



## **WARRANT**

For

### **Special Town Meeting**

November 14, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School  
Football Stadium (Under a tent)

**Please note:** The appendices are available at Town Hall, on-line at [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov), and at the meeting. They were omitted from the warrant mailing to save on printing and postage costs.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the on-going health precautions we are taking, child care cannot be offered for Town Meeting members. All attendees to Special Town Meeting will be asked to be seated immediately upon entering the Town Meeting floor and will be required to wear a mask while inside Town Meeting. Residents who self-identify that they are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition, will be asked to complete a health screening survey and be offered a socially distanced seat in a designated area of the Town Meeting floor, to protect themselves and other Town Meeting members.

**Children will not be allowed into Town Meeting this year.**

Please recycle this warrant after the Town Meeting.

## **Town By-Laws**

### **CHAPTER II**

#### **RULES AND PROCEDURE OF TOWN MEETINGS**

**SECTION 1.** All articles in the warrant shall be taken up in the order of their arrangement, unless otherwise decided by a two-thirds vote, except that unanimous consent shall be required for inclusion of an Article in a "Consent Motion" group of Articles that will be taken up by the meeting for voting on the group.

**SECTION 2.** In case of motions to amend, or to fill out blanks, the one expressing the largest sum or the longest time shall be put first, and an affirmative vote thereon shall be a negative vote on any smaller sum or shorter time.

**SECTION 3.** The report of a committee shall be deemed properly before a meeting if a request for its acceptance is included in an article of the warrant and a copy is published in the Special Report or is filed with the Town Clerk fifteen days prior to the meeting. A vote to accept a final report shall discharge the committee but shall not be equivalent to a vote to carry out its recommendations. A vote on recommendations included in a committee report shall only be in order under an article to that effect in the warrant. A vote to accept a report of progress shall continue the committee under its original authority unless otherwise specified.

**SECTION 4.** If an article of the Warrant has once been acted upon and disposed of, it shall not be again considered at the meeting except by a two-thirds vote.

**SECTION 5.** No money shall be appropriated from the Stabilization Fund except by a 2/3 vote at a Town Meeting.

**SECTION 6.** Only registered voters of the Town shall be admitted and entitled to vote at any Annual or Special meeting provided that upon prior request the Moderator may admit to the meeting persons who are not registered voters and in his discretion may permit them to speak on a subject. Any person so permitted to speak at a meeting shall announce his full name and address to the meeting.

**SECTION 7.** Motions at Town Meeting shall be made orally, but the Moderator may require any motion also to be submitted in writing. Unless otherwise directed thereby the Moderator shall appoint all committees created by the vote of the Town.

**SECTION 8.** The conduct of all Town Meetings not prescribed by law or by the foregoing rules shall be determined by the rules of practice contained in the most current edition of Town Meeting Time, A Handbook of Parliamentary Law.

**SECTION 9.** On matters requiring a two-thirds vote, either by statute or these By-Laws, a count need not be taken and the vote need not be recorded unless the vote declared is immediately questioned by seven or more voters as provided in General Laws, Chapter 39, Section 15.

**Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020**

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***Please note:*** The appendices are available at the Town Hall, on-line @ [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov) and at the meeting. They were omitted from the warrant mailing to save on printing and postage costs.

## Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020



ESSEX, SS

### TO THE CONSTABLE OF THE TOWN OF HAMILTON:

### GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Hamilton qualified to vote in election and town affairs, to meet at the Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School located at 775 Bay Road in said town, on Saturday, the fourteenth day of November, in the year Two Thousand Twenty (November 14, 2020) at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 a.m.), then and there to act on the following articles.

### SECTION 1: ELECTIONS, REPORTS, PROCEDURES

<b>ARTICLE 2020/11 1-1</b>  <i>Article for Consent Motion</i>	To see if the Town will consolidate in one consent motion containing the motions for those articles that, in the opinion of the Moderator, are not controversial and can be passed without debate, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.  Articles expected to be included in the Consent Motion are: 2-4, 2-9, 2-10, 2-11, 3-1, 3-2, 3-3
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### SECTION 2: FINANCIAL ACTIONS

<b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-1</b>  <i>Prior Year Bills</i>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum of money to pay any unpaid bills incurred in prior years, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (<i>Expected request \$1,084.97</i>)</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> This article provides for payment of all prior year bills which were not submitted or received by the Town prior to the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2020.</p> <p><i>Bills include:</i></p> <p><i>\$209.97 for Staples for office supplies for May 2020</i></p> <p><i>\$875.00 for Beauport Ambulance – COA Van Service for May 2020</i></p> <p><i>A 9/10 vote is required for passage.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> Payment of these bills will have a negligible effect on the tax rate.</p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
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<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-2</b></p> <p><i>Capital Expenditures</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of funding capital expenditures and further, to authorize the Town Manager to administer and expend funds from said accounts, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request \$415,000.00)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article would provide funds for various projects contained within the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Projects Plan.</i></p> <p>[Please refer to <b>Appendix A</b> to the 2020 Appendix Book.]</p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The request would have no impact on the tax rate, as it is anticipated that Free Cash will be utilized for these appropriations.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-3</b></p> <p><i>Water Treatment</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of money in accordance with General Laws Chapter 44, Sections 7 or 8, or any other enabling authority, for the purpose of funding the design and construction of improvements to the Town’s water treatment system, including all incidental or related costs, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept any federal state and/or other grants or loans available for the project, and to enter into any and all agreements related thereto; and that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payments of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request is \$1,000,000)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This project seeks to complete the Water Plant pre-treatment project that was authorized by Town Meeting in April 2019. Since that time, the town has completed an assessment of the water conditions, reviewed a variety of options for pre-treatment of water and has engaged a consultant to design and install the town’s preferred pre-treatment system. The funds sought in this article would allow for the completion and construction of this important water quality improvement project.</i></p> <p><i>A 2/3 vote is required for passage of this article.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact :</i></b> <i>None. The funds to pay the debt service will be appropriated from the Water Enterprise Fund.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-4</b></p> <p><i>Pool Revolving Fund</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$820.75 to the Pool Revolving Fund to cover a deficit, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request \$820.75)</i></p>

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	<p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> This article appropriates \$820.75 to the Pool Revolving Fund to fund a deficit that exists in the Fund due to decreased revenues generated during this past Summer as a result of COVID-19 restrictions preventing use of the pool.</p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> This appropriation will have a negligible effect on the tax rate.</p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-5</b></p> <p align="center"><i>Community Preservation - Affordable Housing Trust Grant</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c.44B, to appropriate \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Undesignated Account to the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust as a grant for the purpose of supporting development projects that will lead to the creation of affordable housing, and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust setting the terms for such grant, including a requirement that the owners of any dwellings subsequently receiving any of these appropriated monies from the Trust grant to the Town an Affordable Housing Restriction in said dwellings, and that such requirement be included in any grant agreement involving these funds; and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept such restrictions; provided further that any funds from this appropriation remaining unspent after January 1, 2023 will be returned to the Community Preservation fund only after a vote by the Community Preservation Committee determining that it is unlikely the remaining appropriated funds will need to be spent to this effect, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> This article seeks to allocate funds from the Community Preservation Fund Undesignated Account for the purpose of aiding the development of Affordable Housing in the community.</p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact :</i></b> The Community Preservation Budget is allocated from a 2% surcharge on to the property tax plus State matching funds. This is noted as a separate line item on your tax bill.</p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The CPC (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-6</b></p> <p align="center"><i>Community Preservation - First Congregational Church Clock and Belfry</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c.44B, to appropriate \$75,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Historic Reserve Account to the First Congregational Church of Hamilton as a grant for the purpose of repairing and restoring the historic clock tower and belfry on the First Congregational Church of Hamilton; and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Grant Agreement with the First Congregational Church of Hamilton setting the terms for such grant, including a requirement that the First Congregational Church of Hamilton grant to the Town an Historic Preservation Restriction in connection with such clock tower and belfry, and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept said restriction; provided further that if construction has</p>

