

TOWN OF HAMILTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DECEMBER 19, 2011

Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 19, 2011 with Jennifer Scuteri, David Carey, Marc Johnson, Jeff Stinson, and Jeff Hubbard present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo also present.

Accept minutes (November 21, November 28, November 29, December 5, and December 12, 2011

Board clerk Jeff Hubbard entertained a motion for Board to approve November 21, 2011 regular session minutes. Marc Johnson so moved. Jeff Stinson seconded motion. VOTE: 3-0-2, David Carey and Jennifer Scuteri abstained because they were not present at that meeting.

Hubbard entertained a motion for Board to approve November 28, 2011 regular session minutes. Stinson so moved. Scuteri seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Hubbard entertained a motion for Board to approve November 29, 2011 joint regular session minutes. Stinson so moved. Scuteri seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Hubbard entertained a motion for Board to approve December 5, 2011 joint regular session minutes. Stinson so moved. Scuteri seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Board held the December 12, 2011 minutes for approval at a subsequent meeting.

Public Comment

None.

Town Manager's report

Town Manager Michael Lombardo and DPW Director John Tomasz met with Department of Environmental Protection grant representative to discuss funding

opportunities for \$20,000 feasibility study on anaerobic digester for the Town that would be located at the Chebacco Road landfill site.

Town officials are in process of developing agreement for grant funds where Hamilton would be reimbursed the \$20,000 by DEP. They are also thinking about next steps after the study is done.

CDM is in the field doing test pits at the landfill site to sample the cap size and depth to assess condition of cap to determine if remediation of the cell is necessary. The town of Lexington is six months ahead of Hamilton in this process and is developing an RFP to get an anaerobic digester built.

Discussion was about commercially viable anaerobic digester currently being used by dairy farms in central Massachusetts. Hamilton is considering a digester facility that could handle 50 to 150 tons of waste a day.

Johnson said to generate that volume farms in the area would have to participate as well as restaurants. Lombardo suggested 10 to 15 communities and some commercial. The facility could be relatively low tech and cost from \$100,000 to \$10 million.

Discussion was about varying forms of output that could be generated including compost, gas or electricity. Concept is based on risk/reward and could include bringing in a partner to invest capital within a land/lease agreement. Process will maximize the Town's presence. Details will be defined as analysis progresses.

Lombardo said the consultants have been asked to present the Town with a turnkey business model including access to feed stocks, transport of manure or leaf waste.

The Town is looking into how it can access funds for the feasibility study from DEP and Mass. Clean Energy and some could be used for the CDM work.

#### Chairman/Selectmen reports

Scuteri and Hubbard discussed recent meeting with realtors to understand pressure of Hamilton's property taxes and outside perception as a result from potential homebuyers. Town officials are committed to trying to change this trend with the benefit to property values.

Discussion about how prospective homebuyers are interested in Beverly, Ipswich and Manchester Essex school districts since all three have new high schools. Also, homebuyers are put off initially by expensive housing in Manchester and investigate Hamilton until they look at the Town's high tax rate and trend that the tax rate is constantly going up. So it becomes a buying decision based on financing real estate taxes or price of house.

Discussion about marketing Hamilton via website and merchant material, that beach is five miles away, the schools and quality of life are good and there is a lot of open space with trails. Carey suggested an advertising firm in Magnolia be consulted to develop a marketing plan to promote the Town.

Discussion was about facilities assessment being done in Hamilton and Wenham, particularly analysis of the school facilities. A meeting will be held in January to address next steps such as identifying the short falls in the schools (i.e., need for science lab wing at high school) and a citizens committee could be organized to interview school department heads to understand curriculum needs.

Carey mentioned that he has organized a meeting on January 12 at 5:30 p.m. with Conservation Commission Coordinator Jim Hankin and residents concerned about the high water level in the Miles River. Issues to be discussed include: use of fertilizer near riverbed, beaver dams, flooded yards and abandoned properties. Hankin will explain details about jurisdiction especially relative to private property and Fish and Wildlife regulations. The purpose of the meeting is to provide education and develop an action plan that could include dredging part of the river.

#### Council on Aging –Susan Carp

Susan Carp, shared director for the Hamilton and Wenham Council on Aging, said the volunteer run organization is not sustainable and requires 2.5 FTEs to fully support both towns. The full time director's position is divided into 13 hours each for the two towns' Council on Aging organizations and 14 hours to run the senior van for both communities.

She individually supports the 18% of Hamilton's population that are 60 years old or older representing 2,300 people.

