

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

June 11, 2013

At

Winthrop Elementary School

At the close of registration on May 31, 2013 there were 5,827 registered voters.

Moderator declared a quorum present (75) and the Warrant returned showing it had been properly served, opened the Special Town Meeting at 7:34 P.M. with 917 voters checked and present 16% of the total registered voters.

Precinct 1 – 282

Precinct 2 – 300

Precinct 3 – 335

Assistant Moderator

Richard Flynn 183 Linden Street

Cafeteria and Gymnasium

Sue Ackerman	16 Greenbrook Road
Theresa 'Mimi' Fanning	122 Railroad Avenue
Ruth Flumerfelt	59 Greenbrook Road
Phil Stearns	175 Linden Street
Arthur Towne	20 Savoy Road
Jean Towne	20 Savoy Road
Bob Nyland	118 Woodbury Street
Dot Ingalls	23 Lincoln Avenue
Nick Mazzetta	4 Gifford Road

Pledge of Allegiance

He asked non-resident members of the regional school system, Town officials and those assisting the Selectmen or Finance and Advisory Committee to be present here so they may be available to answer questions. Members of the press and the video crew have also been allowed to be present. He reminded those allowed here to do nothing which may influence the counting of a vote.

He explained that there is overflow space in the gymnasium. Another procedural note was that proceedings are recorded so as to have an accurate record of the meeting. The Moderator mentioned that unless he recognize speakers by name, please use the microphones provided and give your name and address when you arise to address the moderator.

The Moderator proceeded to announce members at the front of the cafeteria.

Bruce Ramsey – Moderator
Jane Wetson – Town Clerk
Maureen Hickey – Assistant to the Town manager

Board of Selectmen:

Scott Maddern
Marc Johnson – Chair
Jennifer Scuteri
Jeff Hubbard
David Neill

Michael Lombardo – Town Manager
Donna Brewer – Town Counsel
Deborah Nippes-Mena – Finance Director

Finance and Advisory Committee:

John McWane –Chair
Rick Sprenkle
Charles Chivakos

The Moderator also mentioned that all registered voters have been given a distinctive voter ID card when checking into the meeting and they should not lose or destroy this card since they will have to show the card on any vote and for the ballot vote on the motion. Also, the check-in process will stop 15 minutes after voting starts and anyone arriving after that time might not be able to vote. He mentioned babysitting was available.

He explained that there would be two presentations on the motion from the motion sponsor and Pirie family that opposes the proposed action that would be followed by debate.

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL ACTIONS

ARTICLE 2013/6 2-1 Authorize Purchase of Pirie Property

Moderator read: To see if the Town will authorize the purchase of the Pirie Property, so-called, by gift, purchase, or otherwise; appropriate a sum of money to pay costs of such

purchase, including the payment of any and all costs incidental and related thereto, and to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by taxation, transfer from available funds, borrowing or any combination of the foregoing, or to take any other action relative thereto.

The Moderator recognized Marc Johnson.

Moved by Marc Johnson, Chair Board of Selectmen, duly seconded, that the Town is authorized to acquire the Pirie Property, so-called, by gift, purchase, or otherwise; that the sum of \$4,000,000 is appropriated to pay the costs of this acquisition and for the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto; that to meet this appropriation, \$19,800 shall be transferred from the sale of lots and graves accounts for cemetery purposes, \$100,000 is appropriated from the undesignated funds in the Community Preservation Fund as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee to pay for closing and legal costs, \$400,000 as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee is raised by borrowing pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 44B, Section 11 in anticipation of revenues to be raised pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 44B, Section 3, to pay for acquisition costs, and the Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen, is authorized to borrow \$3,480,200 under and pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 7(3) of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefore. In addition, \$153,000 shall be transferred from free cash of which \$63,000 is to pay to offset the loss of tax revenue and \$90,000 is to pay interest and operating and borrowing costs associated with this acquisition.