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	<p>not commenced by November 15, 2022, any funds from this appropriation will be returned to the Community Preservation fund only after a vote by the Community Preservation Committee determining that it is unlikely the remaining appropriated funds will need to be spent to this effect and that if the grant is successfully challenged, any funds granted to the First Congregational Church or Hamilton shall be returned to the Town, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article seeks to allocate funds set aside in the Community Preservation Fund Historic Reserve Account for the purpose of funding a portion of the repair and restoration of the historic clock and belfry at the First Congregational Church of Hamilton. The church is a historic structure that has played an important role in Town history, as it once housed Town offices and served as the meeting place for Town Meetings.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact :</i></b> <i>The Community Preservation Budget is allocated from a 2% surcharge on to the property tax plus State matching funds. This is noted as a separate line item on your tax bill.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (4-1) recommends Unfavorable Action. The CPC (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends Unfavorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-7</b>  <i>Community  Preservation – Town  Hall Building Project</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c.44B, to appropriate a sum of \$3,000,000 for the restoration, rehabilitation and preservation of the historic Town Hall located at 577 Bay Road as set forth in an application dated 7/30/20 approved by the Community Preservation Committee and on file with the Town Clerk, including but not limited to design, project management and construction costs, and all incidental and related costs, i.e., those project costs designated by the Community Preservation Committee as eligible to be funded under the Community Preservation Act; and, to meet said appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of said amount under G.L. 44B, §11, G.L. c.44, §§7 or 8 and/or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor, and while these will be general obligation bonds of the Town, it is anticipated that they shall be repaid through the Community Preservation Fund, and, further, any premium received by the Town upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to costs approved by this vote with a reduction of borrowing authority therefore by a like amount in accordance with G.L. c.44, §20; provided, however, that the expenditure of these funds shall not be authorized if Town Meeting fails to approve Article 2020/11-2-8, or if construction of the Town Hall project fails to commence by November 15, 2022, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article seeks to utilize Community Preservation Act historic preservation funds to pay for the historic preservation components of the</i></p>

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	<p><i>proposed Town Hall restoration, rehabilitation and preservation project, thus reducing the amount that has to be bonded out of the Town's General Fund. Use of these community preservation funds will reduce the potential impact to taxpayers, by reducing the amount that would need to be funded through a Proposition 2 ½, so called, debt-exclusion vote.</i></p> <p><i>A 2/3 vote is required for passage of this article.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The Community Preservation Budget is allocated from a 2% surcharge on to the property tax plus State matching funds. This is noted as a separate line item on your tax bill.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The CPC (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-8</b></p> <p><i>Town Hall Building Project</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer to borrow a sum of money in accordance with General Laws Chapter 44, Section 7 or any other enabling authority, for the purpose of funding the design, construction, renovations and improvements to, and equipping, the Town Hall located at 577 Bay Road, excluding costs to be paid from the Community Preservation Act under Article 2020/11 2-7, and including design and construction of the renovations and improvements to a temporary Town Hall facility and relocation costs and all other incidental or related costs, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept any federal state and/or other grants or loans available for the project, and to enter into any and all agreements related thereto; provided, however, that the appropriation authorized hereunder shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters of the Town to assess taxes in excess of the amount allowed under Proposition 2 ½, so-called, for the amounts required to pay principal and interest on bonds or notes issued for the purposes set forth herein; and further, that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payments of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article seeks funding for the portions of the Town Hall Building Project, which were <u>not</u> funded with CPA funds or previous Town authorizations. The proposed Town Hall Building project has progressed through the contract documents and bidding phase. If approved, these funds, together with funds sought in a related article on this warrant, will be utilized to fund construction phases. (Expected request was estimated as \$5,300,000, at the time the Warrant closed – the actual request will be based on bids.)</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>None in FY2021. Debt service costs will be appropriated in future fiscal years. It is estimated that the debt-service costs would impact the tax rate at an average of \$0.22 cents per \$1,000.00 of</i></p>



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	<p><i>valuation, based on the estimated request at the time the Warrant was finalized and assuming no increases to property values or changes in the current interest rate on a 30-year bond.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-9</b></p> <p><i>Assessing Department Software</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of upgrading the Assessing Department's software, including all incidental or related costs, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request is \$10,000.00)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article proposes to appropriate \$10,000.00 for the cost of upgrading the Assessing Department's software. The project commenced in the previous fiscal year, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition to the new software was not completed prior to June 30, 2020, and the funds that had been set aside to complete the project were not able to be encumbered. As a result, the funds reverted back to the Town's general fund as unexpended fund balance (Free Cash). This appropriation is needed to complete the software transition.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The allocation of these funds will have a negligible impact on the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rate.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-10</b></p> <p><i>Town Clerk and Election Staffing and Supplies</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of funding additional Town Clerk and Election staffing costs for FY2021 and the purchase election and administrative supplies and materials, based on the estimates provided by the TownClerk and included as Appendix B of the Warrant, including all incidental or related costs, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request is \$29,785.00)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article proposes to appropriate \$29,785.00 to handle unanticipated costs associated with new state requirements for early and mail-in voting that were imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Special Election, supplies and postage costs associated and to properly fund the salary line in the Town Clerk's Office for the current fiscal year.</i></p> <p>[Please refer to <b>Appendix B</b> to the 2020 Appendix Book.]</p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The allocation of these funds will have a negligible impact on the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rate.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>

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<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-11</b></p> <p><i>DPW Employee Retirement</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of funding earned sick and vacation time, for a retiring Department of Public Works employee, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request is \$5,600.00)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article proposes to appropriate \$5,600 to fund the pay out of earned sick and vacation accruals in accordance with the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement to a DPW Employee who is retiring.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The allocation of these funds will have a negligible impact on the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rate.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 2-12</b></p> <p><i>Master Plan</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money necessary to fund a master plan, including all incidental or related costs, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. <i>(Expected request is \$150,000 from Free Cash)</i></p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>The Town is proposing to undertake a Master Planning Process that will help create a vision and articulate what the future of the Town of Hamilton should look like, as well as provide goals and strategies for Hamilton boards, committees, volunteers and employees to utilize in building a sustainable future for the community. The funds sought in this article would be used to hire a professional planning consultant to undertake this project, which is expected to take between 18 month and 2 years to complete.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>The requested funds will be paid from Free Cash and will have no impact on the tax rate.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>