Despite this challenge she is continually running programs for the elderly in Hamilton and Wenham. Since July she began tracking the COA activity for the

past 8.5 months, and identified that 2,312 seniors have regularly participated. In addition, 1550 people annually are using the elder van. More women than men come to programs (i.e., chair yoga).

Carp spends a large part of her time making phone calls since many seniors do not have access to computers and email. She helps connect seniors with opportunities for services such as fuel and food assistance, access to DPW if they are snowed in, and if there are any fire issues. Also, she assists adult children trying to keep their parents in their own homes, and provides information on the senior abatement and work-off programs. Carp also did the application work to receive a grant from Senior Care for \$1,400.

Discussion about seniors being under supported in both towns and that there is a long way to go to serve the seniors in Hamilton and Wenham. It was noted that a comprehensive plan has to be put in place before the municipality can consider designating a permanent space for a senior center in Town. Carp emphasized the importance of providing a community-based social organization for seniors.

#### Adopt Hazard Mitigation Plan

If a plan were put in place it would articulate and identify risks for natural hazards and actions related to FEMA events in Hamilton. This profile will provide the Town with access to future FEMA funds when natural hazards occur. It was noted that the Red Cross provides shelter under such circumstances.

Adoption of such a plan is not restrictive and no appropriation is required. Lombardo said such a plan provides the federal and state government with information about the community's assets and response plans to a sufficient level that FEMA funds could be available (i.e., the Bridge Street culvert for \$700,000 for mitigation of the Miles River could have qualified, has been submitted for consideration and has gone on to the next level).

Scuteri read into the record the resolution about the Town of Hamilton's Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Board of Selectmen's adoption.

She then entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40. Stinson so moved. Johnson seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Town Owned Land

Discussion about seven Town-owned parcels that were recently observed and identified as ready for sale as previously approved by Town Meeting.

These include:

1. (Map 47, Lots 24 and 58), Two on Lincoln Avenue that are slightly smaller than an acre, both are wet with standing water and are not buildable but could be of interest to abutters;
2. (Map 72, Lot 10), Approximately an acre near landfill that is landlocked and might be of interest to Spang family, easements could be considered to have solar on property this could be determined by CDM study, potential for low power solar generation could be understood when parcel is put out to bid;
3. (Map 54, Lot 68), In Idlewood well area with one abutter,
4. (Map 54, Lot 6), Contains a brick wall and has access to Pleasant Pond, property was bought by Town in 1979 and designated for sale in 2006, lot does not warrant use for recreation programs because it is too dense, there is no place to park, there could be abutter interest;
5. (Map 59, Lot 63), Is a 5,600-square foot sliver on School Street with three abutters where one has expressed interest,
6. (Map 56, Lot 51), 11,200-square foot long, narrow, dry lot on Forest Street that could be buildable on corner with two abutters, minimum bid will be established.
7. Discussion was about research underway on Chebacco Road lot that has a complicated title and lacks strong title history. Taxes have not been paid on this property for 50 years. If owner cannot be identified, Town would have to go through Land Court process to do a tax title taking of parcel that has access to Chebacco Lake and could be worth \$340,000.

Patton Estate –Formation of Task Force

Discussion was on formation of nine-member task force to assess proposed gift of Patton estate land. Group could consist of representatives from Town boards including Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Recreation Board, a developer and real estate attorney. If a Wenham resident were appointed that person would not be a voting member.

Issues raised related to gift would be of interest to Essex County Trails Association, Green Meadows farm and Brick Ends Farm and could address future development and archiving program use by Gordon College. Details need to be defined on uses and negotiation will be done to be fair and reasonable.

Adopt changes to Open Meeting Law

Selectmen will set up guidelines for other Town boards and committees to consider when deciding whether or not to adopt OML changes. Scuteri entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adopt 940 CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law to allow Remote Participation by all Town of Hamilton public bodies. Hubbard so moved. Johnson seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Other business

Board will meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 22 to vote on H-W Green sign notifying public of collection of Christmas trees for composting from December 26 until January 8. Selectmen will hold retreat Saturday, January 14 at 8:30 a.m.

Scuteri entertained a motion for Board to go into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23B(3) for the purpose of Litigation Strategy, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Town's litigation position, not to return to regular session at 8:52 p.m. Carey so moved. Stinson seconded motion. Roll call vote: Marc Johnson, aye, Dave Carey, aye, Jennifer Scuteri, aye, Jeff Stinson, aye, Jeff Hubbard, aye.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk