

TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
NOVEMBER 7, 2011

Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 7, 2011 with Jennifer Scuteri, Jeff Stinson, David Carey, Marc Johnson and Jeff Hubbard present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, DPW Director John Tomasz and Police Chief Russell Stevens also present.

Accept minutes (October 19 and October 25, 2011)

Board will take action at subsequent meeting.

Public Comment

None.

Town Manager's report

None.

Chairman/Selectmen's report

Selectmen reported on actions associated with liaison roles. Jennifer Scuteri said Conservation Commission recently approved repaving and drainage work along Gregory Island Road, is working with Essex County Trails Association on trail repair and improvement projects, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary has three projects and DPW filed application for more stream work near seminary.

David Carey noted that MBTA is willing to locate a Hamilton-Wenham downtown business directory sign on its parking lot property in Wenham near the Hamilton-Wenham train station sign. MBTA has to approve business directory sign before it is installed. MBTA will continue to charge parking fee and maintain ownership of parking lot.

Jeff Stinson will be on search committee for permanent superintendent of schools that will interview interim Superintendent Peter Gray. New budget schedule will be presented at next Budget Process Committee meeting.

Jeff Hubbard is working with Community Preservation Committee on potential downtown projects and mentioned upcoming activities associated with Hamilton merchants association.

Marc Johnson mentioned report sent to Board members about Planning Board's intention to decide by yearend on Canterbrook senior housing development project. That board is also interested in updating Town's Master Plan.

Community Preservation Committee –Christine Berry

CPC Coordinator Christine Berry said Hamilton has received approximately \$1.1 million in Community Preservation Act matched funds from the state since the Town enacted CPA in 2006 with an annual 2% surcharge on property taxes.

She highlighted CPA projects including Donovan playing fields acquisition, Town Hall renovations, Weaver Pond restoration, energy audit, Firehouse Place affordable housing, etc.

Berry described annual CPC operating/prioritization process for CPA project determination. She said no projects are rejected from CPC review even if they are submitted as late as December or January.

Hamilton's CPA funds projects in the following categories: open space and recreation where there is \$48,000 in reserve, affordable housing with \$70,000 in reserve and historic preservation at \$41,000. Ten percent of CPA revenue taken in annually has to be set aside or spent in these categories. Town has \$1.3 million in CPA fund balance that can be used for any of the three purposes.

There is new legislation to stabilize the state match of CPA funds to participating communities. This would be useful for Hamilton because in 2006 it received 100% of CPA matching funds from the state and currently Town receives 33% of matching funds. Reduction in match is due to Commonwealth having a much larger number of CPA partaking municipalities. Legislation could also broaden recreation criteria, which would allow Town to use CPA funds for existing projects (i.e., Patton Park pool).

Berry said research and title work is being done on Discover Hamilton trails.

Application for Class II License –Chris Gangi

Scuteri entertained a motion to grant a Class II License for the sale of used cars to Chris Gangi at 247 Forest Street, Hamilton with the following condition: No cars are to be sold or stored on the licensed premises. Carey so moved. Stinson seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Adopt Snow Emergency/Winter Parking Ban Policy

Town Manager Michael Lombardo and Police Chief Russell Stevens described how the snow emergency/ winter parking ban by-law repealed at Town Meeting in the last few years was unenforceable because it was tied to lighting and signage that didn't exist so there was no enacting mechanism to notify public.

Lombardo explained that proposed policy could be voted on by Board and does not require a Town Meeting vote. It has been discussed between police and public works department. It is a reiteration of prior policy that would get cars off public roads when there is 4" of snow enabling DPW to plow to curb to keep roads and sight lines clear throughout winter season; especially important in downtown area.

Police Chief Stevens said Town officials have been working with Town Counsel Donna Brewer to get policy in place. The difference with new policy compared to prior policy is enactment mechanism for notifying public would be Connect CTY, HWCAM, Town's website and if anyone calls ECO.

Enforcement action would be taken four hours after public is notified, there is a \$20 fine and vehicles could be towed to clear streets allowing DPW to plow. Stevens emphasized that Town officials would work hard to educate people first including having police officers knock on resident doors asking them to move cars if necessary. Lombardo said advertising on policy would be done long before it is snowing on a regular basis in Hamilton.

Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the proposed snow emergency/winter parking ban policy as presented by Police Chief Russell Stevens and Town Manager Michael Lombardo and as put before the Board in writing. Johnson so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

North Shore United Way request to place fundraising thermometer in front of The Meeting House, 299 Bay Road

Some Selectmen discussed with North Shore United Way representative their concern that the five-month campaign from mid-November until April 30 was a long time for the fundraising thermometer to be located in front of The Meeting House at 299 Bay Road. UW representative reported that other surrounding communities have not expressed same concern.

Scuteri entertained a motion to allow North Shore United Way to place a fundraising thermometer in front of The Meeting House at 299 Bay Road until April 30, 2012. Stinson so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: 3-2-0. Scuteri, Stinson, Hubbard in favor with Carey and Johnson opposed.