## SECTION 3: OTHER APPROPRIATIONS AND ACTIONS

<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/ 3-1</b></p> <p><i>Council on Aging Bylaw</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 5 of Article XXXIII of the Town's General Bylaws, Hamilton's Council on Aging Bylaw, by deleting the language shown in strikethrough and inserting the language shown in bold, or take any other action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p>Article 5. Membership</p> <p>a. The Council shall consist of seven <b>voting</b> members <b>and two alternates</b> who are residents of Hamilton. <b>An Alternate shall have voting rights only when a</b></p>
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	<p><b>quorum is not present and the Alternate is so designated by the Chair of the Council in a member's absence;</b></p> <p>b. Membership on the Council shall be for a 3 year term;</p> <p>c. A candidate for Council membership shall submit a letter of intent to the Chairman and be voted on by the Council before presenting the name to the Board of Selectmen for appointment;</p> <p>d. If a resignation or incapacity of any officer or member occurs, <del>the Council shall recommend to the Selectmen a successor whom a majority of the Board of Selectmen shall appoint to serve out the term</del> <b>the remaining term will be filled consistent with the Town of Hamilton Board of Selectmen's policy for filling committee vacancies;</b></p> <p>e. A quorum shall be 4 members;</p> <p>f. All members shall be sworn in by the Town Clerk within 10 days of their appointment;</p> <p>g. All members shall serve without compensation.</p> <p><i><b>Brief Summary:</b> This article seeks to amend the Council on Aging Bylaw to allow for two alternate members to be appointed who are able to fill in for absent voting members in order to achieve a quorum.</i></p> <p><i><b>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</b> None.</i></p> <p><i><b>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</b></i></p>
<p><b>ARTICLE 2020/11 3-2</b></p> <p><i>Home Rule Petition to Amend Acts of 2010 Chapter 91</i></p>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for special legislation to amend Chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Providing a Tax Exemption for Certain Qualifying Real Estate in the Town of Hamilton, by inserting the language shown in bold and deleting the language shown in strike-through, as set forth in Appendix C; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill unless the Board of Selectmen approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to approve amendments within the scope of the general objectives of the petition, or take any other action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><i><b>Brief Summary:</b> This article is required as part of the process to seek a Home Rule Petition. The Town seeks to amend the Act in order to allow flexibility in setting the annual cap for exemptions, provide guidance for the Tax Exemption program and from time to time to allow for updating of the financial qualifications criteria.</i></p> <p>[Please refer to <b>Appendix C</b> to the 2020 Appendix Book.]</p> <p><i><b>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</b> None.</i></p> <p><i><b>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance</b></i></p>

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	<b><i>and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b>
<b>ARTICLE 2020/11 3-3</b>  <i>Lease for Temporary Town Hall</i>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease with Gordon–Conwell Theological Seminary, Inc. for real property located at 130 Essex Street, in Hamilton for purposes of temporarily relocating Town Hall, under such terms and conditions and the Board of Selectmen deem advisable, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.</p> <p><b><i>Brief Summary:</i></b> <i>This article seeks authorization for the Town to lease space for use as the temporary Town Hall during the renovation and improvement of Town Hall. Gordon–Conwell Theological Seminary, Inc. has offered to lease a portion of one of its buildings to the Town for \$1 per year, with only the cost of utilities used. The Town will be responsible for the cost of renovations and improvements to the building related to the town’s temporary residency.</i></p> <p><b><i>Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:</i></b> <i>None.</i></p> <p><b><i>The Board of Selectmen (5-0) recommends favorable action. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) recommends favorable action.</i></b></p>
<b>ARTICLE 2020/11 3-4</b>  <i>Citizen’s Petition</i>	<p>To see if the Town will vote to require the Board of Health for the Town of Hamilton (“BOH”) to adhere to all guidance, metrics, rules, and instructions promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) concerning the opening and operation of schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts during the 2020-2021 School Year and for the duration of the State of Emergency in the Commonwealth regarding the Covid-19 Global Pandemic.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prohibits the BOH from adopting, approving, enacting, promulgating, or enforcing any guidance, metrics, rules, or instructions concerning the opening and operation of schools in the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (the “District”) more stringent than what DESE or DPH has promulgated or will promulgate for the Commonwealth. Specifically, the BOH is prohibited from establishing “local metrics” that redefine the categories of the state color-coded health metric system based on aggregate average daily incidence rate more strictly (<i>i.e.</i>, the gray, green, yellow, and red categories set forth in the color-coded charts and maps provided by DPH);</li> <li>2. Requires the BOH to use the DESE “key municipality” standard to determine the District’s alignment to the health metric established by DPH. The “key municipality” is defined as the municipality where the greatest percentage of enrolled students in the district reside (<i>i.e.</i>, Hamilton); and</li> <li>3. Annuls any guidance, metrics, rules, or instructions previously adopted, approved, enacted, promulgated, or enforced by the BOH more stringent than that promulgated by DESE or DPH,</li> </ol>

**Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020**

including but not limited to the BOH’s redefinition of the red category to lower the aggregate daily incidence rate from >8 per 100,000 people to >6 per 100,000 people.

***Brief Summary:*** *As required, this Article appears exactly as it was submitted by the petitioners. The petitioners seek to require the Board of Health to adhere to all guidance, metrics, rules and instructions promulgated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health concerning the opening and operation of schools. Decisions regarding public health and whether to adopt different or stricter policies are within the discretion of the Board of Health. Any action taken here is considered advisory in nature.*

***Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Rate Impact:*** *None.*

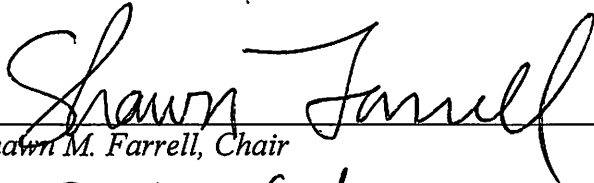
***The Board of Selectmen will make a recommendation on this article at Town Meeting. The Finance and Advisory Committee (5-0) makes no recommendation at this time.***

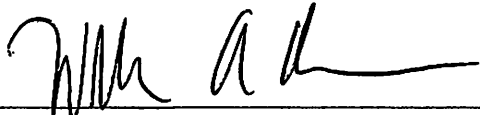
Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020

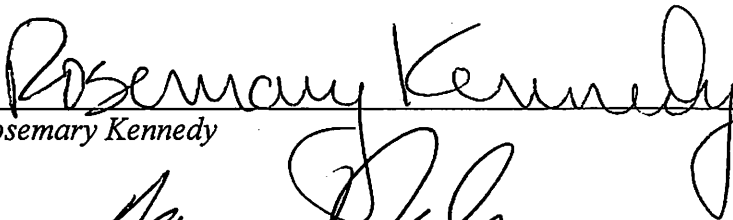
ADJOURNMENT

*Given under our hands this 26 day of October, 2020.*

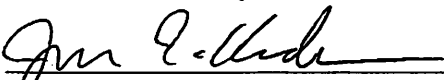
**HAMILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