The Moderator recognized Marc Johnson who noted that Scott Maddern would do the presentation. The Moderator recognized Scott Maddern. Maddern explained that Special Town Meeting was being held for Town Meeting voters to decide if Town should enact its right of first refusal to purchase the Pirie Property. He noted that there would be a question and answer period. Maddern summarized why the Selectmen thought it was a good idea to consider purchasing the Pirie Property in spite of the tight schedule to make a decision and potentially purchase the property. He mentioned that there is a capable Town manager and other officials in place to handle this type of project, which is in the conceptual rather than planning stage who could assist in RFP process, that meets some of Hamilton's needs outlined in Master Plan, Recreation Master Plan and Housing Production Plan and would bring in more property tax revenue than the current development proposal for the site.

The Moderator recognized John McWane. McWane spoke of what the future looks like for Hamilton with the tax rate expected to rise from \$17.17 to \$17.75 next year which represents a \$240 annual increase in real estate taxes for median house valued at \$400,000. He summarized the need for more revenue generation in Town to cover cost of operating Town and Hamilton's share of HWRSD since Hamilton derives 97% of its revenue from property taxes. Also, that the amount of revenue coming into the Town is less than the increase in spending so efforts have been made to reduce spending (i.e., trash/recycling program) but it is not enough to control the tax rate so the alternative is to

cut services if new revenue sources are not implemented. He said that the Finance and Advisory Committee recommended favorable action on this warrant article.

The Moderator recognized Fred Mills from the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust. Mills addressed need for affordable and senior housing in Hamilton as defined by Housing Production Plan to keep the Town financially viable.

Also mentioned by proponents of the Town purchasing the Pirie Property was that citizen input would shape the plan. In addition, Town officials described how feasibility study for Patton Property was on track as part of meeting a two year timeframe to get the property financially self-sustaining.

The Moderator recognized Town Manager Michael Lombardo who spoke to the specifics of traffic study done relative to the development proposal for the Pirie Property and suggested that the increased traffic on Bay Road resulting from the Town's conceptual plan would not be any different than what exists today from the Norman Road and Margaret Road neighborhoods.

The Moderator recognized Jack Lawrence, 105 Rock Maple, who suggested a motion for the Town Meeting to vote on to postpone any action on Article 2-1 indefinitely. The Moderator did not accept the motion citing deadline for any motions was last Friday, June 7, 2013.

The Moderator recognized Bill Dery, Chebacco Road, who presented his thoughts regarding the impact of increased number of school children resulting from Town's proposed development at Pirie Property and his opposition to Hamilton purchasing the property.

The Moderator recognized Bill Wheaton, Bridge Street, Martin Zee, Bay Road, Peter Whitman, 292 Bridge Street, John Pirie, 7 Kinsman Lane, Rod O'Connor, Walnut Road, Forrester Clark, Sagamore Street, and Selectmen David Neill and Jeff Hubbard, who all spoke in opposition to Town's proposal to buy the Pirie Property.

The Moderator recognized David Carey, 8 Arabian Way, Charles Chivakos, 27 Village Lane, and Selectmen Jennifer Scuteri and Marc Johnson who all spoke in favor of the article. Scuteri cited examples of other similar communities to Hamilton that had success with such purchases and a need for Hamilton to work together as a community and that the Pirie Property was an opportunity not to be missed by the Town. Johnson emphasized the disparity between growth cost and revenue in Town being a recipe for disaster and effort Hamilton has made implementing senior housing and great estate bylaws to facilitate the Town moving forward with development.

The question was called to move to a vote at 8:50 p.m., with a motion moved and duly seconded by Town Meeting voters.

The Moderator called for the voice vote on whether to move to a vote on the main

motion, ending further debate.

VOICE VOTE: MOTION PASSES

Having previously decided that any vote on the main motion would be by paper ballot, the Moderator explained the details of the paper ballot that would be used by Town Meeting voters for a yes or no vote and he stated that a two-thirds vote was required for Town of Hamilton to purchase land.

The Town Meeting proceeded to the ballot vote and the Moderator asked if anyone else was waiting to vote at 9:54 p.m. and with no one waiting, the vote was tallied.

BALLOT VOTE: YES – 391
NO --- 478 MOTION FAILS
(Did not get 2/3rds required vote)

ADJOURNMENT

The Moderator dissolved the Special Town Meeting at 10:03 p.m.

A TRUE COPY: ATTEST:

Jane M. Wetson, CMMC
Town Clerk