure

Our complete Spring and Summer Brochure will be heading to the printer shortly. We will be distributing the brochures to the schools on Monday, February 26th. At this time the electronic version of the brochure will also be made available, registration for all of our Spring and Summer Programs will begin on March 5th.

The Clerk's office has been busy getting the dog licenses out to the dog owner's.

Just keeping up with the daily vital records and the daily voter registrations from the state.

Finished the Clerk's page in the Annual report

Have almost completed the search on replacing the administration position