  
Shawn M. Farrell, Chair

  
William Olson

  
Rosemary Kennedy

  
Darcy Dale

  
Jamie Knudsen

Hamilton, Massachusetts

*I have this day served this warrant as directed by Chapter 1, Section 1b of the Town By-laws.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Constable, Town of Hamilton

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

734679/HAML/0001

## Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020

### Appendix A CAPITAL PLAN

Fiscal Year 2021 Special Town Meeting Capital Program				
Department	Priority	Item	Cost	Funding Source
ECO	1	Radio Repeaters (2 of 3)	\$56,000.00	Free Cash
Fire	1	Ballistic vests	\$6,000.00	Operations
Highway	1	NPDES Phase III-V Compliancy	\$54,000.00	Free Cash
Police	1	Patrol SUV (1 of fleet of 7)	\$55,000.00	Free Cash
Water	1	Water Treatment Plant	\$1,000,000.00	Water Bonding
Facilities	3	DPW Fuel Station Replacemet	\$250,000.00	Free Cash
Facilities	3	Town Hall Renovation Project	\$5,300,000.00	Bonding
Library	3	Replace Roof	\$49,463.00	Operations
Library	3	Replace Server	\$11,871.00	Operations
Water	3	Water Meter Replacement	\$15,000.00	Operations
Water	3	Hydrant and Gate Valve Replacement	\$15,000.00	Operations
Water	3	Water Storage Tank Eval and Plan	\$30,000.00	Operations
Water	3	Water Supply Feasibility Study	\$100,000.00	NOT FUNDED
Total Water Bonding			\$1,000,000.00	
* Total Bonding			\$5,300,000.00	
Total Free Cash			\$415,000.00	
Total Operations			\$127,334.00	
Total NOT Funded			\$100,000.00	
* Request shown here is an estimate as of the time of printing of the warrant. The actual request will be discussed on Town Meeting floor, after competitive bids are opened and publicized.				

**Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020**

**Appendix B  
Town Clerk and Elections Costs**

<b>Total Unanticipated costs for Town Clerk and Elections</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Town Clerk	Mail-in voting costs	\$2,438.00
In Person Early Voting - Primary	Staffing, equipment and supplies	\$2,861.00
Primary Election	Additional costs caused by COVID-19	\$4,310.00
In Person Early Voting - General	Staffing, equipment and supplies	\$6,225.00
Special Election costs	Staffing. Equipment and supplies and costs caused COVID 19	\$9,960.00
Town Clerk	Payroll adjustments, added postage and shipping	\$3,991.00
<b>Total unanticipated additional costs</b>		<b>\$29,785.00</b>



## Special Town Meeting – November 14, 2020

### Appendix C AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 91 OF ACTS OF 2010

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010 is hereby amended by deleting paragraph (a) in section 2 in its entirety, and inserting in place thereof:-

(a) the qualifying real estate is owned and occupied by a person or family where the total annual household income and total assets of members of the household do not exceed limitations established by the Board of Selectmen in accordance with section 10 of this act.

**SECTION 2.** Section 2 of chapter 91 is further amended by deleting paragraph (e) in its entirety and inserting in place thereof, the following:-

(e) the maximum assessed value of the applicant's primary residence is no greater than the median assessed value of a single family residence in the town of Hamilton plus 10 per cent, as measured for the current tax year in which the application for exemption is filed.

**SECTION 3.** Chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010 is further amended by deleting section 3 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:-

The exemption provided for in this act shall be in addition to any other exemption allowable under the General Laws, excluding circuit breakers. After the first year of enactment, the dollar cap for all real estate abatements available under this act shall be set annually by the board of selectmen in accordance with section 10 of this act.

**SECTION 4.** Section 4 of chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010 is further amended by deleting the last sentence of said section and inserting in place thereof:-

The application shall be filed by March 31 each year for which the applicant seeks the exemption for the fiscal year commencing the following July 1.

**SECTION 5.** Section 5 of chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010 is hereby further amended by adding at the end of said section, the following:-

The applicant is required to submit copies of their federal and state tax returns with the application. The applicant is also required to submit a list of all gross receipts for members of the household from all sources, including retirement benefits and social security payments, pensions, wages, net profits from any business or property rental, interest and dividends, capital gains, public assistance, and any other source.

**SECTION 6.** Chapter 91 of the Acts of 2010 is hereby further amended by inserting a new section 10, as follows:-

The board of selectmen is hereby authorized, after consultation with the Board of Assessors and holding of a public hearing for which no less than 7 days' notice is provided, to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of the act.

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*Please join us*

*Saturday, November 14, 2020*

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

*Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School  
Football Stadium (Under a tent)*

**9:00 a.m.**

**DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT**

**Please bring this warrant with you to the Town Meeting. Thank you.**

October 29, 2020

From: Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee

**Commentary and Recommendations on the Warrant for:**

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

Saturday November 14, 2020  
9:00 A.M.

Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School, Gymnasium

Please bring this report to Town Meeting

To the Citizens of Hamilton:

The Finance and Advisory Committee (FINCOM) appreciates this opportunity in advance of the Special Town Meeting (STM) to provide our views and reasons for our recommendations regarding the warrant articles to be presented at STM for citizen deliberation and disposition.

FINCOM's responsibility is to recommend the action we consider appropriate as to any or all municipal questions. As citizens, you are entitled to consider and vote on all such questions presented to you on the town meeting warrant. As Hamilton residents, we are fortunate to have retained the most direct and democratic form of governance, the town meeting. But that means that only those that attend will ultimately make these decisions. Too often, a small minority of citizens make decisions at town meeting that will affect all citizens. FINCOM encourages you to participate in the decision-making process by attending STM and voting on these important matters.

Once again, we find ourselves in unusual and extraordinary circumstances. Earlier this year the town held its Annual Town Meeting (ATM) in June after it was determined that the meeting could be held in a thoughtful and safe manner. Part of that determination was premised on stream-lining the meeting by prioritizing, among other matters, the determination of important FY 2021 budgetary questions so that municipal operations could continue as planned. However, this process necessitated that the town's deliberation and voting on certain other important matters would be delayed until the Fall STM. Namely, certain capital expenditures and the proposed Town Hall Renovation Project.

While restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been gradually loosened within our town and throughout the Commonwealth since June, it appears that the pandemic is far from over and the status of such restrictions could

change at any time. Therefore, it continues to be paramount that the STM be held with citizen health and safety in mind. Unfortunately, our STM could not occur until mid-November because of the likelihood of a need for a separate ballot question after STM which would have conflicted with the 2020 elections. Therefore, while an open-air event would have been preferred, it may not be practical given the date. As of the printing of these recommendations, it is anticipated that the STM will be held in the HWRSD gymnasium so as to increase space and air-flow, and social-distanced spacing and masks will be required among other precautions.

