

Town of Hamilton Massachusetts

Annual Town Report



2023

Town of Hamilton
Massachusetts
July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023



Select Board

Shawn Farrell, Chair

James Knudsen, Vice-Chair

Caroline Beaulieu, Clerk

William Olson

Thomas Myers

Town Manager

Joseph J. Domelowicz Jr.

Incorporated: June 21, 1793

Government
Open Town Meeting
Five-member Select Board with Town Manager

Annual Town Meeting
First Saturday in April

Annual Town Election
First Thursday in April following Town Meeting

Town Census: 7,585

Area: 14.99 Square Miles

Fiscal 2023 Tax Rate: \$16.34

Tax Levy: \$32,849,406

Congressional District: Sixth
Senatorial District: First Essex and Middlesex
Representative District: Second Essex
Councilor District: Fifth

State Officials
Congressman: Seth Moulton, Representative 6th District
Senator: Bruce E. Tarr, Gloucester
Representative: Kristen Kassner, Hamilton

Schools:
Winthrop Elementary School (PK-5)
Cutler Elementary School (K-5)
Buker Elementary School K-5)
Miles River Middle School (6-8)
Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School (9-12)

Town Website
www.hamiltonma.gov

Town Hall Hours
Monday: 8:00AM - 4:30PM
Tuesday: 8:00AM - 6:30PM
Wednesday: 8:00AM - 4:30PM
Thursday: 8:00AM - 4:30PM
Friday: 8:00AM - 12:30PM

2022-2023 HAMILTON ELECTED OFFICIALS

SELECT BOARD	(Elected 3 year term)
Shawn M. Farrell, Chair	2024
James R. Knudsen	2023
Caroline Q. Beaulieu	2025
William A. Olson	2024
Thomas B. Myers	2025
TOWN CLERK	(Elected 3 year term)
Carin A. Kale	2023
BOARD OF ASSESSORS	(Elected 3 year term)
Steven G. Ozahowski, Chair	2024
Christopher S. Campbell	2025
Joseph S. Shaktman	2023
PLANNING BOARD	(Elected 3 year term)
Margaret M. Crouch, Chair	2024
Richard L. Boroff	2023
Jonathan F. Poore	2024
Frederick G. Mitchell	2024
Emil T. Dahlquist	2025
William C. Wheaton	2025
Elizabeth L. Herr	2025
HOUSING AUTHORITY	(Elected 5 year term)
Sheryl L. Leonard, Chair	2026
Joanne Copeland	2025
Michelle F. Horgan	2027
Leon Purington, State Appointed	2023
TOWN MODERATOR	(Elected 1 year term)
William Bowler	2023
H-W LIBRARY TRUSTEE	(Elected 3 year term)
Dorothy A. Goudie (Wenham), Chair	2023
Mary Jane Brown (Hamilton)	2023
Dianne L. Johnson (At Large - H)	2024
Cara A. Fauci (At Large – W)	2024
Karen Bebergal (Wenham)	2025
Jane S. Kusel (Hamilton)	2025
H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE	(Elected 3 year term)
Dana Allara (Hamilton), Chair	2023
Anna Siedzik (Hamilton)	2023
Julia Campbell (Wenham)	2024
Jennifer Carr (Wenham)	2024
David Polito (Wenham)	2025
David Frenkel (Wenham)	2025
Amy Kunberger (Hamilton)	2025



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HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

SELECT BOARD

Dear Residents,

As the Chair of the Select Board, I am pleased to provide the Select Board's portion for the FY 2023 Annual Report. This report offers a brief overview of our town's achievements, challenges, and ongoing initiatives. Our dedicated team, consisting of the Select Board, staff, and various committees, has worked tirelessly to address the needs of our community.

The Select Board functions as the Chief Executive body of the Town. Its five members are elected to three-year terms, with one or two seats up for election each year. The Board acts as the chief policy-making body of the Town and directly supervises the activities of the Town Manager. The Town Manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of all town departments falling under the direct control of the Select Board. The Select Board strives for transparency and holds public meetings every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held in the Memorial Room at Town Hall and are broadcast live on your local cable public access station. Comcast subscribers can view the meeting on Channel 10, Verizon subscribers can view it on Channel 37, or meetings can be viewed after the fact on HWCAM's YouTube channel.

The past year has been marked by significant achievements and challenges, showcasing our commitment to progress and resilience in the face of limited revenue sources other than property tax. Many items here are discussed by other boards and committees in more detail later in this report. The following are some highlights.

Staff, Boards, and Committees:

To demonstrate our commitment to environmental sustainability the Select Board established the Hamilton Environmental Impact Committee (HEIC). The HEIC's charge is to guide us toward our goal of achieving net-zero carbon for our municipal buildings and operations by 2040.

The Patton Homestead Task Force, who studied the impact of the Patton Homestead on the town, presented their findings to the Select Board about future options for the Homestead. Three options were discussed. The first was to spend no capital on the property and look for ways to sell the property, the second option was to maintain the property but do no major capital projects and allow time for programming at the property to grow, and the third option was to invest capital on infrastructure to improve the property. The Select Board decided to maintain the property and not invest in major infrastructure improvements and to reassess the property in five years. The Recreation Department and the Homestead Director, Holly Erikson, are doing a great job continuing to build the programming at the property.

A grant was secured from the Mass Cultural Council with help from the Friends of the Patton Homestead, Inc. to partially fund a pavilion at the Patton Homestead to improve the usability of the property. It has been named in honor of Joanne Holbrooke Patton for her unwavering commitment and contributions to the town over many years.

Laurie Wilson the Assistant to the Town Manager and Carin Kale our Town Clerk worked diligently on putting together “A Handbook For Members of Town Committees, Boards, and Commissions” for incoming committee members. The handbook is a comprehensive guide to all that is needed to help new members understand their roles and other necessary information to be productive members of the committee they are on.

We welcomed Wendy Markiewicz as our new Finance Director. She hit the ground running and helped the Select Board finish drafting two new financial policies. These policies were recommended earlier with help from a grant and the board is glad to be continuing to implement best practices to be fiscally responsible.

Policy:

After collaboration with the Finance and Advisory Committee, the Select Board approved an Antifraud Policy and an Indirect Cost Allocation Policy. The board plans to continue to work on implementing more recommended policies over the next year.

After much deliberation, the board updated our Flag Raising Policy to be consistent with the Attorney General's recommendations based on the Shurtleff v. City of Boston Supreme Court case.

We have begun to address the state's new 3A zoning requirement. 3A zoning in short allows for a higher density of housing surrounding MBTA stations and must be adopted by 12/31/24. This new zoning permits a much higher density than we have ever allowed before. This amount of density would be hard to support if it were ever built with our current infrastructure. The state has required the zoning but has not given any aid to support local infrastructure improvements needed to support it.

The board updated the water abatement policy to fix issues that have arisen over the past year with abatements. The new policy is more clear on the parameters needed for an abatement.

Improvements:

After years of applying to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to improve our elementary school buildings, they have allowed us to move forward with applying to build a new school. The first step of the process is to have a feasibility study done.

At the Annual town meeting (ATM), money was granted to do a school feasibility study to rebuild the Cutler School and possibly combine it with the Winthrop School. This would free up more of the downtown for development and revenue generation. A School Building Committee was formed and they are running different scenarios and looking for the best solution for our needs.

At the Special Town Meeting (STM), \$100,000 for water pipe inventory was approved. This money will be used to assess our future infrastructure needs and help eliminate any lead pipes, and other issues in the system.

At the STM the town voted to extend CPC's grant deadline for the rehabilitation of the Town Hall. The extended time was needed to improve our options to keep the project moving forward. Options to make the building more green and cut more of the overall cost were weighed and amended plans were made.

The project is much needed and we look forward to the project coming to fruition after many years of hard work.

The HWRSD proposed a stabilization fund at STM and it was approved. The current intention of the fund is to use the monies transferred into it for the school's athletic field's project. In addition to this, a debt exclusion was passed at the ATM and at the polls for funds to update the HWRSD athletic facilities.

Finances:

The Select Board gave town employees Pandemic Stipends out of monies received from the American Rescue Act (ARPA). The board thought it proper to compensate staff for all the hard work and stress of working throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. We have a dedicated staff that wears many hats and deeply cares about the town and its residents and we thought this gesture appropriate.

The Select Board approved the use of ARPA funds to finish the implementation plan for the town's Master Plan. We are very happy to be getting close to a completed Master Plan and appreciate all the hard work and hours the Master Plan Steering Committee has put into the process.

Our Chapter 91 Senior Exemption Program limits were updated to allow more seniors to qualify for the program. We are constantly trying to improve our services for our growing population of seniors.

We continue to communicate regularly with the HWRSD about budget issues and funding. There are periodic meetings during the budget cycle with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, School Committee Chair, the Wenham and Hamilton Select Board Chairs, the Wenham and Hamilton FinCom Chairs, the Wenham Town Administrator, and Hamilton's Town Manager. These meetings have been very beneficial in getting all the entities on the same page and sharing budget information to help benefit the taxpayers in both towns.

The town maintains its AAA bond rating and we had another clean audit by CliftonLarsonAllen LLC. This year we received no management letter. This is a very positive thing. A management letter advises on areas for improvement and we had no suggestions to improve. Our Finance Director, Town Manager, Select Board, and Department Heads worked very diligently to make this so.

Improvements:

A backflow device was put in Asbury Grove to protect the town's water system as well as the Grove's residents. The Asbury Grove Association donated \$50,000 towards the cost of the project and the rest of the funding came from ARPA funds.

In November and December, visioning workshops were held for community input into the Patton Park Master Plan. The plan was finalized in March and is a comprehensive guide for the park's future improvements.

The Board worked to update the parking regulations for the downtown area. In November a parking study was shared with the board and options were discussed and voted on to help improve the parking in the downtown area.

We added pay electric vehicle chargers in Patton Park to keep up with the times and gain some revenue in the process.

The Hamilton Development Corporation and the Town applied for a MassWorks grant for \$5 million to make downtown improvements along Railroad Ave. and Bay Rd. The grant request included monies for new sidewalks, improvements to the walkability of the downtown, and ways to unify the area to name a few.

We renamed Donovan Fields to Masconomet Fields.

Shared Services:

We signed an Inter-Municipal Agreement with Wenham to share a Director of Assessing and it has improved our ability to serve our community needs. We continue to provide some of the best local services in the area and much of this is due to our initiatives to share services with surrounding communities.

GCTS:

Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) announced plans to sell all or some of its property. The Town and GCTS have been working together to find the best use of the property. On November 14th at the Community House, a community workshop to gain public input on the best options for the campus was held with consultants from Abramson & Associates and Gamble Associates. The consultants worked to put together a study of the options available and a market analysis of the property. In January we met jointly with the Planning Board to discuss how the town could pursue a Strategic Plan for the GCTS Campus. In this meeting, the two boards discussed with various stakeholders including Zoning Attorney Jonathan Whitten, and our zoning consultants the possible re-zoning of the seminary campus property and elements of a possible development agreement between the town and college. The Select Board and Planning Board met again in April to discuss what is now called the Brown's Hill Overlay District (BHOD). The planning board has worked for many months to draft a new overlay district on the campus. We continue to work to refine the BHOD.

In conclusion, we extend our gratitude to all residents, staff, and community partners for their unwavering support. Together, we look forward to a future of continued growth and prosperity for the Town of Hamilton.

Sincerely,

Shawn Farrell
Chair, Hamilton Select Board

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Town of Hamilton's finances remain stable, thanks to the diligent work of the Town Manager, Finance Director, Finance Committee, Department Heads, and many other town officials. It truly is a collaborative effort to maintain financial success. With that success, Hamilton was able to:

- Maintain a balanced budget while continuing to invest in capital infrastructure improvements, public safety, education, unfunded liabilities, and other key areas.
- Maintain the General Stabilization Fund, Capital Financing Investments, and Free Cash within the limits of the financial policies.
- Maintain positive results in the FY23 audit by CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP.
 - Resulted in a clean, unmodified opinion, the best possible opinion.
 - Resulted in the removal of management letters that Hamilton worked to resolve.
- Maintain many Inter-municipal Agreements with surrounding towns for shared services
 - Director of Human Resources
 - Director of Assessing
 - Conservation Agent
 - School Resource Officer
 - Animal Control Officer
 - Energy Manager
 - Planning & Inspectional Services
 - Recreation
 - Public Health Department
 - Cultural Council
 - Library
 - Veterans' Benefits
 - IT Collaborative
- Utilize Water Enterprise rates to self-sustain the Enterprise Fund

The Town Manager and Finance Director, with the support of the Finance Committee and the Select Board, work to review and implement best practices to continue to maintain financial success.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

For Fiscal Year 2023, the total assessed taxable valuation of Hamilton was \$2,010,367,569 with a property tax levy of \$32,849,406.08. The fiscal year 2023 tax rate as certified by the Department of Revenue was \$16.34 down \$1.54 from the previous year. Building permits issued in FY2023 resulted in \$171,355 in tax levy growth for FY2023.

In FY2023, the Board of Assessors completed their interim values adjusting properties in the town of Hamilton as required by the Department of Revenue. Under Massachusetts law, this Board is required to value all of Hamilton's 2,943 properties at 100 percent of their full and fair cash valuation, thereby insuring an equitable distribution of the property tax levy. The town's average residential single-family valuation was \$713,728.

More important, the Assessors office believes that we have met our statutory obligation to re-establish proper assessment level and uniformity throughout the town of Hamilton. Final Department of Revenue certification of assessed valuations was granted in December and property tax bills were subsequently mailed at the end of December. The current valuation and levy percentages based upon property class are as follows:

Class	Valuation	%	Tax Levy
Residential	\$1,928,459,012	95.92%	\$31,511,020.26
Commercial	\$59,512,647	2.96%	\$972,436.65
Industrial	\$866,000	.043%	\$14,150.44
Personal	\$21,529,910	1.07%	\$351,798.73
Totals	\$2,010,367,569	100%	\$32,849,406.08

Also in FY2023, the Assessors office processed applications for excise abatements, Chapter 91 senior tax exemption, Elderly and Veteran exemptions and Community Preservation Act surcharge exemptions.