Appoint Claudia Woods to Planning Board until June 30, 2012

Scuteri entertained a motion to appoint Claudia Woods as a voting member of the Planning Board until the next Town election in May 2012. Carey so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Agreement for Shared Finance Department Services (effective 11/4/11)

Lombardo described a letter of agreement for shared finance department services for Hamilton and Wenham where Hamilton's Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and Treasurer/Collector Cheryl Booth would assist Wenham for 10 hours a week until December 1, 2011 since Wenham's Finance Director Nichole Hagstrom is leaving.

This is an interim solution that gives both municipalities an opportunity to consider merging finance department services for both towns. After a few weeks when deliberation has occurred a solution will be presented about whether or not to merge departments or for Wenham to recruit and hire a finance director.

Details about proposed merging of finance services (i.e., economies of scale, transition plan and ultimate department possibly including human resources/benefits manager) are being worked out now by officials from both communities and will be reported shortly perhaps on November 15.

Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the agreement for shared interim finance director and treasurer/collector services between the towns of Hamilton and Wenham. Johnson so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Adopt policy and procedure for liquor license holders that apply for change of Sunday hours

This will be voted on at a subsequent Board of Selectmen meeting.

Appoint Tom Rogers to HWCAM until June 30, 2012

Scuteri entertained a motion to appoint Tom Rogers to the Hamilton Wenham Community Access and Media Board until June 30, 2012. Stinson so moved. Johnson seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

DPW yard hours and schedule fees

DPW Director John Tomasz mentioned transfer station would be open on Chebacco Road on Wednesday and Saturday for residents to drop off brush.

He and Lombardo discussed plans to better manage access and control of DPW yard by residents to prevent abuses of disposing of white appliances and use of the Town's sand/salt supply. The proposal is for the yard to only be open 8 hours a month rather than Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

The new yard hours would be every other Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. with one DPW employee and a bonded Town employee who can collect disposal fee payments on duty. Disposal fees would be raised to cover the \$220 per Saturday cost of employee hours that would include overtime.

Tomasz mentioned that MIIA had recommended safety cameras be installed in the yard and a grant is available to help defray that cost.

He and Lombardo recommended the past practice of providing approximately 5 gallons of sand/salt to residents outside of the DPW yard gate be reconsidered as no longer applicable.

Selectmen will vote on the proposed change in DPW yard access hours and procedure at an upcoming BOS meeting.

Board retreat recap

Selectmen recapped what was discussed at recent Board retreat including: enhancing community relations, making Hamilton a better place to live (i.e., Master Plan and local events), coordinating Town Meeting so that residents are informed ahead of time about warrant articles, improving Town website data, communicating/interacting more with Town boards and committees, Hamilton and Wenham's spending \$14,300 per student compared to surrounding communities, impact of Hamilton residents typically earning \$20,000 less a year than Wenham residents, only possible revenue stream for foreseeable future in Hamilton is anaerobic digester versus independent living facility in Wenham expected to bring in \$1 million annually in taxes, evaluate services provided relative to other municipalities regarding cost tradeoffs (i.e., new trash program savings could be offset by increased ECO costs with Wenham going to regional ECO), reorganization strategy in Town government, and controlling tax rate by reconsidering past practices (i.e., plowing snow when 6" on ground versus 4").

SMART program updates

Scuteri reviewed Hamilton's history of trash removal from 2006 (recycling was 26%) to present. In 2008, the Town adopted a program with one free barrel of trash per week. When implemented, Hamilton was recycling at 36% but that number has dropped back to 28%. Cost incentive of a full PAYT along with a transfer station drives up recycling rate to as high as 60%. In 2009, Hamilton's unique organic recycling program was put in place.

She mentioned that savings in trash removal can be realized in single stream, organic recycling and automated pick up with fewer trash runs. This requires a lot of administrative time to manage. Every household in Town typically dumps 1.5 tons of trash annually.

Discussion about interplay between bag revenue and organic composting that can include as much as 17 pounds a week and that some residents may not elect to compost resulting in additional bag revenue.

There was also dialog on fact that some unpleasant smelling trash items cannot be removed with organics and that a supplemental alternative trash-drop off site where a fee would be charged would be offered to residents.

Lombardo noted that there would be an opportunity to address households with specific medical needs. He believes the SMART program is workable and hopes people will embrace it.

He explained that a recycling/organic truck has been order by trash hauler to support new SMART program to be rolled out in March. Bins have been ordered, plans are being finalized, and brochures are being produced to educate residents.

Other business

Next regularly scheduled Selectmen’s meeting, a working session, is Monday, November 14. A formal Board meeting will be held on Monday, November 21.

Discussions were about Comcast cable television raising service fees and that details about fee charged to pay Hamilton property taxes online needs to be investigated. Lombardo said he would research.

Board dialog was on tone of Enough Is Enough resident group’s email addressing how school budget is controlled and if a policy could be implemented.

Scuteri entertained a motion for Board to adjourn open session at 8:59 p.m. Stinson so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Clerk