With the exception of the presentation and potential debate regarding the Town Hall Building Project, we anticipate a comparatively quick session on November 14, with no speeches unrelated to the warrants, and a limited agenda. We hope that your sense of community and responsibility will be important factors in your decision whether to join us for this STM. However, we understand that every individual's health and circumstances are different and we trust that you will use your best judgment in deciding whether to attend.

There are many issues facing our Town and the current pandemic only exacerbates them. With the levels of future state and federal aid uncertain and recent spending trends putting us effectively at our Proposition 2 ½ ceiling, it is more important than ever that we be vigilant and efficient about our spending. While adherence to our fiscal policies have put us in a stable position with respect to our cash reserves, future fiscal uncertainties require that we continue to be cautious about using them. With tax revenue as our predominate source of revenue, the burden of increased spending will fall on you, the residents of Hamilton, at a time when many are struggling. But, as always, there continue to be urgent needs that need to be funded. Among others, our Town Hall is in desperate need of repair, our water infrastructure needs continued upgrading and our school district fights an ongoing battle to control costs at a time when there are significant new challenges. With all these needs, it is incumbent upon the residents of the Town, both today and in the future, to view the complete picture in prioritizing spending decisions. And equally important is the need for all stakeholders and interested parties to collaborate and compromise rather than blindly advocating for their position at the expense of others. With limited resources chasing a variety of worthy needs, we can't afford as a community to view every issue within a self-serving vacuum.

To avoid repetition, this document should be read in conjunction with the Warrant and the appropriate Appendices. Please refer to those documents for the wording of the articles, summaries and fiscal impact as prepared by the Board of Selectmen (BOS), Town Manager, Finance Director and Town Counsel.

## **ARTICLES 2020/11 1-1 Article for Consent Motion**

Certain of the articles described below that the BOS believes are non-controversial will be consolidated into a single motion for approval. We anticipate that the consent motion will include Articles 2-4, 2-9, 2-10, 2-11, 3-1, 3-2 and 3-3.

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-1 Prior Year Bills**

### **Prior Year Bills in the Amount of \$1,084.97**

Our fiscal year (FY) runs from July 1st through June 30th. The bills in question reflect services received and purchases made prior to the end of FY20 for which invoices were not received until after the end of the fiscal year.

When this happens, the town government must come back to the town to appropriate the funds to pay these year prior year bills. There is no question that the goods and services included in this Article were received, and FINCOM believes that the funds should be appropriated and the following bills paid:

Staples – \$209.97: Office supplies; and

Beauport – \$875: Transportation for COA; invoice misplaced during pandemic

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-1.**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-2 Capital Expenditures**

Article 2-2 is an appropriation for capital expenditures for the Town. The expected request of \$415,000 is a portion of the capital expenditures recommended for FY21 by the Town's Capital Committee (CAPCOM) after discussions and deliberation among the CAPCOM, FINCOM and BOS. Certain additional items are proposed as separate Articles in the Warrant. The full list is attached as Exhibit A to the Warrant.

The \$415,000 is comprised of the following four different items:

### **1) NPDES Phase III-V Compliance (\$54,000)**

**Rationale/Purpose of Spend:** These funds will be used to comply with EPA regulations related to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

Systems, specifically systems necessary to mitigate polluted stormwater runoff.

## **2) Replacement/Elimination of DPW Fuel System (\$250,000)**

**Rationale/Purpose of Spend:** Due to their age, the fuel storage tanks in the DPW yard are no longer being used and need to be replaced or removed to prevent leaking or other environmental damage. The Town is currently undergoing a pilot of a shared fuel system with Wenham at their DPW, but regardless of whether the Town opts to collaborate with Wenham or replace its fuel system, these funds will be required for the new system and elimination of the old system.

## **3) Replace Patrol SUV (\$55,000)**

**Rationale/Purpose of Spend:** The replacement SUV is part of the Town's gradual fleet replacement so that older vehicles with a lot of mileage get replaced on a regular basis. Generally, the plan calls for the purchase of a new fleet vehicle every year, with the occasional purchase of 2 vehicles. Although FY21 was originally planned to have 2 vehicles purchased, one of these vehicles was deferred to a future year.

## **4) Upgrade ECO Repeaters (\$56,000)**

**Rationale/Purpose of Spend:** The repeater technology necessary to broadcast the emergency communications throughout the Town is in urgent need of an upgrade.

We recommend that the Town approve spending on these items due to there being a clear need for each of these items and they are an appropriate expenditure of Town funds. In addition, we recommend that the Town use free cash for these items instead of other sources (e.g., bonding or appropriation) given that 1) many of these expenses are of a one-time nature, 2) the Town ended FY2020 with more free cash than it had anticipated due to expenditure freezes implemented during the year in anticipation of decreased revenues during the pandemic, and 3) raising and appropriating for all these expenses would likely require a Proposition 2 ½ override. However, FINCOM has some concern about continually using free cash to fund capital expenses, especially if those expenses are recurring and otherwise operational in nature. Eventually this practice will deplete the Town's free cash, vitally needed in uncertain times, and mask the true operational expenses of the Town. We believe additional financial policies regarding the funding sources of annual capital expenditures would be helpful and we look forward to working with the BOS in this regard.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the set aside for the Capital Stabilization Fund at ATM brought the balance at such time to approximately \$1,412,520, which is

slightly in excess of the Town's target of \$1.3 million. However, we anticipate that by FY22 our financial policies may require an increase of this target (based on the annual asset depreciation calculations of the Town's assets) and therefore we do not advocate using funds from the Capital Stabilization Fund.

Finally, as these capital expenditures are anticipated to come from Certified Free Cash, approval of these items will not impact the tax rate.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-2.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-3 Water Treatment**

Recently, the Ipswich water basin has been accumulating larger amounts of organic matter. The materials tend to clog the filtration system and retard the metal cleaning process. Investment has previously been made to pretreat the raw river water, remove the organics and prepare the water for an efficient metal purification process. The requested funds would add additional capability add to the Idlewood treatment plant to remove organics (TOC) from the raw water. Organics are found mostly in well no. 2, so it is not pumped as frequently. With increased treatment capability for organics, we can increase our raw water supply and rest other wells if required. Given the time needed to figure out a longer-term water solution, these funds should be expended to keep our Town water quality and quantity high.

This expenditure will be bonded out of the Water Enterprise Fund. Since the Water Enterprise is designed to be self-funded, there is no impact on the tax rate. However, Town residents should anticipate that there may be another water rate increase in the near future. When the BOS increased the water rates in FY20 a decision was made to modestly increase the water rates rather than to dramatically increase the water rates and build up retained earnings that will be drawn down in future years as had been done previously. In addition, the flat rate infrastructure charge was increased to better match the amount spent on capital related to the water infrastructure that all water consumers benefit from. The BOS will review water rates on an annual basis. The goal is to try and match these water rates to the anticipated capital and operating expenses that are forecasted at the time. Based on the projected Water Enterprise Fund balance at the end of FY21 and as a result of the investments in the Town's water quality and capacity, it is likely that there may be an increase in usage and/or infrastructure rates on or prior to FY22.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-3.**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-4 Pool Revolving Fund**

Normally the Town's Pool Revolving Fund would be self-sustaining and collect revenue that matched expenses over the course of a year such that there would be no need to appropriate any additional funds. In the past few years, this has been the case and revenues have exceeded operating expenses. However, due to the pandemic, the pool was not able to open this past summer and there was no revenue collected. Although most operating expenses were also eliminated, there were some unavoidable operating expenses that had to be incurred for general pool maintenance. Accordingly, these expenses exhausted any surplus in the fund and created a small deficit of \$820.75.

The purpose of this article is to raise and appropriate from the General Fund such amount to balance the fund. It will have a negligible effect upon the tax rate.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-4.**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-5 Community Preservation – Affordable Housing Trust Grant**

This Article requests the appropriation of \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Fund's unreserved fund balance as a grant to the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) for an affordable housing project. These funds will provide the AHT with the flexibility of aiding in the development of affordable housing in the community, including assisting in the purchase of land and construction of housing units. The reserve fund has been drawn down by recent projects (434-436 Asbury Street, Willow Street development, etc.) and is in need of replenishment to assist in these projects. It is anticipated that all or a portion of these funds may be used to assist in the construction of units at 434-436 Asbury Street to complete the project which was previously approved at the 2019 STM.

The CPC balances are currently \$291,852.35 (unreserved), \$101,945.00 (community housing), \$61.52 (open space), and \$109,675.82 (historic preservation). The AHT fund balance was \$878,639 as of March 31, 2020; however, \$450,000 of this balance has been earmarked for the Willow St. project and \$35,000 was used to hold the land on 434-436 Asbury St. The developer of the Canterbrook project would be providing \$434,000 in total over two equal installments. The Asbury St. project (not yet approved) would require \$400,000 for acquisition. Habitat for Humanity had also committed \$700,000 to the development project. The CPC had a two-year window to fund projects. In the event the projects were not constructed within the two-year window, funds would return to the CPC fund.



These projects meaningfully add to our Town's stock of affordable housing without resorting to large scale developments and we believe the requested transfer will continue to allow for the flexibility of pursuing future projects of this type.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-5.**

**ARTICLE 2020/11 2-6 Community Preservation – First Congregational Church Clock and Belfry**

This article seeks to allocate funds from the CPC's Community Preservation Fund Historic Reserve Account to fund a portion of the repair and restoration of the historic clock and belfry at the First Congregational Church of Hamilton. The church is a historic structure that once housed Town offices and served as the meeting place for Town Meetings.

FINCOM carefully considered this transfer request and appreciates the historic importance of this building and the work of the CPC in approving this request. However, there are several aspects of this request which give us pause. In contrast to its history of hosting Town related functions, the church's present-day primary purpose is as a house of worship, a sectarian function. The repair and restoration of the belfry and clock relate to maintaining the structural integrity of the church and facilitating continued pursuit of that primary purpose. Therefore, we believe that the use of substantial tax-payer generated money (\$75,000) to pay in whole or in part for such structural restoration is inappropriate, crossing the church/state separation line, a distinction essential for maintaining community equilibrium. In addition, the funding of this project may well be unconstitutional under the Massachusetts Anti-Aid Amendment. Even if a grant might ultimately be deemed to be legally permissible, we do not believe the issue is so clear cut as to avoid scrutiny or challenge by members of the community, which could ultimately result in needless additional expense for our Town. With the myriad of other projects requiring funding in this Town, we do not believe it is prudent to fund a use that might be potentially objectionable to others. For these reasons, FINCOM has voted unanimously to recommend unfavorable action on this Article.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends UNFAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-6.**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-7 Community Preservation – Town Hall Building Project**

**Overview:** Hamilton's Town Hall is over 122 years old and is an historic landmark for the town. It is badly in need of renovation for a variety of reasons, including:

- Safety – electrical and plumbing not up to code, lack of fire protection
- Mechanical – HVAC systems failing
- Structural deterioration in multiple areas
- Lack of ADA compliance
- Inefficient layout and working conditions.

Furthermore, any renovation must also comply with Historic Preservation requirements.

This issue has been under consideration by the Town for several years. After looking at the options between building new or renovating, the town residents decided to preserve the Town Hall. It has such cultural, historical and traditional significance they want to keep the building as a symbol of the town.

Part of the Community Preservation Committee's (CPC) mission is to fund historical preservations and renovations. The town's historically significant Town Hall is the quintessential CPC project. This contribution is a portion of what the Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) needs to complete the renovations. THBC is also requesting authorization to borrow additional funds in **Article 2020/11 2-8**. A more comprehensive discussion on the merits, cost and recommendations will be in that section.

As FINCOM supports this project, we encourage the use of CPC funds to complete the construction phase of this historic preservation.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-7.**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-8 Town Hall Building Project**

The THBC is requesting that the Town accept the renovation plans presented and borrow the amount necessary to fund the construction phase of the Town Hall renovation, which at the time the warrant closed was estimated to be \$5.3 million. The precise amount to be approved and borrowed may be adjusted at STM based on final bids that will be received on November 6<sup>th</sup>. This amount, along with the CPC's \$3.0 million is expected complete the renovation.

The total project cost including pre-construction cost, professional fees, management services, construction and contingencies is estimated at the time of the final warrant to be \$9.5 million. The cost breakdown below includes the funding sources and uses.

### **Hamilton Town Hall Renovation**

#### **A Schedule of Funds Committed and Requested**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>Pre-Construction Costs*</b>	<b>Construction Costs**</b>	<b>Total</b>
CPC Funding	475,000	3,000,000	3,475,000
Committed Town Funds	729,127		729,127
Town Debt Funding		5,300,000	5,300,000
	1,204,127	8,300,000	9,504,127

\* Funds already committed to the Renovation, including \$86,300 insurance claim

\*\* Fund requests being discussed at November 2020 STM and that must be approved by voters to complete the Renovation.

The pre-construction costs were approximately \$1.2 million. Up to this point, the town residents have voted and approved these development costs for the project. The final construction phase will require approximately \$8.3 million, based on cost estimates available at the time of the final warrant.

It is anticipated that these costs will be funded with approximately \$8.77 million of 30-year General Obligation Bonds which will include the \$5.3 million under this Article, the \$3.0 million borrowed by the CPC under Article 2-7 and the refinancing of approximately \$468,000 in previously approved short-term borrowings. The annual principal payment varies slightly but is approximately \$300,000 each year. The CPC is responsible for \$100,000 of the principal payment and that payment will not impact the tax rate. Interest payments

decrease each year as principal is paid down. Below is a breakdown of the bond and the estimated cost over the 30 years.

Use	Bond Amount	Estimated Interest	Years
Committed Funds	467,767	3.25%	30
CPC Funding	3,000,000	3.25%	30
Town Funding	5,300,000	3.25%	30
Lifetime Cost	8,767,767	4,298,120	

Using the 2022 principal and interest repayment costs as an example after netting out the CPC funding, the tax rate impact of the \$336,067 of principal and interest will be approximately \$0.22 per \$1,000, or \$134 on the average \$613,400 home. It is also helpful to look at this bonding in the context of the other Town borrowings, which are appended to this Commentary as **Exhibit A**. The Town's most significant borrowing, the Public Safety Building, will be repaid in 2026 and averages \$275,000 in annual principal and interest payments over its remaining term. Likewise, the Fire Truck borrowing, will be repaid in 2027 and accounts for \$70,000 in annual principal and interest payments. These two borrowings combined, upon their maturity, approximate the annual principal and interest costs of the Town Hall Building Project to the Town. Therefore, by 2027, after incorporating the incremental borrowing related to the Town Hall Building Project and absent any other significant projects, our borrowing levels and related annual expense will not be greater than they are today.

FINCOM analyzed this project in several ways: (1) Is a renovation necessary and the best option versus new construction? (2) Has the project been thoroughly researched and vetted? and (3) Does it make economic sense?

On the question of renovation vs. new construction FINCOM concluded the existing Town Hall is a town treasure. It is architecturally significant, its history is woven into the fabric of the community and its sheer presence promotes pride in the town. From a more practical standpoint, the town does not have the land to build another Town Hall. Razing the existing Town Hall and undertaking a new

build would mean a longer displacement for the town employees. Therefore, renovating the existing Town Hall is the best option.

Prior Town Meetings have engaged in repeated consideration of the Town Hall renovation, and such deliberations have reflected continued support for this undertaking. The more recent continuum of positive discourse included 1) rejecting the hiring of outside consultants in favor of relying upon a grouping of citizen volunteers with relevant experience and expertise, 2) the establishment of the Town Hall Building Committee whose diligent work is reflected in this Article, and 3) the initial approval of project funding as the THBC pursued its BOS generated charge. Thus, Articles 2-7 and 2-8 reflect the culmination of careful, purposeful planning with the continued support and affirmation by prior Town Meetings.

With respect to vetting the project, design and costs, the Town Hall Building Committee has done an excellent job. It is made up of townspeople who are experts in commercial and municipal construction. Over the past 3 years they have sought citizen's input, vetted and hired architects and an OPM, kept them challenged and focused and have scrutinized options and costs at every meeting. All along the way they have kept the BOS, FINCOM, Town Manager and others up to date and well informed. We believe they will continue to provide excellent oversight during construction.

Finally, FINCOM has looked at the economics of the project. Since the town folk preferred a renovation to new construction, no credible estimates of a new building are available. Even if new construction is less expensive, arguably the renovation should be looked at a time horizon much longer than the 30-year financing. The building has already functioned for over 122 years without a major renovation. It is reasonable to assume it will continue to function for 75 to 100 years with the current renovation. Over this longer time horizon, the difference between new construction and a renovation would be negligible.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-8.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-9 Assessing Department Software**

This is a request for funds to upgrade the Assessing Department's Software. The costs related to the software upgrade were already budgeted and appropriated in FY20 but, due to the pandemic, were not spent before the end of the fiscal year. Therefore, these previously appropriated funds reverted to free cash at the end of FY20. Accordingly, we support this project and this request and it will have a negligible effect upon the tax rate.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-9.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-10 Town Clerk and Election Staffing and Supplies**

There has been a need for updated election equipment and given the extra election requirements surrounding early voting, mail-in voting and special elections, there have been additional staffing expenses. These expenses are necessary for our democratic process and we support same. Although these additional expenses may end up being one-time expenses and/or subject to reimbursement under the CARES ACT, we anticipate that additional election expenses may be required for the foreseeable future and therefore recommend funding these expenses out of General Fund appropriations. It is not expected to have a significant effect upon the tax rate.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-10.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-11 DPW Employee Retirement**

Due to the unexpected early retirement of a Department of Public Works employee, the Town must pay out the earned sick and vacation time accruals in accordance with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. The expected request is \$5,600, and the Town is required to fund this amount. It is not expected to have a significant effect upon the tax rate.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-11**

## **ARTICLE 2020/11 2-12 Master Plan**

A Master Plan is designed to set goals and priorities for the next 25 years. It is multifaceted and will lay out plans and objectives for:

- Residential housing; types, size, amount, location
- Commercial development; where, type, how much
- Revenue sources
- Open space availability and utilization
- Infrastructure goals; roadways, sidewalks, water system, digital communication

This is an 18-to-24-month project involving a consulting company and town representatives, with significant inputs from the residents of the Town to ensure that the final result represents a consensus of our community. The end-product will provide guidepost for future development and investments opposed to letting development happen haphazardly. It should be noted that \$30,000 was approved in FY19 for the housing element of the Master Plan but it was prudently decided to expand the request to revamp the entire Master Plan so that interrelated elements were not updated in a vacuum.

An added benefit of a Master Plan is that it can support grant requests. Organizations, the Commonwealth and federal agencies look more favorably on grants that dovetail with the town's Master Plan.

As a community we must come together in charting our future, i.e., what do we want our Town to look like in such terms as the balance of development and open space, stimulating commercial projects and considering other approaches to lessen the burden on residential property tax, and the infrastructure required to support such goals. In short, what do we want and how do we want to pay for it. We are not alone in approaching such issues. The School District is an integral part of our community, culturally and materially, given tax-payer funding and land utilization, and that overlap necessarily involves Wenham. Thus, while supporting this Article, FINCOM strongly recommends that our municipal planning be undertaken with the substantive participation of Wenham and the School District, and that our Town officials make every effort to achieve that result.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 2-12.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 3-1 Council on Aging Bylaw Amendment**

This article seeks to amend the Council on Aging Bylaw to allow for two alternate members to be appointed who can fill in for absent voting members in order to achieve a quorum at council meetings. The Council had instances in the past where it was unable to achieve a quorum due to absences and this amendment should alleviate that problem.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 3-1.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 3-2 Home Rule Petition to Amend Acts of 2010 Chapter 91**

The Town provides a tax exemption for certain qualifying real estate. This article would allow certain changes to the rules for the exemption. The changes would allow the financial qualification criteria to be updated from time to time, allow some flexibility in setting the annual cap for exemptions, and clarify the requirements for applying to the program. The tax exemption is a benefit to the residents of the Town, and the changes will ensure that the program operates as intended.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 3-2.**

### **ARTICLE 2020/11 3-3 Lease for Temporary Town Hall**

During the Town Hall renovation, the town staff must vacate the building and set up temporary offices elsewhere. Gordon-Conwell has offered to lease, **at virtually no cost (\$1 per year)**, space in one of their buildings. The town will, however, be required to pay utilities and for needed renovations or improvements to accommodate the staff.

The Town will still have to move furniture, set up its IT system and design the space to meet Town Hall needs. However, this arrangement will be a significant savings to the Town.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION (5-0) on Article 3-3.**



### **ARTICLE 2020/11 3-4 Citizen's Petition**

This Article was the result of a citizen's petition to require the Board of Health for the Town of Hamilton to adhere to all guidance, metrics, rules, and instructions promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health concerning the opening and operation of schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts during the 2020-2021 School Year and for the duration of the State of Emergency in the Commonwealth regarding the Covid-19 Global Pandemic.

Decisions regarding public health and whether to adopt different or stricter policies are within the discretion of the Board of Health, and therefore any action taken here is considered advisory in nature.

Subsequent to the citizen's petition, the Board of Health made changes to their policy to explicitly let the HWRSD and the public know that their recommendations were advisory and not mandates. As a result, we anticipate that this Article may be effectively withdrawn by its proponent at STM and not moved upon. Accordingly, we are not making a recommendation on this Article at this time.

**The Finance and Advisory Committee is not making a recommendation on this article.**

Respectfully Submitted,

#### **Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee**

John Pruellage, Chair  
Christina Schenk-Hargrove, Vice Chair  
Valerie McCormack, Secretary  
Nick Tensen  
David Wanger

EXHIBIT A

Town of Hamilton  
Governmental Long-Term Debt  
June 30, 2020

	Date of	1st Payment	Original		Interest	Outstanding at June 30,			Outstanding at June 30,																	Total
Ref#	Issue	Date	Issue	Project	Maturity Date	Rate %	2019	Issued	Redeemed	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Principal
2520.01E	3/10/2011	05/15/12	1,065,000	Library Refunding	5/15/2020	2.00 - 3.00	\$ 110,000	\$ -	\$ (110,000)	\$ -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2520.01F	3/10/2011	05/15/12	366,000	Donovan Property	5/15/2020	2.00 - 3.00	40,000	-	(40,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2520.01G	3/10/2011	05/15/12	266,000	Energy Services Contract (ESCO)	5/15/2020	2.00 - 3.00	25,000	-	(25,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2520.01h	5/21/2015	05/15/16	1,302,000	Landfill Capping	5/15/2030	2.00 - 4.00	940,000	-	(90,000)	850,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	-	-	-	-	-	850,000
2520.01i	5/21/2015	05/15/16	840,000	Fire Truck	5/15/2027	2.00 - 4.00	560,000	-	(70,000)	490,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	490,000
2520.01j	6/2/2016	09/15/16	2,825,000	Public Safety Building - Refunding	9/15/2025	2.00 - 4.00	1,935,000	-	(285,000)	1,650,000	280,000	280,000	280,000	275,000	270,000	265,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,650,000
2520.01k	5/10/2017	03/15/18	194,000	Landfill Closure	3/15/2022	2.00	110,000	-	(40,000)	70,000	35,000	35,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70,000
2520.01l	5/10/2017	03/15/18	1,250,000	Sagamore Hill Land Acquisition	3/15/2032	2.00 - 3.00	1,080,000	-	(85,000)	995,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	-	-	995,000	
2520.01m	11/12/2019	11/01/20	940,000	Chebacco Road Paving	11/1/2034	2.00 - 5.00	-	940,000	-	940,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	55,000	940,000
Total governmental funds							\$ 4,800,000	\$ 940,000	\$ (745,000)	\$ 4,995,000	620,000	620,000	585,000	580,000	575,000	570,000	305,000	230,000	230,000	225,000	140,000	140,000	60,000	60,000	55,000	4,995,000

Interest Analysis

Interest Analysis									2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	Total Interest
<a href="#">2520.01h</a>	Landfill Capping	(135,000)	15722-590004	285,000	25,458	22,908	19,508	16,108	13,558	11,008	8,883	6,758	4,505	2,253	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	130,943
<a href="#">2520.01i</a>	Fire Truck		15722-590006	110,000	15,400	13,300	10,500	7,700	5,600	2,650	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55,150
<a href="#">2520.01j</a>	Public Safety Building - Refunding		15722-590009	25,000	44,200	33,000	21,800	13,450	8,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120,450
<a href="#">2520.01k</a>	Landfill Closure		15722-590012	70,000	1,400	700	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,100
<a href="#">2520.01l</a>	Sagamore Hill Land Acquisition		15722-590013	90,000	25,600	23,900	22,200	20,500	18,800	17,100	14,550	12,000	9,600	7,200	4,800	2,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	178,650
<a href="#">2520.01m</a>	Chebacco Road Paving		25600-590011	40,000	31,170	27,920	24,670	21,420	18,495	16,545	14,595	11,995	9,070	6,845	5,645	4,445	3,215	1,925	633	-	-	-	-	198,588
TOTAL INTEREST				85,000	143,228	121,728	98,678	79,178	64,453	47,303	38,028	30,753	23,175	16,298	10,445	6,845	3,215	1,925	633	-	-	-	-	685,880
				745,000																				

Debt service requirements for interest and principal for bonds payable (Governmental funds) in future years are as follows:

Fiscal Year	Principal		Interest		Total
2021	\$ 620,000	\$ 143,228	\$ 763,228		
2022	620,000	121,728	741,728		
2023	585,000	98,678	683,678		
2024	580,000	79,178	659,178		
2025	575,000	64,453	639,453		
2026	570,000	47,303	617,303		
2027	305,000	38,028	343,028		
2028	230,000	30,753	260,753		
2029	230,000	23,175	253,175		
2030	225,000	16,298	241,298		
2031	140,000	10,445	150,445		
2032	140,000	6,845	146,845		
2033	60,000	3,215	63,215		
2034	60,000	1,925	61,925		
2035	55,000	633	55,633		
Total	\$ 4,995,000	\$ 685,880	\$ 5,680,880		

# HAMILTON TOWN HALL: RENOVATION AND PRESERVATION

## HISTORY



Since 1898 our Town Hall has served as a beacon, drawing our community together. Primarily the seat of our local government, it has served as a place to lodge WW1 soldiers, has housed a school, a library and has hosted dances and a theater.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, it has never had a major renovation, a testament to its intrinsic strength.

Now, after 3+ years of planning, Hamilton seeks to prepare the Town Hall to take us into the next generation and beyond.

### This PROJECT IS SUPPORTED by:

Hamilton Board of Selectmen  
Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee  
Hamilton Community Preservation Committee  
Hamilton Historic District Commission  
Hamilton Capital Committee



## IMPROVEMENTS

- Install fire suppression system
- Attain full handicapped access per ADA
- Stabilize the physical structure
- Repair cupola and exterior decay
- Mitigate water issues
- Reconfigure interior to add office space, enhance privacy, restore large meeting room for community use
- Support sustainability via green technology
- Retain historic architectural details

**\*\*See Town Website for Project Details\*\***

## FUNDING

Total Estimated Cost - \$9.7M

Recent Town Meetings have voted nearly \$1.1M for planning and document preparation

CPC has voted to allocate \$3M

The Town has arranged for leased space to temporarily relocate Town Hall employees at no cost. (Saving \$200,000)

This Project requires an estimated \$5.3M YES vote both from Town Meeting on November 14 and a Special Ballot on December 3 to commence. This will allow a 30-year bond with a favorable interest rate.

Final project costs will be announced at Special Town Meeting.

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**Building Our Future; Honoring Our Past**

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# HAMILTON TOWN HALL: RENOVATION AND PRESERVATION



From cluttered and impractical.....



....to clean and functional



The second floor will be reconfigured to include a spacious meeting room, bathrooms and well-designed workspaces



Improvements include an addition to the back of the building to house a new ground level entrance and elevator, as well as a new ADA compliant ramp to the side entrance