We would like to assure all property owners that the Board of Assessors will continue its effort to meet the challenge of maintaining equitable assessments in this current real estate market.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Ozahowski, Chair

Joe Shaktman, Vice-Chair

Chris Campbell, Secretary

TREASURER / COLLECTOR

I hereby submit my Annual Report as Treasurer/Collector for the Town of Hamilton for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023

July 1, 2022	\$22,024,334
Receipts	\$46,150,150
Disbursements	<u>(\$44,208,179)</u>
June 30, 2023	<u>\$23,966,304</u>

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. McLoughlin, CMMT, CMMC
Treasurer/Collector

		July - December	January - June	Total
<u>COLLECTIONS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>			
REAL ESTATE	2023	\$ 15,435,048	\$ 16,675,536	\$ 32,110,584
	2022	\$ 263,194	\$ 5,888	\$ 269,082
	2020	\$ 2,780		\$ 2,780
		\$ 15,701,022	\$ 16,681,424	\$ 32,382,446
PERSONAL PROPERTY	2023	\$ 172,291	\$ 178,103	\$ 350,394
	2022	\$ 54	\$ 15	\$ 69
Prior to	2021		\$ 783	\$ 783
		\$ 172,345	\$ 178,901	\$ 351,246
MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE	2023		\$ 1,119,052	\$ 1,119,052
	2022	\$ 207,095	\$ 34,234	\$ 241,329
	2021	\$ 3,754	\$ 4,045	\$ 7,799
	2020	\$ 982	\$ 882	\$ 1,864
Prior to	2019	\$ 241	\$ 168	\$ 409
		\$ 212,072	\$ 1,158,381	\$ 1,370,453
BOAT EXCISE	2023	\$ 2,174	\$ 255	\$ 2,429
	2022	\$ 5	\$ 74	\$ 79
	2021	\$ 15		\$ 15
		\$ 2,194	\$ 329	\$ 2,523
WATER				
Rates		\$ 1,072,134	\$ 929,448	\$ 2,001,582
General Billing		\$ 4,337	\$ 1,930	\$ 6,267
Liens		\$ 5,976	\$ 40,583	\$ 46,559
Penalties & Interest		\$ 8,240	\$ 3,374	\$ 11,614
		\$ 1,090,687	\$ 975,335	\$ 2,066,022
CPA	2023	\$ 263,181	\$ 289,041	\$ 552,222
	2022	\$ 3,981	\$ 82	\$ 4,063
Interest		\$ 573	\$ 394	\$ 967
		\$ 267,735	\$ 289,517	\$ 557,252
TAX TITLES		\$ 19,255	\$ 22,743	\$ 41,998
PENALTIES & INTEREST		\$ 46,378	\$ 46,896	\$ 93,274
TOTAL		\$ 17,511,688	\$ 19,353,526	\$ 36,865,214

FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Finance and Advisory Committee (“FinCom”) consists of five registered voters who serve without compensation for three-year terms. Members are appointed by the Town Moderator and approved by the Select Board. In addition to reviewing the Town’s finances and making budget recommendations, FinCom is statutorily responsible for considering “any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the town.” Although a financial background is useful to serve on this committee, it is by no means a pre-requisite and we welcome members without this background. We always value differing opinions and perspectives, especially when they stem from an overwhelming desire to improve the town and better serve its residents. We have instituted a practice of recruiting non-voting “associate” members in order to have volunteers ready to fill any open positions. In the past year we brought on one Associate member into a full member position, and currently have an opening for an Associate Member. Notifications of openings are posted on the town website and by the Select Board. Even if you are not a member, we always welcome input of the public.

Budget Activities

FinCom is involved in the development and review of all aspects of the town operating budget including revenues, expenses, capital needs, related financing initiatives and the establishment and maintenance of reserve funds. We begin the annual budget process in the fall for the budget and capital plan that will be presented to voters at annual Town Meeting the following spring. We have worked closely with Joe Domelowicz, the Town Manager, and the Town’s Finance Director, Wendy Markiewicz, in developing these budgets and would like to thank them both for their assistance, transparency and responsiveness in providing the data and answers to all the questions that arise during budget season.

As part of the budget process, a member of FinCom meets with each department head to understand and evaluate every aspect of their budget. We appreciate the diligent efforts of all the department heads in maintaining discipline over their expenses while maximizing as much value as possible from their limited resources. An element of the annual budget activities is our on-going collaboration with the Hamilton Capital Committee which advises the Town Manager on short-term and long-term capital priorities and planning, by drawing on critical input from residents of the Town.

Each year the town expresses certain Goals and Objectives with respect to the annual budget. Most notably, the desire to “Avoid Proposition 2 1/2 Override” was again expressed and achieved for the currently proposed FY ‘25 operating budget inclusive of the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD).

Regarding the School District budget, (which accounts for 59% of our Town’s annual budget), our process is a bit different. As an autonomous regional school district, the HWRSD ultimately presents its budget request as a single assessment to the two towns, which is proportioned based

on enrollment. We do, however, meet with the HWRSD Administration and School Committee multiple times during the budget cycle to understand as much as possible about the details of the budgets and constraints and to convey Town expectations regarding our overall budget. We have worked very closely with the School Administration this year to monitor and understand the School District budget and communicate the Town's requirements.

The FinCom has observed that over the most recent two years, the HWRSD Administration has paid heightened attention to ensuring a more thoughtful and conservative approach has been instituted during the budget process. This has resulted in a higher quality final budget. This heightened focus is directly attributable to the leadership of Eric Tracy, our District Superintendent, and Vincent Leone, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration. We offer our hearty congratulations to both the District administration and School Committee relative to this budget process.

Town Meeting Recommendations

In addition to our budget and finance work, FinCom also makes a recommendation to the residents of the Town on every Warrant article proposed at town meetings. We take our responsibility in this regard very seriously. As such, we perform our due diligence before making any formal recommendations. This includes welcoming proponents and opponents of the various articles to our meetings, so that each side can educate us before we make our recommendation. All FinCom meetings are posted on the town website and citizens are encouraged to attend and participate. Although it is not always possible, we endeavor to reach consensus within our committee before making our final recommendation. While our ultimate recommendation on an issue may be boiled down to a "Yes" or a "No", not every issue is that cut and dry for us. Accordingly, we also publish our written recommendations with the Town Warrant which go into the detailed reasons for our recommendation, including any qualifications or dissenting opinions that we may have. We urge you to read these prior to Town Meeting, as we believe that they often may provide you with greater enlightenment than our ultimate recommendation.

Capital Spending Outlook

The town and the school district have many future capital needs which are going to require significant funding. Given the structural challenges of our budget, sustaining our current level of spending and meeting our considerable capital needs will result in higher taxes. Too often issues are considered by the Town and its residents in a vacuum without looking at the big picture. We cannot expect a high functioning school district and the same level of Town services, while limiting development and revenue opportunities, without seeing our tax rate increase.

With this in mind, a current focus of FinCom is to drive increased levels of collaboration and transparency with one key element being the publication of a longer-term view of potential capital spending. This provides taxpayers with an opportunity to understand and discuss the impact of major capital decisions. The FinCom will continue to bring this information forward to the taxpayers at the Annual Town Meeting" (ATM) and keep it visible on the FinCom town website.

Town Capital Spending

On the town side, most notably, our water infrastructure requires additional funding and given the scarcity of water, alternate water sources need to be explored. Water capital projects are generally funded through the water rates which each homeowner pays each quarter. Over the coming year, the FinCom hopes to undertake a renewed assessment of the projected capital water projects and the necessary funding required to support those projects. Our goal is to determine and communicate an appropriate long-term funding level to ensure critical infrastructure modifications are executed.

School Capital Spending

In April of 2023, the Town Meeting and subsequent ballot vote approved a Proposition 2 ½ “debt exclusion” override for the School Athletic Fields project. This \$15 Million project will impact the FY ’25 budget and hence will flow to FY ’25 tax bills. Hamilton’s share of this assessment for FY ’25 is \$1Million.

Currently, the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District is working on a proposed Elementary School Building program. At the end of April 2024, the School Building Committee (SBC) will select a “Preferred Building Option” to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for approval. At the end of the year 2024, the SBC will approve a final “Scope and Budget” for the “Preferred Building option” project.

In April 2025, the voters of both towns will be asked to vote at Town Meeting and subsequently at the ballot, to approve a Proposition 2 ½ “debt exclusion” override for the funding of the school project.

Participation in the MSBA’s program is of enormous benefit to the Town, as the current buildings are aging and require an influx of capital. The cost and scope of the project has yet to be finalized, hence the contribution by the State is still to be determined. Funding provided by the state will greatly reduce the cost of updating the schools and depending on the final size and design of the school project, the State contribution could range from \$20 Million to \$45 million.

FinCom has been closely following the SBC activities and will continue to monitor and review their progress.

Revenue Opportunities

Generally, the FinCom believes there are limited options available, in the short-term, to generate increased revenue for the town. We are always willing to explore ways in which we can increase the revenue of the Town, be it through potential development, better utilization of Town assets or otherwise.

One opportunity which may present itself results from the Elementary School project discussed above. A few options are being considered by the School Building Committee which would consolidate two schools and free up one of the existing school sites. If such an option were to be

approved, the vacant school site could be sold and developed. The revenue generated would obviously be dependent on the market value of any new residences or commercial buildings situated on the site. We feel this could be a significant revenue opportunity for the town and we are focused on working to analyze this opportunity.

Town Financial Situation

While assessing the town's current financial situation, the answer is a complicated one that is not served by oversimplification. On the one hand, there is much to be pleased about. The Town continues to maintain a AAA bond rating, which allows us to borrow at attractive rates. All our financial reserves and our available free cash are consistent with the Town's financial policies and at the levels recommended by the Massachusetts Municipal Association. We continue to set aside funds to meet the growing unfunded Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability that will only continue to rise in cost in the coming decades. Overall, Hamilton's favorable financial position, is the result of a lot of work and discipline by Town employees, who have repeatedly sought out economic efficiencies in the services that our Town provides.

But our Town is not without its economic challenges and FinCom believes things will become more challenging in the future, primarily due to the projected capital investments required over the coming years, some of which are discussed above. Currently, Hamilton's tax rate is considered high when compared to many neighboring municipalities and FinCom expects the tax rate to remain high.

Several factors help explain this, but ultimately it is a structural issue for the town that is not going away any time soon. It is primarily a result of the fact that: 1) we have a high-functioning school district, which is expensive to maintain, 2) we value our open-space and agricultural land, which generates little or no tax revenue, and 3) we do not have significant commercial development to mitigate these factors.

Accordingly, the burden of paying for the Town's services and school district falls on the residential taxpayer, whose taxes account for over 90% of the revenue that the town must raise. In addition, while the state does provide levels of aid to every Town in the Commonwealth, we do not generally qualify as "high-need" and we certainly do not see a disproportionate amount of aid relative to other Towns.

Respectfully submitted,

John McGrath, Chair
Harry Philip, Vice Chair
Alex Rindels, Secretary
Christina Schenk-Hargrove
John Pruellage

CAPITAL COMMITTEE

The Capital Committee supports the Town Manager's decisions on Town of Hamilton priorities for capital expenditures each year. In 2023, Capital Committee's final product culminated with a final report to the Town Manager. After discussions with the Select Board, Finance Committee, and Department Heads, the final FY 24 Capital Plan was presented as "Appendix D" to the Town Meeting Warrant.

Respectively submitted,

Heather Ford, Chair

Steven Loeper

Michael Twomey

William Wilson

Jack Lawrence

Appendix D
TOWN OF HAMILTON 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan

Dept/Liaison		Item	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	FY'23 thru FY'27 Total
Vehicle	Funding	Proj ID#						
		V-10	Trackless Machine (sidewalk plow)		\$ 190,000			\$ 190,000
		V-5	2006 John Deere Backhoe			\$ 125,000		\$ 125,000
		V-6	2001 John Deere Tractor		\$ 28,375			\$ 28,375
		V-11	John Deere Mower			\$ 17,500		\$ 17,500
		V-7	2002 John Deere Tractor			\$ 28,375		\$ 28,375
		V-9	(2) 2013 International Sanders		\$ 350,000			\$ 350,000
		sub total		\$ -	\$ 540,000	\$ 28,375	\$ 170,875	\$ -
Highways		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
		H-3	Radio Systems Upgrade	\$ 50,000				\$ 50,000
	FC	H-1	Road and Sidewalk repairs	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 750,000
		sub total	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 800,000
Facilities		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
		F-1	Fueling Facility	\$ 750,000				\$ 750,000
		F-8	Town Hall Construction	\$ 4,000,000				\$ 4,000,000
		F-9	PSB HVAC / Upgrades / condenser units	\$ 30,000				\$ 30,000
		F-10	DPW salt shed replacement			\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000
	FC	F-11	DPW Garage Roof (Bundle DPW)	\$ 100,000				\$ 100,000
	FC	F-12	DPW Garage Doors (Bundle DPW)	\$ 75,000	\$ -			\$ 75,000
	FC	F-13	DPW Garage Heaters (Bundle DPW)	\$ 50,000		\$ -		\$ 50,000
		F-16	PSB Roof Replacement	\$ -	\$ 230,000			\$ 230,000
		sub total	\$ 225,000	\$ 4,780,000	\$ 230,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 5,260,000
Water		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
	FC	W-9	GIS Asset Management	\$ 63,500	\$ -			\$ 63,500
		W-3	2013 GMC water Utility Vehicle w/Plow		\$ 60,000			\$ 60,000
		W-5	Phase 5 water System Improvements		\$ 150,000	\$ 2,000,000		\$ 2,150,000
		W-6	Water Master Plan - Reservoirs			\$ 200,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,700,000
		W-7	Water Study					\$ -
		sub total	\$ 63,500	\$ 210,000	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 9,473,500
Cemetery		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
		C-1	Hurricane Leaf Blower	\$ 12,000				\$ 12,000
	PC	C-2	Cemetery Mowers	\$ 15,000				\$ 15,000
		sub total	\$ -	\$ 27,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000
Parks & Rec		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
	CPC	PR-2	Playground equip - rec center					\$ -
	CPC	PR-4	Patton Park Tennis Courts					\$ -
	CPC	PR-8	Patton Park Master Plan and Improvements	\$ 30,000				\$ 30,000
	FC	PR-8	Patton Park Master Plan and Improvements		\$ 150,000	\$ -		\$ 150,000
		sub total	\$ 30,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 180,000
Library *Regional		Proj ID#	FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27	Total
	FC	L-1	Replace roof (library, Rec)	\$ -				\$ -
	FC	L-3	HVAC retrofit				\$ 114,188	\$ 114,188
	FC	L-4	IT Infrastructure	\$ 27,405				\$ 27,405
	FC	L-5	Replace carpet on floors 1 and 2			\$ 101,138		\$ 101,138

	FC	L-6	Security			\$	13,050				\$	13,050										
	FC	L-7	Paint exterior						\$	26,100	\$	26,100										
	sub total					\$	27,405	\$	13,050	\$	101,138	\$	281,880									
Police		Proj ID#				FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27		Total										
	FC	P-1	Patrol SUV (Fleet of 8)			\$	57,000	\$	58,000	\$	59,000	\$	292,000									
												\$	-									
	sub total					\$	57,000	\$	58,000	\$	59,000	\$	292,000									
Fire Dept		Proj ID#				FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27		Total										
	FC	F-3	Squad truck- Squad 5 (2006)									\$	-									
	D	F-4	Replace Engine 3 2004 (pumper truck)						650,000	\$	-	\$	650,000									
	FC	F-5	Mobile Cascade Unit				\$100,000	\$	-			\$	100,000									
	D	F-9	Ambulance Service									\$	-									
	sub total					\$	-	\$	100,000	\$	-	\$	750,000									
ECO		Proj ID#				FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27		Total										
	FC	E-1	Upgrade ECO Repeaters			\$	28,000	\$	-			\$	28,000									
	sub total					\$	28,000	\$	-	\$	-	\$	28,000									
Affordable Housing						FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27		Total										
												\$	-									
	sub total					\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-									
Grand Total Town							\$	580,905	\$	6,078,050	\$	2,768,513	\$	4,580,975	\$	3,823,188	\$	17,831,630				
Schools Regional						FY'23	FY'24	FY'25	FY'26	FY'27		Total										
			Combined Total			\$	-	\$	3,258,000	\$	3,230,183	\$	2,844,683	\$	2,517,683	\$	11,850,548					
			Hamilton share @ 70%				\$	2,280,600	\$	2,261,128	\$	1,991,278	\$	1,762,378	\$	8,295,383						
Total Total							TOTAL Town & School District				\$	580,905	\$	8,358,650	\$	5,029,640	\$	6,572,253	\$	5,585,565	\$	26,127,013
Regional departments will be split							Town total less Grants				\$	580,905										
School Town split 70%																						
Does not Include Carryover from FY'20																						
Priority	Funding					FY'23																
1	FC	Free Cash			\$	550,905																
2	OP	OpEx			\$	-																
3	SF	Stabilization Fund			\$	-																
4	D	Town Debt			\$	-																
	W	Water			\$	-																
	SC	School Debt			\$	-																
	CPC	CPC			\$	30,000																
	GO	Grants/Outside Sources			\$	-																
	ARPA	Rescue plan act			\$	-																
	PC	perpetual Care			\$	-																
	TOTAL						\$	580,905														

TOWN CLERK

The primary roles of the Town Clerk include Chief Election Official, Recording Officer, Public Records Officer, Registrar of Vital Records, and Licensing Officer. The elected Town Clerk has duties and responsibilities under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Attorney General, the Department of Public Health Registrar of Vital Records, the Office of Campaign and Political Finance, the State Ethics Commission, the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services, the Jury Commissioner, and the Office of the State Fire Marshall.

As the Chief Election Official the Clerk oversees all aspects of local and state elections including voter registration, the processing of nomination papers, and the certification of election results to the Secretary of State. The Clerk also conducts the annual town street list/census and issues the published annual street list. In June, 2022, the Governor signed ‘An Act Fostering Voter Opportunity, Trust, Equity and Security’ (the VOTES Act) that provided expanded options for voting including mail in voting and in-person early voting and changed various existing election laws (see Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2022). The Town Clerk’s election responsibilities grew from three days (primary and general elections and local election) to 21 days plus many days processing vote by mail applications and returned ballots, approximately 25 days before each election.

As the Keeper of the Records, the Clerk is the official recorder of Town Meeting proceedings and responsible for certifying all official actions of the Town including Town Meeting legislation and appropriations, Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals’ decisions, and the signing of all notes for borrowing, all to ensure compliance with legal requirements. The Town Clerk is also responsible for swearing into office all elected officials and board and committee appointments, posting meeting agendas of government bodies, and informing officials of Open Meeting Law, State Ethics/Conflict of Interest Law, and Campaign Finance Law administrative and filing requirements. The Clerk is then responsible for filing all documents received from officials and appointees.

As the Registrar of Vital Records, the Clerk registers all vital events (births, deaths, marriages and adoptions) that occur within Hamilton and those events occurring elsewhere to Hamilton residents. The Clerk provides the public with certified copies, with the town seal, of requested vital records.

As Licensing Officer the Clerk’s Office issues marriage licenses, raffle/bazaar permits, dog licenses, kennel licenses, and business certificates. And as Public Information Officer the Clerk serves as a direct link between residents, local and state government, and various boards and committees.

	2023	2022	2021
Town Population (Jan 1, 2023)	7517	7641	7883
Registered Voters (Jan 1, 2023)	5628	5707	5864
Voters checked in for elections and town meetings	7379	3242	
Marriage Intentions Filed	24	17	33
Marriage Licenses Issued	20	19	28
Births Recorded	67	83	75
Burial Permits	20	16	24
Deaths Recorded	52	46	49
Vital Record Certified Copies Issued	629	581	
Dog Licenses Issued	1093	1131	1226
Kennel Licenses Issued	5	4	4
Business Certificates Issued	56	43	46
Raffle/Bazaar Permits Issued	4	5	3
OML - Agenda & Amended Agenda Postings	455	458	
Oaths administered, OML and Ethics Laws overview provided	68	64	
Records Requests Processed	32	17	

Elections and Town Meetings

In fiscal year 2023 we had two Town Meetings, an Annual Town Election, a State Primary and a State Election. All minutes and results are on file in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town Clerk's web page.

Due to Massachusetts re-districting, Hamilton became part of the 2nd Essex District for Representative in General Court. Previously in the 4th Essex District, for the first time Hamilton and Wenham were in separate districts with different State Representatives. The State Senate district remained the same.

The November 8, 2022 State Election for the 2nd Essex District for Representative in General Court ended with a 10 vote margin which triggered a district-wide recount (six towns). In Hamilton, the recount results were identical to the election night results. Hamilton resident Kristen Kassner won by one (1) vote.

September 6, 2022 MA State Primary Election:

1505 voters or 26.85% of 5606 registered voters - 47% voted early; 53% voted Election Day

October 1, 2022 **Special Town Meeting:** 243 voters or 4.3% of 5634 registered voters

November 8, 2022 MA State Election:

3731 voters or 65.7% of 5683 registered voters - 42.5% voted early; 57.5% voted Election Day

April 1, 2023 **Annual Town Meeting:** 465 voters or 8.2% of 5669 registered voters

April 6, 2023 **Annual Town Election:** 1435 voters or 25.4% of 5643 registered voters

Overall, 7379 voters checked in for elections and town meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Carin A. Kale
Town Clerk



**Special Town Meeting
October 1, 2022
9:00 am
Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School**

At the close of registration on September 21, 2022 there were 5634 registered voters. There were 243 present:

Precinct 1 - 120
Precinct 2 – 123

William Bowler, Town Moderator, stated that the Warrant for this Special Town Meeting has been properly posted, a quorum is present and that the Special Town Meeting of the Town of Hamilton is open. The Moderator welcomed everyone to the October 1, 2022 Special Town Meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Bowler started with some general reminders: First, registered voters in Hamilton should have picked up a voting clicker and if they did not should get one. Second, cell phones should be silenced and voters should leave the meeting if they need to take or make a call. Third, non-voters are welcomed at the Town Meeting but are asked to sit in the visitors' area at the back of the auditorium.

Mr. Bowler introduced the officials who were sitting at the front of Town Meeting: Lauren Goldberg (KP Law, Town Counsel), Carin Kale (Town Clerk), Joe Domelowicz (Town Manager), Alex Magee (Finance Director), Shawn Farrell (Select Board, Chair), Jamie Knudsen (Select Board, Vice Chair), Caroline Beaulieu (Select Board), Bill Olson (Select Board), Tom Myers (Select Board), Christina Schenk-Hargrove (FinCom, Chair), John McGrath (Vice Chair, FinCom), John Pruellage (FinCom), Harry Philip (FinCom), and David Wanger (FinCom).

Mr. Bowler read through various points: Non-resident Town officials and those assisting the Select Board or Finance Committee are present to answer questions. Members of the press and the video crew have also been allowed to be present. The agenda, prepared by the Select Board, is the Warrant and copies are available.

Mr. Bowler spoke about Town Meeting procedures: To bring an agenda item before the meeting, he will recognize a member of the sponsoring board, committee, or individual so they can make a motion. If the motion is seconded, he will recognize the proponent to speak. When done, he will open discussion up to the audience who can comment by standing at one of the microphones, ask to be recognized and their name and address. Comments and questions must be within ‘the four corners of the motion,’ no more than three minutes and are to be on the merits of the motion and not about any person who is in favor of or against the motion. Please, no applause. All motions to amend must be submitted to the Town Clerk in writing. If assistance in framing a motion to amend is needed, Town Counsel will assist. Only one amendment may be pending at the same time. A vote is first taken on the amendment and then on the main motion.

Mr. Bowler spoke about voting procedures: Votes will be counted using the electronic voting clickers. In the unlikely event that there is trouble with the new technology, votes will be counted by raising paper voter cards. He will decide visually whether there is the necessary majority or 2/3 vote. If in doubt, or seven voters question the vote immediately after I declare the outcome, votes will be counted by tellers. The use of the clickers was demonstrated and although the result of the vote was displaying on the primary laptop screen, the projection of the votes to the larger screens was not working. The Town Clerk viewed the laptop screen to record the vote and handed the Moderator the vote written on paper. The Moderator read the vote to the Town Meeting.

Mr. Bowler recognized State Representative, Jamie Belsito.

Representative Belsito stated that State funding for the Schools was increased from \$3.791M to \$3.889M. Hamilton was given \$25,000 for fuel tank and pump replacement. The State worked with the Police Department to obtain \$9,800 for municipal safety grants. The Economic and Development Bill might provide \$50,000 for the Accord Pantry for food insecurity. A Hamilton resident needed help with an assessment, which bolstered the passage of legislation to allow all disabled veterans to look for an assessment in one place.

Mr. Bowler stated that we will now begin going through the articles in the Warrant.

SECTION 1: ELECTIONS, REPORTS, PROCEDURES

ARTICLE 2022/10 1-1 Consent Agenda

Mr. Bowler stated that there is no Consent Motion.

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL ACTIONS

ARTICLE 2022/10 2-1 Compensation Classification Table.

To see if the Town will amend the Personnel Bylaw by adopting changes to the classification and compensation table as set forth in Appendix A, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (The Proposed Compensation Classification Table appears as Appendix A to the 2022 Appendix Book.)

Town Moderator recognized Christina Schenk-Hargrove.

Christina Schenk-Hargrove said: “I move that the Town amend the Personnel By-law by adopting changes to the classification and compensation table as set forth in Appendix A to the 2022 Appendix Book.” Seconded.

Christina Schenk-Hargrove explained the article. Union contracts had not been finalized at Annual Town Meeting and two personnel changes had been reviewed and made.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 170. No: 3. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

Town Moderator recognized Senator Bruce Tarr.

Bruce Tarr recognized a charter agreement relative to water resources and the protection of the Ipswich River. Senator Tarr thanked Town administration for their part in protecting natural resources and drinking water.

ARTICLE 2022/10 2-2 Prior Year Bills

To see if the Town will 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. (Expected request \$2,494.28)

Town Moderator noted the article required a 9/10ths vote. Town Moderator recognized Harry Philip.

Harry Philip said: “I move that the Town transfer \$2,494.28 from current year departmental funds to pay unpaid bills from Cabot Risk Strategies for Worker’s Compensation Services in the amount of \$2,494.28.” Seconded.

Harry Philip explained the article.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 191. No: 1. A 9/10ths majority was established. Motion carries.

ARTICLE 2022/10 2-3 Strategic Plan.

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum of money not to exceed \$65,000 for the purpose of funding a consultant to develop a strategic plan related to the development of various properties in Town, including the Winthrop School property, Gordon-Conwell property and the downtown area of Town, including all incidental or related costs, or take any action thereon or relative thereto (*Request is \$65,000*).

Town Moderator recognized Caroline Beaulieu.

Ms. Beaulieu said: “I move to indefinitely postpone this article.” Seconded.

Ms. Beaulieu explained that since the time residents received the Warrant in the mail, an alternative funding source had been identified so the motion has been updated to reflect that.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 162. No: 7. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

ARTICLE 2022/10 2-4 Water Line Inventory – Lead Pipes

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, a sum of money not to exceed \$100,000 for the purpose of funding a Water Service Inventory with Lead Assessment study to inventory lead pipes within the Town’s water distribution system, including all incidental or related costs, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request \$100,000*)

Town Moderator recognized Bill Olson.

Bill Olson said: “I move that the Town utilize \$100,000 from the current Water Enterprise Fund Appropriation Fund to fund a Water Service Inventory with Lead Assessment study to inventory lead pipes within the Town’s water distribution system, including all incidental or related costs.”

Seconded.

Bill Olson explained the article.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 188. No: 2. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

ARTICLE 2022/ 10 2-5 Schools – Reauthorization of Previous Borrowing

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the use of the \$250,000 borrowing approved under Article 2020/6 2-4 of the June 20, 2020 Annual Town Meeting to be used by the Hamilton-Wenham Regional Schools District (“District”) for an Elementary School Facilities Study and Education Plan, for the specific purpose of paying the costs of a Feasibility Study of the Cutler School, 237 Asbury Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982 (the “Study”), for which Study the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District’s Cutler School Building Committee, the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Study costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities; any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Study shall be as set forth in the Feasibility Study Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.

Town Moderator recognized Shawn Farrell.

Shawn Farrell said: “I move that the Town vote to authorize the use of the \$250,000 borrowing approved under Article 2020/6 2-4 of the June 25, 2020 Annual Town Meeting to now be used by the Hamilton-Wenham Regional Schools District (“District”) for a School District Facilities Study for the specific purpose of paying the costs of a Feasibility Study for the Cutler Elementary School, 237 Asbury Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982 (the “Study”), for which Study the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District’s Cutler School Building Committee, the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Study costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities; any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Study shall be as set forth in the Feasibility Study Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.” Seconded.

Shawn Farrell Recognized School Superintendent Eric Tracy.

Eric Tracy showed a slide presentation of the Cutler Elementary School. The 250 student school had multiple deficiencies and had deteriorated beyond educational uses. Eight modules for MSBA were shown. The first module, Eligibility, included town support which was one of the last milestones to be met. \$250,000 in funds had been held since 2020 for the purpose.

Town Moderator recognized John McGrath.

John McGrath said the FinCom made a positive recommendation regarding the article.

Discussion -

Rick Mitchell (Rock Maple Ave) asked if the project included the Winthrop School and asked about the Buker School. Eric Tracy explained that the School Board and MSBA walked all three schools to find the Winthrop and Cutler Schools in need of rebuilding and reconfiguring the two schools into a school for 540 students. The Buker had not been judged by the MSBA to be rebuilt. The professionals would determine the reconfiguration. Mr. Mitchell wanted to look at all three elementary schools at one time. Mr. Tracy said the MSBA controls the process and determines how much they will pay for. Electronic Vote: Yes: 198. No: 11. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

ARTICLE 2022/ 10 2-6 Schools – Cutler Elementary School Feasibility Study

To see if the Town will approve the \$1,000,000 borrowing authorized by the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (the “District”) for a Feasibility Study for the Cutler Elementary School, located at 237 Asbury Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto (the “Study”) and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District’s Cutler School Building Committee: the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Study costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities; any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Study shall be as set forth in the Feasibility Study Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA; or take any other action thereon or relative thereto.

Town Moderator recognized Shawn Farrell.

Shawn Farrell said: “I move that the Town will approve the \$1,000,000 borrowing authorized by the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (the “District”) for a Feasibility Study for the Cutler Elementary School, located at 237 Asbury Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto (the “Study”) and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District’s Cutler School Building Committee: the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Study costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities; any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Study shall be as set forth in the Feasibility Study Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.” Seconded.

Town Moderator recognized Eric Tracy.

Eric Tracy explained the article. The \$1M and the previously approved \$250,000 would be combined to begin the Feasibility Study.

Town Moderator recognized John McGrath.

John McGrath said the MSBA could supply the Town with a \$30M grant for the project. The FinCom recommended favorable action.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 198. No: 14. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

SECTION 3: OTHER APPROPRIATIONS AND ACTIONS.

ARTICLE 2022/10 3-1 General ByLaws- Amendment to the Conservation Bylaw.

To see if the Town will vote to amend Chapter XVII of the Town's General Bylaws, Conservation, by deleting the language contained in the Bylaw in its entirety and replacing it with the language shown in Appendix B, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

Town Moderator recognized Tom Myers.

Tom Myers said: "I move that the Town indefinitely postpone article 3-1 as printed on the handout." Seconded.

Tom Myers said he appreciated the work of the Conservation Commission and explained that the Select Board met before the meeting and questioned whether the change extended beyond the scope of the existing Bylaw. He explained that if voters voted down the motion to postpone, someone else could move to recommend the article.

Town Moderator recognized John Pruellage.

John Pruellage said the FinCom believed there was no substantive change in the Bylaw but thought it might need more time to alleviate concerns.

Discussion -

Cathy Rich Duval urged residents to read and understand the Bylaw change. Town Moderator said the merits of the original article were not at question.

Antonio Watson (16 Sagamore Farm Road) wondered about the late breaking items that changed the minds of the Select Board and FinCom.

Tom Myers responded that a resident's attorney questioned the expansion of jurisdiction that might be enacted.

Kathy Simons (245 Sagamore St and Conservation Commission) offered her disappointment regarding late breaking concerns.

Ms. Kassner (27 Union St.) asked if substantive changes were pertaining to process or content. Tom Myers responded that the regulations were not addressed in the Bylaw but a letter clarified that some information in the proposed Bylaw expanded on the current Bylaw.

Sue Savarese (25 Old Cart Road) asked what the Commission thought of the current motion.

Town Moderator responded that the Commission had not posted a meeting and would not be able to offer an opinion.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 134. No: 71. Majority in favor. Motion to postpone carries.

ARTICLE 2022/10 3-2 Community Preservation Committee – Amendment of Vote Under Article 2020/11 2-7 and Article 2021/5 2-14.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the votes taken under Article 2022/11 2-7 and Article 2021/5 - 14 to extend the period of time when construction of the Town Hall project must commence from November 15, 2022 to November 15, 2024, or take any other action thereon or relative thereto.

Town Moderator recognized Shawn Farrell.

Shawn Farrell said: “I move that the Town approve Article 3-2 as printed in the Warrant.” Seconded. Shawn Farrell explained the article was for Town Hall improvements to bring the building up to code. The article was an extension of encumbering previously approved funds for renovating Town Hall. The Town was looking for alternatives for solutions for fire, ADA accessibility, and second floor structural integrity. Grants were being sought. The funds totaled \$4M.

Jay Butler (78 Old Cart Road/CPC) spoke in favor of the article.

Electronic Vote: Yes: 174 No: 25. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

ARTICLE 2022/10 3-3 Schools – Authorization of the Stabilization Fund.

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District to establish a Stabilization Fund for the District, pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, or take any other action thereon or relative thereto.

Town Moderator recognized Jamie Knudsen.

Jamie Knudsen said: “I move that the Town vote to deny authorization to the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District to establish a Stabilization Fund for the District, pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws.”

Jamie Knudsen said the Select Board had recently met and voted to recommend unfavorable action on the article, which was not a vote to reject the potential field project. A separate vote indicated that the Board was favorable toward the field project. The Board was concerned with the implications of a Regional School District funding of a Stabilization Fund.

Town Moderator recognized Eric Tracy.

Eric Tracy noted the motion made and the motion projected on the screen were not the same. The Excess and Deficiency Fund (\$1.6M) was described and Mr. Tracy said that the use of those funds was allowable by law to fund a stabilization fund for the schools and that the funds were already raised by the Town not new, additional funds. Slides of the athletic field project were shown. The potential cost was \$12M to \$13M. Fund raising and grant applications were being sought. Mr. Tracy outlined the benefits of the proposal. He reported that families have been leaving the school district because of the condition of the buildings and the fields.

Town Moderator recognized John McGrath.

John McGrath noted that a level of transparency and trust did exist but the FinCom recommended deferring the article due to concern of the funding mechanism and alternatives to the project before the Town determines funding the project. The FinCom recognizes that the funds are from FY’22 but the project needs to be vetted and the taxpayers need to understand this.

Discussion.

Michelle Horgan (School St.) introduced herself as a representative of the HW Athletic Facility Improvement Committee and described a partnership with the school district to update the outdoor athletic facilities at the middle school and high school campus. The Committee, a pending 501c3 organization, is committed to raising funds to offset the cost of the project. She asked the voters to support the district and the efforts to update and bring up to speed the athletic facilities.

Bill Olson (Select Board) clarified that the Select Board is in favor of the project but the motion isn't about the fields, it is about a Stabilization Fund and whether there were other more creative ways to raise the funds.

Dana Allara (Echo Cove Road) stated that the "motion in the warrant book" was in the affirmative and the motion on the floor was made differently.

[Further comments and questions showed that there was lack of understanding about the difference between a Warrant article and a motion and concerns about whether funds in the to-be-established Stabilization Fund would be dedicated specifically to the athletic fields. Note: motion language is not printed in the Warrant, only the article is.]

A discussion involving the Town Moderator, Town Counsel Lauren Goldberg and others took place regarding the Select Board's negative motion (to deny authorization) and the distinction between the language of the article printed in the Warrant and the language of the motion of Jamie Knudsen that does not appear in the Warrant. There were questions about whether the negative motion was an amendment and, if so, whether it was submitted in writing to the Town Clerk. Town Counsel said no, it was a motion not an amendment to the article. Town Moderator suggested that the Select Board withdraw the motion and vote on the "motion in the warrant." Attorney Goldberg said it was her opinion that the negative motion does pertain to the original article. Town Moderator asked that, for the record, the Clerk's minutes state that the Moderator was unhappy with how this played out.

Dana Allara expressed concern with the way the motion was made.

Rick Mitchell (Rock Maple Ave) spoke against the Stabilization Fund because it is not dedicated to the fields and is a blank check. Dana Allara responded to Mr. Mitchell's concerns and said the School Committee votes in a public meeting for the use of the funds.

Joe Mahar (Linden St.) asked about the funding of the Stabilization Fund. A response was given by Alex Magee, Town Finance Director, who explained that when the Excess and Deficiency fund exceeded 3%, funds were given back to the Town. Now, the Stabilization Fund would be 5%. Mr. Mahar spoke in favor of the Stabilization Fund.

Elizabeth Herr (270 Asbury St.) was concerned that the five person School Board would make financial decisions for the Town.

Shawn Farrell spoke in favor of the project but not the Stabilization Fund. A more specific ask for the turf field project would be preferred rather than a fund in perpetuity. The entire school budget would need to be voted down rather than just the Stabilization Fund. Lauren Goldberg said the only way to unwind the fund would be to not fund the Stabilization Fund in the future. The School Committee would have authority to transfer money on its own rather than voting the transfer each year.

Jamie Smorzewski (86 Highland St.) spoke in favor of the Stabilization Fund.

Anna Siediak (227 Highland St/School Committee) asked the Select Board to withdraw their motion and she would make an affirmative motion for what was within the Warrant, adding that the Stabilization Fund could be used for many facility needs.

Christina Schenk-Hargrove noted the motion was not to approve or disapprove the athletic fields but rather if the town should create a School Stabilization Fund. The motion on the floor is to not create the fund. Rather than giving Efficiency and Deficiency back to the Town, the School Committee could move it elsewhere.

Beth Herr (270 Asbury St.) spoke against the Stabilization Fund as funds could be used for other uses.

Anna Siedzik recommended that the Select Board should have voted to postpone.
Lauren Goldberg said the motion was a functional equivalent to a postponement.
Melissa Sachsel (60 Echo Cove Road) spoke in favor of the Stabilization Fund.
Sam Vaill (315 Bridge St.) spoke in favor of the Stabilization Fund.

Jamie Knudsen reread the motion: "I move that the Town vote to deny authorization to the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District to establish a Stabilization Fund for the District, pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws."
Electronic Vote: Yes: 85. No: 128. Majority not in favor. Motion does not carry.

Anna Siedzik said: "I move to approve Article 3-3 as printed in the Warrant." Seconded.

Town Moderator reread the motion as printed in the Warrant. "I move that the Town vote to authorize the Town of Hamilton Wenham Regional School District to establish a Stabilization Fund for the District pursuant to Section 16G1/2 of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws."
Electronic Vote: Yes: 122. No: 89. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

The Moderator said: "I will now accept a Motion to dissolve."
So Moved
Seconded.
Vote: Unanimous in favor. Motion carries.

This Annual Town Meeting is now dissolved at 11:14 am on October 1, 2022.



**Annual Town Meeting
April 1, 2023
9:00 am
Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School**

At the close of registration on March 22, 2023 there were 5669 registered voters. There were 465 present:

Precinct 1 - 238
Precinct 2 - 227

William Bowler, Town Moderator, stated that the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting had been properly posted, a quorum was present, and the Annual Town Meeting of the Town of Hamilton was open. Mr. Bowler stated that tellers had been appointed in the event they are needed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Bowler started with some general reminders: First, registered voter in Hamilton should have picked up a voting clicker and if they did not should get one. He also noted that voters should have also received a pink Hamilton voter card, in case it is needed. Second, cell phones should be silenced and voters should leave the meeting to make a call. Third, non-voters are welcomed at Town Meeting and are asked to sit in the visitors' area in the back of the auditorium.

Mr. Bowler thanked the student volunteers and School Department employees who set up this Town Meeting. He introduced the officials who were sitting at the front of Town Meeting: Tom McEnaney (KP Law, Town Counsel), Carin Kale (Town Clerk), Joe Domelowicz (Town Manager), Wendy Markiewicz (Finance Director), Shawn Farrell (Select Board, Chair), Jamie Knudsen (Select Board), Caroline Beaulieu (Select Board), Bill Olson (Select Board), Tom Myers (Select Board), Christina Schenk-Hargrove (FinCom, Chair), John Pruellage (FinCom), Harry Philip (FinCom), David Wanger (FinCom), and John McGrath (FinCom).

Mr. Bowler stated: "I have asked non-resident Town officials and those assisting the Select Board or Finance Committee to be present so they can answer questions. Members of the press (and the video crew) have also been allowed to be present." He added that the agenda, prepared by the Select Board, is the Warrant.

Mr. Bowler spoke about Town Meeting procedures: To bring an agenda item before the meeting, he will recognize a member of the sponsoring board, committee, or individual so they can make a motion. If the motion is seconded, he will recognize the proponent to speak. When done, he will open discussion. To ensure an orderly meeting, if a voter wishes to speak, the voter must first ask to be

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recognized. He asked that voters be standing at a microphone and, when recognized, state their name and street address. He said the rules are those used at every Town Meeting. Voters have three minutes to make comments or ask questions about the motion. If a voter continues to speak once time has elapsed, to maintain a fair and efficient meeting requires that he move to the next speaker. Comments and questions must be within 'the four corners of the motion.' He reminded voters that they are in a legislative session for the Town of Hamilton and that while spirited debate is welcome, being cordial and respectful is a priority for the efficiency of the Meeting and every person who rises to debate a motion has an equal right to be heard. As such, he asked that people refrain from making remarks of a personal nature about any Town or School officials or any person who is in favor of or against the motion and comment on the merits of the motion. To ensure that the Meeting is run efficiently, comments or questions must be directed to the Moderator rather than any individual or Town official. If deemed appropriate, he may ask the person making the Motion or another Town official to respond to the question. He asked that there be no applause, cheering, booing, or any other conduct that will disrupt or delay the Meeting. All motions to amend must be submitted to the Town Clerk in writing and Town Counsel is available to provide some assistance. No more than one amendment may be pending at the same time. A vote is first taken on the amendment and then on the main motion.

Mr. Bowler spoke about the voting procedures: Votes will be counted using the electronic voting clickers. In the unlikely event that there is trouble with the technology, votes will be counted by raising paper voter cards. He will decide visually whether there is the necessary majority or 2/3 vote. If in doubt, or seven voters question the vote immediately after the outcome is declared he will have the vote counted by tellers.

SECTION 1: ELECTIONS, REPORTS, PROCEDURES

ARTICLE 2023/4 1-2 Reports

To hear reports of Town Officers and selected committees and to take action thereon or relative thereto. Reports will appear in the Town Report for Fiscal Year 2022 and be posted to the Town of Hamilton Website. Town Moderator recognized Shawn Farrell.

Shawn Farrell said: "I move that the reports of Town Officers and Committees be received and placed on file. Is there a second?" Seconded.

Town Moderator recognized Shawn Farrell.

Shawn Farrell spoke about the upcoming sale of the Gordon Conwell Seminary property and the possible reuse and plans for the location. Mr. Farrell presented a summary timeline of the events and work that had occurred. He mentioned that the Planning Board will hold public hearings on a proposed Overlay District, a Special Town Meeting will be held in June to approve the zoning change, and that a development agreement would then be executed. Mr. Farrell introduced David Gamble of Gamble Associates.

David Gamble gave an overview of the benefits, impacts and tensions regarding the Gordon Conwell 100 acre property with 400,000 square feet across 14 buildings. Only 40-50 acres are available for development given the slopes and trees. Overarching 'Guiding Principles' had been discussed at public meetings. Physical and fiscal characteristic of the site would need to be combined into a final report. Core values were discussed and included a transparent process, cohesiveness of the property,

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working with topography, sustainability, public access, historic buildings, dormitories, and developable areas. The goal was to balance development while maintaining principles. Continuity of the tree canopy and wetlands tied different portions of the site together. Mr. Gamble considered the land to be in three campuses, upper campus (14 acres), central portion (8 to 10 acres), and six residential buildings in the lower campus (11 acres). A single land use might be vulnerable to economic fluctuations. The market would determine where projects landed. The existing buildings required investment to bring them up to code.

Mr. Bowler recognized Marnie Crouch.

Marnie Crouch (Planning Board Chair) thanked Gordon Conwell for their cooperation and introduced the members of the Planning Board. They are working on an Overlay District, which will be brought to the Town for approval. The proposed Bylaw would address the needs of the Town and Seminary.

Shawn Farrell introduced Bill Wilson (Master Plan Committee Chair) who discussed the benefits of the Master Plan and the history of the Committee. The Committee focused on three (3) Guiding Principles: What to protect, What to provide, and How to grow. Community engagement was ongoing. Mr. Wilson discussed important features worth protecting.

Electronic Vote: 309 in favor; 6 opposed. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4 1-3 Articles for Consent Motion

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.

Town Moderator said: "I will now read the list of articles to be taken up and voted on as one motion. If you want to ask questions or make comments on an article, shout out 'Hold' as the list is read. Any article that is held will be deleted from the Consent Motion and taken up and considered according to its place on the Warrant: Article 2-1, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-11, 2-12 and 3-2." Town Moderator recognized Bill Olson.

Motion of Bill Olson: "I move that the articles included on the List of Articles for Consent Motion for this 2023 Annual Town Meeting, a copy of which has been delivered to the Town Clerk to be filed with the minutes of this meeting, be approved by one vote, each motion to be deemed a separate action under the Warrant Article having the same corresponding number."

Seconded.

Electronic Vote: In favor 336; Opposed 7. Motion passes.

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL ACTIONS

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-2 Prior Year Bills

To see if the Town will 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. (*Expected request \$1,575.01*) Town Moderator noted the article required a 4/5th vote.

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Town Moderator recognized Christina Schenk-Hargrove.

Motion of Christina Schenk-Hargrove: "I move that the Town transfer the sum of \$900 from DPW Consultative Services account and \$675.01 from the Finance Department Consultative Services account to pay unpaid bill for Voltrek, O'Connell Plumbing, and Carousel Industries respectively." Seconded.

Electronic Vote: In favor 306; Opposed 4; a 4/5ths majority was declared. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-3 General Town Departmental Appropriations

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to defray the expenses of schools and all other Town expenses for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2023, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected requests Town - \$13,904.365 and all educational expenses, including HWRSD and ENSATSD - \$23,396,950*).

Town Moderator said: "This is our annual general Town and School omnibus appropriations article. I recognize Eric Tracy (Superintendent of Schools) to report on the School Budget."

Eric Tracy said the net increase of the School budget was 2.66% or \$1.2M. Due to an enrollment shift, cost to Hamilton (66% of school population) shifted by \$285,000. Dr. Tracy explained how the \$3.1M Excess and Deficiency Funds would be spent: \$1.698M would go to the Stabilization Fund for athletic fields, \$701,095 would go to maintenance and \$773,064 to be refunded to the Towns. The FY'23 to FY'24 increase to Hamilton was 3.9%. Superintendent Tracy noted that State had recently mandated a 14% increase for some services.

Town Moderator said: "I recognized Joe Domelowicz, Town Manager to report on the Town Budget." Joe Domelowicz introduced Wendy Markiewicz, Town Accountant/Director of Finance before discussing the budget for Town and Schools that featured an increase of \$3.312M over the prior year with a large portion for capital improvements. The School increase to Hamilton was \$854,000. The Town increase was \$2.4M.

Town Moderator said: "I will now read each appropriation and for any item a voter would like to discuss separately, please shout out 'hold'."

\$ 2,378,699 for General Town Government

\$ 3,921,655 for Public Safety

\$23,089,492 for Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District

\$ 307,458 for Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School District

\$ 2,330,985 for Department of Public Works

\$ 370,192 for Health and Human Services

\$ 1,157,859 for Culture and Recreation

\$ 3,744,974 for Unclassified

Totaling \$37,301,315

Town Moderator said: "I recognize John Pruellage."

Motion of John Pruellage: "I move that the Town raise and appropriate the sums read by the Moderator for Schools and all other Town expenses which are set forth in the 2024 Fiscal Year Budget

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in Appendix B of the 2023 Appendix Book and Appendix C of the 2023 Appendix Book with the corrections read by the Moderator excepting those items held.” Seconded.

John Pruellage noted the FinCom unanimously supported the Budget. One-time purchases would not affect the tax rate. Mr. Pruellage explained different departmental increases. The increase in the tax rate would be \$.32. There was no levy capacity left in the Town.

Phil Stearns (Linden St.) thanked the Town and Schools for avoiding an override. Mr. Stearns questioned the School’s \$39M OPEB unfunded liability of which \$26M will belong to Hamilton. He stated that over 2 years the budget included \$2.25M but it appears that the amount is not in the fund. An additional \$200,000 had been allocated this year. Eric Tracy responded the Committee put \$2.2M into the Fund from Excess and Deficiency. The School Committee added \$100,000, then \$150,000, then \$200,000, which would increase by \$50,000 more each year to meet the long-term liability.

Jack Hauck (Moulton St.) spoke in support of the Town Manager.

Steven Porter (18 Cunningham Dr.) asked about subsidy from the State.

Eric Tracy responded \$3.9M had been received from the State with a \$100,000 increase for the following year. Medicaid and transportation were revenues and offsets, which totaled about \$9M.

Eric Convey (115 Linden St.) asked about enrollment shift for prior debt obligations.

Bill Wilson (36 Howard St.) asked about enrollment shift trends.

Eric Tracy explained that population was trending downward in general but there was an increase in the elementary grades.

Town Moderator reread the budget numbers.

Electronic Vote: In favor 372; Opposed 32 against. Motion passes.

Senator Bruce Tarr and Representative Kristen Kassner were present.

Representative Kassner spoke about regional issues and budgetary constraints. Senator Tarr congratulated the Schools, FinCom, and Select Board for their production of the budget and updated residents about progress being made at the State level. The State was \$600M in excess of its projected budget. State Assistance (Chapter 70) for Schools was projected to be \$624M with a \$124,000 increase for the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District. Unrestricted government aid would be increase by \$15,000 to \$16,000. The 14% increase for outplacement was being balanced with circuit breaking funding. Robust tax revenue had been experienced.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-4 Capital Expenditures

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. (*Expected request \$1,446,050*) Town Moderator recognized Tom Myers.

Motion of Tom Myers: “I move that the Town vote to: 1) transfer the sum of \$1,096,050 from Free Cash to fund the following purchases and projects identified in the Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Projects Plan, which is set forth in Appendix D of the 2023 Appendix Book: DPW Sander (\$215,000), Radio Upgrade (\$70,000), Fuel Station (\$395,000), DPW Garage Doors (\$75,000), Library HVAC (\$200,000), Library Security (\$13,050), Hamilton Police Department Cruiser (\$70,000), and Emergency Communication Operations Center Cameras (\$58,000); 2) transfer \$105,000 from Water

Department retained earnings to purchase and equip a Water Department Utility truck as set forth in Appendix D of the 2023 Appendix Book; and 3) appropriate the sum of \$700,000 for the purpose of paying the costs of designing, constructing and equipping the Water Phase V Implementation Project and Water Media Projects, including all costs incidental and related thereto; and to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said sum under G.L. c 44 §§ 7 or 8, or any other enabling authority and issue bonds or notes of the Town transfer therefore, with the expectation that said bonds or notes will be repaid from the Water Enterprise Fund and further, that the Select Board is further authorized to take any other action necessary to carry out these projects and vote hereunder.” Seconded.

Town Moderator recognized John Pruellage.

John Pruellage said details of the articles were listed in the FinCom report. The Capital Committee recommended that each of these items should be funded this year. The FinCom unanimous agreed with the spending. \$1.1M was used from Free Cash.

Deb Safford (Maple St.) questioned the cameras at the Emergency Communication Operation Center and other locations. Russ Stevens (Police Chief) responded that cameras were also at Town Hall currently but would be installed at Patton Park in the future. Cameras would not be placed to point at private property. The need was for liability purposes.

Electronic Vote: In favor 372; Opposed 22; a 2/3 majority was established. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4-2-5 Fire Engine Purchase

To see if the Town will appropriate a sum of money to purchase and equip a new fire truck, and to determine whether this amount shall be raised by transfer from available funds, including but not limited to reserved bond sale premiums, or otherwise provided; or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request \$760,000*). A 2/3 vote will be required to approve this article if funds are appropriated from the Stabilization Fund. Town Moderator recognized Caroline Beaulieu.

Motion of Caroline Beaulieu: “I move that the Town appropriate the sum of \$760,000 to purchase and equip a new fire truck, and that to meet this appropriation, transfer the sum of \$114,569 from reserved bond sale premiums and \$645,431 from the Capital Stabilization Fund.” Seconded.

Caroline Beaulieu said the purchase was proactive as it would take a couple of years to obtain and equip the new fire truck.

Electronic Vote: In favor 354; Opposed 26; a 2/3 majority in favor was declared. Motion passes

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-10 Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will transfer \$57,541 from Free Cash to the General Stabilization Fund, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request is \$57,541*). Town Moderator recognized David Wanger. A 2/3 vote was required.

Motion of David Wanger: I move that the Town transfer the sum of \$57,541.00 from Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund. Seconded.

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David Wanger said the transfer was pursuant to financial policies that had been adopted. 5% of the operating budget would be transferred. Shawn Farrell thanked Mr. Wanger, who was leaving the FinCom, for all of his years of service. Mr. Knudsen was not seeking reelection to the Select Board and Mr. Farrell thanked him for his service as well.

Electronic Vote: In favor 367; Opposed 6; a 2/3 majority was established. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-13 Community Preservation School Athletic Fields

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. C 44B to appropriate \$800,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Undesignated Reserve Fund Account for the purpose of funding a portion of the design, construction, reconstruction, improvement, and equipping of the athletic and recreational facilities located at the Hamilton Wenham Regional High School, 775 Bay Road, Hamilton MA including all incidental and related costs as set forth in an application on file with the Town Clerk, dated December 22, 2022 approved by the Community Preservation Committee on February 16, 2023; provided however that the expenditure of said funds shall not be authorized if Town Meeting fails to approve Articles 2023/4-2-14, the Town of Wenham fails to appropriate its share of the costs for said project; or construction of the project fails to commence by April 6, 2025, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. Town Moderator recognized Jay Butler.

Motion of Jay Butler: "I move that the Town approve Article 2-13 as printed in the Warrant."
Seconded.

Jay Butler said the \$800,000 request was meant to lower the cost of the \$15M project. The grant had been approved by the CPC, Select Board, and FinCom. The voters of Hamilton and Wenham will need to approve the debt exclusion at Town Meeting and at the polls. Wenham would also need to approve their CPC grant request at Town Meeting. Construction would need to begin within two years. A Memorandum of Understanding between the School and the Recreation Department would need to define public access to the fields, which was almost complete. In 2016 a \$44,000 grant was approved for baseline studies. No other grant requests were in competition for the request.

Eric Tracy offered an overview of athletics in the district, statistics regarding participation, the status of the current fields, the components and goals of the project, and the cost and possible offsets to the cost. He also spoke about PFAS contamination by using crumb rubber fill and the benefits of alternative fills. MIIA requirements included checking the heat on fields, which may increase due to rubber products.

Peter Gourdeau (416 Bridge St.) gave a fundraising report: \$1,277,567 from 125 community members and organizations. Mr. Gourdeau thanked members of the fund raising committee and other contributing residents. More future donors, grants, and foundations would be sought. The proposal reflected the future of the children of Hamilton.

Town Moderator recognized John McGrath.

John McGrath thanked Eric Tracy for his cooperation. The FinCom supported the funding source but would discuss the financial implications of the capital spending Town and School wide. The broader conversation would be held at the next article.

Olaf Krohg (1 Longmeadow Way) shared his concern about synthetic turf fields, noting that Boston public schools had banned turf fields. Mr. Krohg warned voters about the potential chemicals that would impact generations to come.

Kathy Simons (245 Sagamore St.) seconded the concerns that had been identified.

Tim Clark (Sagamore St.) spoke in favor of the article.

Electronic Vote: In favor 347; Opposed 68. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-14 School Athletic Fields Project – Approval of Borrowing

To see if the Town will vote to approve the debt authorized by the Hamilton Wenham Regional School Committee in the amount of Fifteen Million Dollars (\$15,000,000) for the purpose of designing, constructing, reconstructing, making improvements to and equipping the athletic and recreational facilities located at Hamilton Wenham Regional High School, 775 Bay Road, Hamilton, MA including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto; provided however, that the vote taken hereunder shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters of the Town at an election to exclude from the limits imposed by Proposition 2 ½, the amounts needed to pay for the Town's allocated share of the principal and interest in such debt, and that the total amount authorized to be expended by the Regional School District under the Regional School Committee bond authorization and this vote shall be reduced by any grants or gifts received for such purposes or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request \$15,000,000*).

Town Moderator noted that a 2/3 vote was required. Town Moderator recognized Caroline Beaulieu.

Motion of Caroline Beaulieu: "I move that the Town approve the debt authorized by the Hamilton Wenham Regional School Committee ("School Committee") in the amount of Fifteen Million Dollars (\$15,000,000) for the purpose of designing, constructing, reconstructing, making improvements to and equipping the athletic and recreational facilities located at Hamilton Wenham Regional High School, 775 Bay Road, Hamilton, MA including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto; provided, however, that the vote taken hereunder shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters of the Town at an election to exclude from the limits imposed by Proposition 2 1/2, the amounts needed to pay for the Town's allocated share of the principal and interest on such debt, and further, that the expenditure of funds authorized to be borrowed hereunder shall be reduced by any grants or gifts received for such purposes and by any other amount or amounts that the School Committee may, from time to time, appropriate from the District Capital Stabilization Fund, including, but not limited to the \$1,690,000 the School District has indicated will be earmarked for the project in FY24." Seconded.

Caroline Beaulieu said the Select Board was in support of improving the fields but individuals needed to determine their wants and needs.

Town Moderator recognized John McGrath.

John McGrath said the FinCom recommended a phased approach and consideration of a smaller project. The Gale Report indicated an eight to ten year phased approach was appropriate. The FinCom requested a \$5M per period approach. This field would cost each taxpayer an average of \$300 per year for ten years. In two years, the School will request spending an average of \$100M on a new school. Each taxpayer would be responsible for \$1,000 more per year for 30 years. Mr. McGrath asked residents to make decisions in the context of other needs.

Eric Tracy asked John McGrath to acknowledge that the entire \$15M would not be needed and then proceeded to introduce Kathy Hervol (Gale Associates). Ms. Hervol said the original Master Plan approached the project in phases but ten years had already passed. Ms. Hervol explained why phasing the project would cost more if the School did not construct the project at one time.

Bill Olson (419 Highland St.), Michelle Horgan (School Committee), Chloe Gern (high school student), and Mia Flores (high school student), spoke in favor of the proposal.

Jack Lawrence (105 Rock Maple Ave.) and Kathy Simons (245 Sagamore St.), spoke against the proposal.

Motion of Harry Philip (448 Bay Road): I move to amend Article 2023/4 2-14 by striking out Fifteen Million Dollars (\$15,000,000) and inserting Ten Million Dollars (\$10,000,000). Seconded.

Mr. Philip stated that the town needed to invest in the fields but \$15M was too much to spend on the investment. Reducing the debt would reduce the individual tax increase from \$300 to \$150 per year. The motion allowed significant improvements while cutting the tax impact in half.

Dana Allara (Echo Cove Rd./HW School Committee), Peter Gourdeau (Bridge St), Jonathan Lamb (135 Blueberry Lane), Eric Tracy (Superintendent), and Anna Siezek (Highland St.) spoke against the motion to amend.

Jen Saffrin (Maple St.) spoke in favor of the amendment.

Electronic Vote to amend the main motion – In favor 66; Opposed 313; motion to amend fails.

Discussion ensued regarding the Main Motion.

Lu Lebeck (Pine Tree Drive) and Anne Laws (17 Postgate Rd.) spoke in favor of the proposal.

Anne Gero (821 Bay Rd.) spoke against the proposal and asked Eric Tracy if the School would commit to not using crumb rubber. Dr. Tracy said the School did not plan to use crumb rubber.

Electronic Vote on the main motion: In favor 303; Opposed 92; a 2/3 majority was established. Motion passes.

SECTION 3: OTHER APPROPRIATIONS AND ACTIONS.

ARTICLE 2023/4 3-1 General Bylaws – Amendment to the Conservation Bylaw

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Chapter XVII of the Town's General By-laws, Conservation, by deleting the language shown in strike-through and inserting the language shown in bold, as forth in Appendix H, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. Town Moderator recognized Tom Myers.

Motion of Tom Myers: "I move that the Town vote to amend Chapter XVII of the Town's General Bylaws, Conservation, by deleting the current version of Chapter XVII in its entirety and replacing it

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with the version shown in the handout entitled “3/22/23 Final Proposed Conservation Bylaw Revision – Town of Hamilton,” a copy of which is on file with the Town Clerk’s Office.” Seconded.

Town Myers recognized Lauren Lynch.

Lauren Lynch gave an overview of the proposed Bylaw and the need to update the Bylaw because it was missing key points. Ms. Lynch reviewed the number of meetings that had been conducted and changes made. Ms. Lynch referred to the documents that had been distributed at Town Meeting.

Bill Olson (Highland St./Selectman) asked if the Bylaw would impact the new turf field project or private property, to which Lauren Lynch responded that it would not.

Marc Johnson (6 Patton Drive), John Raymond (62 Gardner St.), Tom Ford (Bay Road) and Rick Mitchell (Rock Maple Road) spoke against the proposal.

John Worrell (260 Chebacco Rd.) spoke in favor of the proposal.

Lauren Lynch said definitions were aligned with best practices and that the changes did not include any changes to the jurisdiction of the Commission. Ms. Lynch explained changes were only administrative and the Bylaw had last been updated in the 1980’s. The proposal was in alignment with MACC guidelines and other local communities.

Ashley Goliti (254 Bridge St.) asked about the proposed changes as they affected the turf field project. Lauren Lynch responded that the Commission had previously approved the turf field project, so any changes would not apply.

Marc Johnson questioned the language regarding projects elsewhere and foreseeable. Lauren Lynch said the language was made in regard to cumulative impacts such as projects subdivided into small pieces. Projects were inter-related to one another, according to Ms. Lynch.

Bill Wilson (36 Howard St.) asked if the turf field would have passed and would it impact other projects. Lauren Lynch said the proposal did not constitute substantive changes. Approval would not be changed.

John Cole (66 Chebacco Rd.) did not think the proposal was strong enough.

Caroline Beaulieu (Select Board) clarified that the proposal increases the legally enforceable jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission, that the change is more than administrative. The change closes the gap between the Regulations and the Bylaw. Lauren Lynch said it legally protected the Commission.

Electronic Vote: In favor 101; Opposed 73. Motion passes.

ARTICLE 2023/4 3-3 Citizens’ Petition – Conservation Restriction Parcels, South Area of Patton Gift.

To see if the Town will vote to ask the Select Board to create a Conservation Restriction (CR) on 19 acres total, more or less, on three adjacent Town-owned parcels at the southern end of the Patton gift of

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2012; the conservancy, parcel number 27-0006 (632 Asbury St, 9.09 acres), Patton Wells, parcel number 27-0001 (0 Asbury St, 3.9 acres), and the southern/westernmost portion of what is commonly referred to as Patton Homestead, parcel 19-0001 (650 Asbury Street, approximately 6.0 acres, the northern boundary of which to be determined by survey, see Map in Appendix I), or take any action thereon or relative thereto. Town Moderator recognized George Tarr.

Motion of George Tarr: "I move to see if the Town will vote to ask the Select Board to create a Conservation Restriction (CR) on 19 acres total, more or less, on three adjacent Town-owned parcels at the southern end of the Patton gift of 2012; the conservancy, parcel number 27-0006 (632 Asbury St, 9.09 acres), Patton Wells, parcel number 27-0001 (0 Asbury St, 3.9 acres), and the southern/westernmost portion of what is commonly referred to as Patton Homestead, parcel 19-0001 (650 Asbury Street, approximately 6.0 acres, the northern boundary of which to be determined by survey, see Map in Appendix I)." Seconded.

George Tarr explained the importance of preserving each parcel of land. Mr. Tarr questioned the validity of the narrative provided to the town.

Bill Olson (419 Highland St.) stated that the Select Board recommended unfavorable action as allowing the proposal would complicate future plans on the restricted property.

Marc Johnson asked if the Conservation Commission had taken a position on the article. Mr. Johnson said it was a bad idea at the moment because the Town has finally put itself in control of the property.

Virginia Cookson (318 Forest St.) offered a history of the area and spoke in favor of the proposal.

Electronic Vote: In favor 36; Opposed 80 against. Motion fails.

ADJOURNMENT

The Moderator said: "I will now accept a Motion to dissolve." So Moved. Seconded.

Vote: Unanimous in favor. Motion carries.

This Annual Town Meeting is now dissolved at 12:57 pm on April 1, 2023.

A True Copy Attest:



Carin A. Kale
Town Clerk

ADDENDUM

ARTICLE 2023/4 1-3 Consent Motion Articles included the following articles

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-1. Compensation/Classification Table

To see if the Town will amend the Personnel Bylaw by adopting changes to the classification and compensation table as set forth in Appendix A, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-6. Water Enterprise Budget

To see if the Town will approve the FY2024 Water Enterprise Budget, as set forth in Appendix F, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request \$2,285,703*)

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-7. Annual Financial Actions

To see if the Town will authorize the following financial actions, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

- A. To transfer \$2,000 from the Cemetery Sale of Lots and Graves Fund to the General Fund to be used for cemetery purposes;
- B. To transfer \$457,313 from the Water Enterprise Fund to the General Fund to be used for indirect expenses;
- C. To transfer \$2,668.36 from the interest of the Clark Fund to the Conservation Trust Fund for conservation related expenses.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-8. Hamilton Development Corporation

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$58,000 to the Hamilton Development Corporation, or take any action thereon or relative thereto. (*Expected request is \$58,000*).

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-9. OPEB Trust Fund

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$125,000 for the purpose of funding the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Liability Trust Fund, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-11. Revolving Fund Establish Expenditure Limits

To see if the Town will vote to establish the annual spending limit for the Recreation and Emergency Dispensing Services and Clinics Revolving Funds as set forth below in accordance with G.L. c.44, §53E ½, with such updated expenditure limit to be applicable for each fiscal year until such time as Town Meeting votes prior to July 1 in any year, to increase the same for the ensuing fiscal year, provided that at the request of the entity authorized to expend such funds the Select Board may increase such limit for that fiscal year only; or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

- A. Recreation Revolving Fund - \$750,000
- B. EDS & Clinics Revolving Fund - \$200,000

ARTICLE 2023/4 2-12. Community Preservation Budget

To see if the Town will act on the Report of the Community Preservation Committee on the Fiscal Year 2024 Community Preservation Budget and specified other projects and appropriate or reserve for later appropriation monies from community preservation fund annual revenues, specific reserves or other available funds for the administrative expenses of the Community Preservation Committee, the payment of debt service, the undertaking of community preservation projects and all other necessary and proper expenses for the year, as set forth in Appendix G, or take any action thereon or relative

thereto.

ARTICLE 2023/4 3-2. Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program – Increase Amount of Allowable Reduction

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to the last paragraph of G.L. c.59, §5K to allow the maximum reduction of real property taxes for the Senior Tax Work-off Program to be based on 125 volunteer service hours in a given tax year, rather than \$1,500.00, or take any action thereon or relative thereto.

OFFICIAL HAMILTON RESULTS - MA State Primary, September 6, 2022

Registered Voters 5606
Turnout 1505 26.85%

DEMOCRATIC

	P #1	P #2	TOTAL
GOVERNOR			
Sonia Rosa Chang-Diaz	53	50	103
Maura Healey	469	438	907
Write in	0	0	0
Blank	21	9	30
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR			
Kimberley Driscoll	365	365	730
Tami Gouveia	51	43	94
Eric P. Lesser	96	71	167
Write in	0	0	0
Blank	31	18	49
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

ATTORNEY GENERAL			
Andrea Joy Campbell	280	242	522
Shannon Erika Liss-Riordan	154	154	308
Quentin Palfrey	77	78	155
Write in	1	0	1
Blank	31	23	54
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

SECRETARY OF STATE			
William Francis Galvin	360	338	698
Tanisha M. Sullivan	166	149	315
Write in	0	0	0
Blank	17	10	27
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

TREASURER			
Deborah B. Goldberg	436	414	850
Write in	0	1	1
Blank	107	82	189
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

AUDITOR			
Christopher S. Dempsey	213	166	379
Diana DiZoglio	274	281	555
Write in	3	0	3
Blank	53	50	103
TOTAL VOTES	543	497	1040

REPUBLICAN

	P #1	P #2	TOTAL
GOVERNOR			
Geoff Diehl	140	100	240
Chris Doughty	111	106	217
Write in	1	1	2
Blank	3	3	6
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR			
Leah V. Allen	159	123	282
Kate Campanale	73	71	144
	0	0	0
Write in	2	1	3
Blank	21	15	36
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

ATTORNEY GENERAL			
James R. McMahon III	201	166	367
Write in	3	0	3
Blank	51	44	95
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

SECRETARY OF STATE			
Rayla Campbell	194	161	355
Write in	5	0	5
Blank	56	49	105
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

TREASURER			
Write in	9	2	11
Blank	246	208	454
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

AUDITOR			
Anthony Amore	193	162	355
Write in	2	0	2
Blank	60	48	108
TOTAL VOTES	255	210	465

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS				
Seth Moulton	477		451	928
Write in	4		0	4
Blank	62		46	108
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

COUNCILLOR				
Eileen R. Duff	435		399	834
Write in	0		0	0
Blank	108		98	206
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT				
Write in	14		28	42
Blank	529		469	998
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT				
Kristin E. Kassner	436		411	847
Write in	0		2	2
Blank	107		84	191
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

DISTRICT ATTORNEY				
James P. O'Shea	223		187	410
Paul F. Tucker	261		250	511
Write in	1		0	1
Blank	58		60	118
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

SHERIFF				
Kevin F. Coppinger	236		220	456
Virginia Leigh	270		237	507
Write in	0		0	0
Blank	37		40	77
TOTAL VOTES	543		497	1040

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS				
Bob May	200		163	363
Write in	3		1	4
Blank	52		46	98
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

COUNCILLOR				
Michael C. Walsh	196		164	360
Write in	1		0	1
Blank	58		46	104
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT				
Bruce E. Tarr	224		177	401
Write in	0		0	0
Blank	31		33	64
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT				
Leonard Mirra	199		163	362
Write in	1		0	1
Blank	55		47	102
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

DISTRICT ATTORNEY				
Write in	8		4	12
Blank	247		206	453
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

SHERIFF				
Write in	12		9	21
Blank	243		201	444
TOTAL VOTES	255		210	465

OFFICIAL HAMILTON RESULTS - MA State Election, November 8, 2022

Updated December 7, 2022

Registered Voters

5683

Turnout

3731 65.7%

	P #1		P #2		Total
GOVERNOR/LT GOVERNOR					
Diehl and Allen	645		612		1257
Healey and Driscoll	1183		1194		2377
Reed and Everett	29		34		63
Write-In	3		3		6
Blank	17		11		28
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854		3731

ATTORNEY GENERAL					
Andrea Joy Campbell	1133		1143		2276
James R. McMahon, III	693		668		1361
Write-In	2		1		3
Blank	49		42		91
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854		3731

SECRETARY OF STATE					
William Francis Galvin	1252		1274		2526
Rayla Campbell	553		521		1074
Juan Sanchez	40		29		69
Write-In	1		0		1
Blank	31		30		61
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854		3731

TREASURER					
Deborah B. Goldberg	1296		1285		2581
Christina Crawford	391		381		772
Write-In	2		2		4
Blank	188		186		374
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854		3731

AUDITOR					
Anthony Amore	747		735		1482
Diana DiZoglio	928		927		1855
Gloria A. Caballero-Roca	46		52		98
Dominic Giannone, III	27		15		42
Daniel Riek	35		39		74
Write-In	1		1		2
Blank	93		85		178
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854		3731

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS				
Seth Moulton	1231		1251	2482
Bob May	578		538	1116
Mark T. Tashjian	32		33	65
Write-In	1		0	
Blank	35		32	67
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

COUNCILLOR				
Eileen R. Duff	1142		1151	2293
Michael C. Walsh	642		625	1267
Write-In	3		0	3
Blank	90		78	168
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT				
Bruce E. Tarr	1230		1251	2481
Terence William Cudney	487		466	953
Write-In	4		2	6
Blank	156		135	291
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT				
Leonard Mirra	774		743	1517
Kristin E. Kassner	1041		1048	2089
Write-In	1		0	1
Blank	61		63	124
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

total *total* Total

DISTRICT ATTORNEY				
Paul F. Tucker	1362		1374	2736
Write-In	25		14	39
Blank	490		466	956
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

SHERIFF				
Kevin F. Coppinger	1348		1376	2724
Write-In	32		12	44
Blank	497		466	963
TOTAL VOTES	1877		1854	3731

QUESTION 1 - Additional Tax on Income over One Million Dollars

Yes	873		796		1669
No	945		971		1916
Blank	59		87		146
	1877		1854		3731

QUESTION 2 - Regulation of Dental Insurance

Yes	1251		1265		2516
No	547		492		1039
Blank	79		97		176
	1877		1854		3731

QUESTION 3 - Expanded Licenses for Sale of Alcoholic Beverages

Yes	820		795		1615
No	958		933		1891
Blank	99		126		225
	1877		1854		3731

QUESTION 4 - Eligibility for Drivers's Lincense

Yes	970		1008		1978
No	836		756		1592
Blank	71		90		161
	1877		1854		3731



2nd Essex District Representative in General Court
Hamilton Recount December 6, 2022
Summary

	Leonard Mirra	Kristin E. Kassner	Write-ins	Blanks	TOTAL	TOTAL
Precinct 1	774	1,041	1	61	1,877	1877
Precinct 2	743	1,048	Ø	63	1,854	1854
Total	1,517	2,089	1	124	3,731	3731

Attested by the Hamilton Board of Registrars:

Walter H. Leszcynski 12-6-22
Walter Leszcynski

Kathryn Tensen 12/6/2022
Kathryn Tensen

Edward Weldon 12/6/2022
Edward Weldon

Carin Kale 12/6/2022
Carin Kale

Town of Hamilton				Annual Town Election				April 6, 2023			
Precinct 1		766									
Precinct 2		669						OFFICIAL RESULTS			
Total		1435				Registered Voters		5643		25.43%	
Candidate Name		Prec. 1	Prec. 2	TOTALS	Candidate Name		Prec. 1	Prec. 2		TOTALS	
Select Board (3 years)					H-W Library Trustee						
Vote for ONE					(3 years) Vote for ONE						
Blanks		146	124	270	Blanks		153	108		261	
William W. Wilson		617	542	1159	Mary Jane Brown		613	559		1172	
Write-ins		3	3	6	Write-ins		0	2		2	
				1435						1435	
Town Clerk					Housing Authority (1 year unexpired term)						
Vote for ONE					Vote for ONE						
Blanks		149	118	267	Blanks		211	162		373	
Carin A. Kale**		617	549	1166	Daniel E. Carlin		554	504		1058	
Write-ins		0	2	2	Write-ins		1	3		4	
				1435						1435	
Moderator (1 year)					H-W Regional School Committee						
Vote for ONE					(3 years) Vote for TWO						
Blanks		160	135	295	Dana E. Allara**		551	494		1045	
William F. Bowler **		599	531	1130	Francesca Avogadri-Connors		492	452		944	
Write-ins		7	3	10	Blanks		477	387		864	
				1435	Write-ins		12	5		17	
										2870	
					H-W Regional School Committee						
Board of Assessors (3 years)							Hamilton	Wenham	Total		
Vote for ONE					Dana E. Allara**			1045	662	1707	
Blanks		185	150	335	Francesca Avogadri-Connors			944	534	1478	
Joseph S. Shaktman**		579	518	1097	Blanks			858	648	1506	
Write-ins		2	1	3	Write-ins			23	14	37	
				1435							
Planning Board (3 years)					Ballot Question						
Vote for TWO					YES		394	420		814	
Blanks		527	430	957	NO		370	247		617	
Margaret M. Crouch**		512	448	960							
Patrick Norton		482	458	940	Blanks		2	2		4	
Write-ins		11	2	13						1435	
				2870	** Candidates for Re-election						
					46						

PLANNING BOARD

At the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023), members of the Planning Board included Marnie Crouch, Chair, Emil Dahlquist, Clerk, Frederick (Rick) Mitchell, William (Bill) Wheaton, Beth Herr, Jonathan Poore, and Patrick Norton and Matthew Hamel (Associate member).

Throughout the period Hamilton Planning & Inspections Director, Patrick Reffett, assisted the Planning Board.

The Hamilton Planning Board has held its meetings primarily within the Town Hall Memorial Room and also accommodates the public by holding its meetings electronically via the Zoom webinar platform.

The mission of the Hamilton Planning Board is to engage in land use management and planning on behalf of the Town. This includes administering the Zoning Bylaw, Site Plan Review, Storm Water Management Permits, Subdivision Control Laws and issuing Approval Not Required Plans (ANR's).

Additionally, pursuant to the Mass General Laws, local planning boards are responsible for updating the Town's Master Plans and for reviewing and amending proposed Zoning Bylaws intended to meet the demands of towns and their growth patterns. A Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) was appointed in 2021 by the Select Board. Chairperson Marnie Crouch is the Planning Board representative to the MPSC. Emil Dahlquist served as an at-large member until the Committee reconfigured itself in the spring of 2023 and reduced its members to seven.

During fiscal year 2023, the Hamilton Planning Board held thirty-two (32) various meetings including one site visit/meeting to Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary and five (5) executive sessions, all of which concerned the Senior Housing Special Permit Application of Chebacco Hill Capital Partners, LLC for property located at 133 Essex Street. The Board conducted two joint meetings with the Hamilton Board of Selectmen, both of which were devoted to the Board's effort to rezone the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Campus and assist in the preparation of a companion development agreement. As part of one meeting the Planning Board held an informational meeting with Hamilton Conservation Commission members and staff to discuss proposed changes to our local wetlands bylaws. Additionally, the Hamilton Planning Board held two presentations at the Hamilton Wenham Public Library to discuss the breadth of the Planning Board's planning efforts with respect to the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Campus.

Regulatory Actions by the Hamilton Planning Board in FY 2023

Special Permit Application

The predominant focus of the Board during early FY 2023 was the continuing review of the Senior Housing Special Permit Application for Chebacco Hill Capital Partners, LLC, regarding a 50 unit project proposed for 133 Essex Street. The Board devoted seven (7) meetings in fiscal year 2023 to reviewing the complex project and ultimately voted to deny the application in October of 2022 by a vote of 5 opposed, to 2 in favor. The applicant has appealed the Board's denial of the Senior Housing Special Permit Application to the Massachusetts Land Court and the denial of the Stormwater Management Application to the Massachusetts Superior Court.

Special Permit Amendment Request

A condominium owner at the Village at Canter Brook Farm requested an amendment to the Canter Brook Village Senior Housing Special Permit. Specifically, the request was to allow construction of a private deck adjoining a condominium unit which required action of the Board. It was approved unanimously by the Board. The Board subsequently granted blanket authority for staff to review and approve such deck projects at Canter Brook.

Site Plan Reviews

The Planning Board received and granted with conditions one Site Plan Review application in fiscal year 2023 for a structure at 19 Railroad Avenue to provide shelter to clientele entering and exiting the commercial building.

Existing Site Plan Amendments

The Board received two requests to amend prior site plan approvals. Willow Street Hamilton, LLC, developer of Willow Flats, the 18-unit mixed use residential/ commercial project at 59-63 Willow Street, requested an amendment to the existing approved site plan which would allow for seven (7) electrical vehicle charging stations within the parking lot. The Board voted unanimously to approve the amendment.

The Planning Board reviewed and approved a request by Hamilton/Wenham, LLC to amend the Site Plan Approval for the Crossroads Shopping Center at 15 Walnut Street. The permit requires that new tenants be approved by the permit granting authority which is the Planning Board. The applicant requested allowance of interior fit-out for a real estate brokerage firm to locate within existing office space that had formerly been occupied by a branch bank that had vacated the premises.

Bond Release Requests

The Planning Board was presented with a bond release request regarding the Village at Canter Brook Farm, the Senior Housing project located at 354 Highland Street. On October 11, 2022, all remaining bond funds were released in a vote by the Board as all project elements were found by staff to have been installed per approved plans.

Storm Water Management Permit Requests

Two applications for Storm Water Management Permits were before the Board in 2022. One was filed by Chebacco Hill Capital Partners, LLC and the other was filed by Summit Real Estate Strategies, LLC. The Board denied the permit application for the 133 Essex Street project in conjunction with the denial of the special permit. In early 2022, Summit Real Estate Strategies presented the Board with an application for Lot 1 of the 19.75 acres sold by Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, which property was divided into nine (9) lots known as 0 Bridge Street. The applicant later retracted its application and modified its project to purportedly to avoid triggering the 1-acre filing threshold criteria included in Ch. XXIX of the General Town Bylaw.

Form A - Approval Not Required (ANR) Reviews

In accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 41, § 81, the Planning Board performed one Form A – ANR review during FY 2023. The review was for 300 Bridge Street, a property in the R1-B district. The purpose was to create a new lot fronting onto Bridge Street which was to be transferred to a neighbor.

Miscellaneous Board Special Projects, Discussions & Action Items

Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Rezoning

The Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) announced plans to offer all or a portion of its property for sale. This possibility has generated a desire by the Town to modify the existing R1-B zoning of the property which is presently subject to the Dover Amendment, a provision of state law that applies to religious and educational institutions. The purpose of the rezoning is to allow for a more economically beneficial use of the 102-acre site which is now tax exempt and provides no economic benefit to the Town. The Planning Board, in concert with Town staff and consultants (engaged and funded by both the Town and GCTS), has been working toward zoning solutions that will permit development of the property. Planning Board members have been working prodigiously toward a mixed-use approach with input from GCTS and abutters, holding 23 separate meetings focused on a future vision for the campus that responds to market conditions, abutter concerns and Seminary desires for market flexibility. It is anticipated that the Planning Board and the Select Board will report on the proposed new zoning bylaw and map change with a companion development agreement at fall Town meeting in November 2023, while a new zoning package is expected to be before the voters at the Annual Town meeting in the spring of 2024.

Other Zoning and Zoning Map Changes

The Board continues to discuss numerous elements of the existing Hamilton Zoning Bylaw which could be improved. Possibilities include changing the zoning designation or developing a form-based code for the downtown and particularly land area north of the Crossroads Shopping Center to include properties such as the Council on Aging/Senior Center property, the Public Safety Building and grounds, and, specifically, the Winthrop School Campus. It is anticipated that the Winthrop School Campus will eventually become surplus property and no longer be used by the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District. Other bylaw elements considered include the Groundwater Protection Overlay District text, and a flexible residential development bylaw. The Board deferred consideration of these zoning amendment possibilities to first allow a greater focus on Chebacco Hill Capital Partners, LLC's application regarding the Senior Housing Special Permit for 133 Essex Street and rezoning the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Campus, as well as understanding ramifications of the amendment to M.G.L. 40A, §3 regarding MBTA Communities discussed below.

Discussions Regarding State-Required MBTA Communities By-Right Residential Zoning

The Board has heard and briefly discussed with staff the Commonwealth's newly required by-right residential zoning which is expected of all communities served by the MBTA. The state has imposed this requirement to help generate more housing near MBTA stations and mass transit nodes. Hamilton, like other communities in eastern Massachusetts, is being required to allow for by-right residential zoning upon 50 acres of property within a half a mile from the MBTA Commuter Rail Station. The zoning amendment is required to be submitted to the Commonwealth by December 31, 2024. A

conceptual approach has been generated by the Planning & Inspections Director which would amend the existing downtown zoning to accommodate the by-right approach but impose building requirements as allowed by law. The rezoning may also extend to include the Winthrop School Campus and additional area to satisfy the requirements of the new law imposed on the Town. All ordinary procedural requirements will be followed to advance the zoning bylaw which will require a public process, including public hearings and a vote for approval at Town meeting. In the event the Town were to vote to reject the zoning amendments, certain state funding sources will become unavailable as a penalty.

Amendments to the Stormwater Management Bylaw

The Planning Board is recommending approval of a warrant governing amendments to Ch. XXIX at 2023 Fall Town meeting. Although the Regulations implementing the Bylaw were updated to meet state and federal requirements as recently as November 2021, the Planning Board has recognized that in some instances the existing Stormwater Management Bylaw is deficient. The Board discussed the Town bylaw within fiscal year 2023 a total of eleven (11) times. The Board's intent is to address sloped sites whose potential development would create unacceptable levels of impact on nearby properties and the environment both on-site and off-site. The Board has worked extensively with legal counsel to formulate appropriate changes to increase the effectiveness of the bylaw.

Easements

Easement complications have been discussed with the Planning Board. The many easements in Town bring both enjoyment to the public, but present legal issues. Horseback riding in much of Hamilton relies on keeping easements open and passable. Abutters and new owners who have purchased properties containing easements do not always welcome public presence. Many easements have not been officially recorded while maintenance and enforcement responsibilities are often clouded at best. The Planning Board recognizes that Town staff are not easement enforcement officers, but endeavors to provide notice to all interested parties to protect easements when appropriate.

Tree Hearings

As the Department of Public Works Director serves as the Town's Tree Warden, hearings are needed when tree clearing is necessary. Two such hearings occurred in fiscal year 2023 at which National Grid presented to the Board specific trees that were dead or badly diseased and needed to be removed to maintain continuous electrical service.

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Building Department enforces all of the provisions of the Massachusetts State Building Code, the Town of Hamilton Zoning Bylaws and Bylaws, State Statutes, and the Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, while assisting the public and reviewing all applications.

The Building Inspector Richard P. Maloney, the Assistant Building Inspector, Pete Swindell, the Electrical Inspector Denis Curran, the Assistant Electrical Inspector David Keenan, the Plumbing & Gas Fitting Inspector Kevin Dash and the Assistant Plumbing & Gas Inspector Dave Preen, inspect permitted work and it is their responsibility to ensure the work is compliant to the State Codes and the Town Bylaws.

The Inspectors are employed through a joint agreement between the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham. The Building Inspector is a full-time employee, the Plumbing & Gas Fitting Inspector and the Electrical Inspector are employed for under twenty hour per week. The Assistant Inspectors fill-in in the absence of an Inspector.

There were 429 Building Permits issued, 15 Sheet Metal Permits issued, 23 Generator Permits issued, 15 Mechanical Permits issued, 129 Gas Fitting Permits issued, 115 Plumbing Permits issued, and 252 Electrical Permits issued. Town of Hamilton property owners spent \$33,892,788.68 on construction costs and \$278,426.44 was collected for the Building Permits issued.

Permits were issued to construct new single family homes at 181 Bridge Street, 185 Bridge Street, 711 Bay Road and 29 Tally Ho Drive.

Local restaurants that serve alcohol are inspected annually by the Building Inspector and the Fire Inspector. The A.P. Gardner Post, Post Restaurant, Myopia Hunt Club, 15 Walnut Tavern, and the Weathervane Tavern were issued Certificates of Inspection. The Community House, the three daycare facilities located in the town, Pingree School, Winthrop Elementary, Cutler Elementary, Miles River Middle School and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School, were also inspected and issued Certificates of Inspection.

If a citizen has a concern or a complaint about a Hamilton property then a Complaint Investigation Form should be submitted to the Building Department. The form may be found on the Town website.

At the end of June 2023 the Building Department initiated PermitLink, the on-line permitting portal. The portal may be accessed by going to the Building Department webpage on the Town website. Then follow the arrows and links to PermitLink. There is a computer kiosk available for the public to submit a Permit Application at the Building Department.

The Building Department would like to thank Hamilton citizens and volunteers Sandy Barton and Ann Theriault for all of their assistance.

The Building Department is located at 299 Rear Bay Road; attached to the Council on Aging Building.

Richard P. Maloney, Building Inspector

Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspectional Services

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Sealer of Weights and Measures inspections are required by M.G.L. c. 98 and c. 295 of the Acts of 1998. The Inspector of Weights and Measures enforces laws regarding pricing and delivery which protects the citizens of Hamilton and those who visit the town. All commercially used measuring and weighing devices, such as gasoline meters, home heating oil trucks, scales, and scanners, are annually tested and certified by the Inspector of Weights and Measures as mandated. If a device is approved then a security seal will be attached. If a device is not approved the business cannot use the device until it is fixed or replaced. The Inspector also conducts random inspections. The Inspector of Weights and Measures will respond to all complaints about pricing, weight, and deliveries. If you have a concern or a question, please contact the Building Department at permitting@hamiltonma.gov or 978-626-5250.

The Inspector of Weights and Measures inspected, sealed, adjusted, or condemned, a total of 64 measuring units. Fees totaling \$2,280.00 were billed.

Crosby's Market	16 devices	\$500.00
A&M Motors	16 devices	\$560.00
Welch & Lamson Inc.	2 devices	\$180.00
Hamilton Convenience	8 devices	\$280.00
CVS	2 devices	\$50.00
Cumberland Farms	14 devices	\$490.00
Beth Israel Lahey Family Medicine Associates	4 devices	\$170.00
Connolly's Pharmacy	2 devices	\$50.00

Meadow Brook Farm – Per the owner, new scales will be purchased in 2024 due to the fact the old devices did not pass inspection.

Leonard Rose, Inspector of Weights and Measures
Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspectional Services

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals Meetings are typically held in the evening on the first Wednesday evening of the month.

The Board Members are appointed by the Select Board and have all the powers, and perform all of the duties, as stated in Massachusetts General Laws, and the Town of Hamilton Zoning Bylaws. The Board Members were William Bowler, Bruce Gingrich, and David Perinchief. The Associate Members were Steven Derocher and Andrea Philip.

The Board reviewed nineteen applications for Findings of Fact, Special Permits, or Variances, and two applications to hear and decide on an Appeal of a Decision by the Building Inspector. A majority of the applications were approved, or approved with conditions. On a few occasions the Applicant requested to withdraw their application and the Board approved these requests without prejudice. No application was denied.

Six of the Special Permit Applications were for an Accessory Apartment. Under Zoning Bylaw 3.6. approval for an Accessory Apartment is not transferable at the sale of a property and the property must be owner occupied.

The Public Hearing for Comprehensive Permit Application for the property located at 466 Highland Street was first opened on July 7, 2021, continued into 2022, and then, on March 1, 2023, the Board granted the Special Permit under Chapter 40B for Harborlight Community Partners to construct 45 Units.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Inc., located at 130 Essex Street applied for a Variance from the lot area requirements in Zoning Bylaw Section 4.1 in order to create 3 lots, pursuant to ZB Section 5.3.2.1 and Findings of Fact under ZB Section 5.2 for a Change of Use from student housing to multi-family dwelling, and under ZB Section 5.3.1.2 in order to construct three additions to the existing multi-family dwellings which had historically been used for student housing. The Public Hearing was continued to numerous Public Meetings until the applicants asked to withdraw their application and the Board Members accepted this request without prejudice.

In June, Chair William Bowler resigned after serving on the Board for nearly two decades. Thank you Bill for your steadfast dedication to the Town of Hamilton.

The Zoning Bylaws may be found on the Town website: hamiltonma.gov. The Board is assisted by the Building Inspector Richard Maloney and the Administrative Assistant Mary-Ellen L. Feener. You may contact them regarding any Board business or questions about Zoning at permitting@hamiltonma.gov or 978-626-5250. Also the Building Department has moved from Town Hall and is located at 299 Rear Bay Road; attached to the Council on Aging Building.

Bruce Gingrich, Chair

Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspectional Services

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Hamilton Conservation Commission's primary task is the administration and enforcement of the state Wetlands Protection Act (Ch. 131 §40) and the Town's Conservation By-Law, Chapter 17 of the Town's General Bylaws.

Conservation Commission jurisdiction and procedure

The Commission's jurisdiction includes all proposed changes in land use within the borders of the Town which will occur within defined wetlands or within 100 feet of the defined edge of wetlands, or within 200 feet of perennial streams and rivers. The Commission considers applications (known as "Requests for Determination" and also "Notices of Intent") for work in these areas at public meetings and/or public hearings. The Commission or the Commission Coordinator holds site walks to review conditions at the proposed work area. The Commission then decides if a permit (either a "Negative Determination" or an "Order of Conditions") shall be issued. Once a project is completed, the Commission reviews post project conditions to establish that the project was finished in the same manner as it was originally proposed and that no damage to resource areas has occurred. A Certificate of Compliance is then issued and the process is complete. The Commission also investigates violations of the Wetlands Act and local Conservation By-Law and the Commission issues Enforcement Orders or Violation Notices if appropriate.

Aside from conducting public hearings and holding open public meetings to review and analyze the various applications, the Commission, through their Coordinator, may on any given day do any or all of the following:

- Respond to residents' questions and concerns about wetlands permitting
- Conduct preliminary site evaluations to determine applicability of jurisdiction
- Perform various compliance inspections
- Reply to building contractor and wetlands consultant questions and concerns
- Interact with various state agencies most notably the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection
- Work with the other Town departments to address issues of common concern

2023 Noteworthy Events

- An update to the Wetland By-Law was drafted and presented at two public meetings and at meetings of FinCom and the Planning Board, before being passed at Town Meeting. The new By-Law incorporates the substance of Hamilton's then-existing Regulations, and follows the format of the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions Model By-Law.
- Brian Collieran left his 19-hour per week position as Conservation Agent at the end of the year.

2023 Filings & Other Regulatory Decisions

6 Requests for Determination

8 Orders of Conditions and Orders of Resource Area Delineation

8 Extensions of Existing Orders of Conditions

0 Amendments to an Existing Order of Conditions

8 Certificates of Compliance

6 Violations / Enforcement Orders

0 Emergency Permit

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Farr, Conservation Coordinator

Conservation Commissioners

Lauren Lynch, chair

Kathy Simons

Sandy Coddling

Deb Thompson

Virginia Cookson



REPORT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT – 2023

To the Honorable Select Board and Citizens of Hamilton:

I am pleased to offer you this annual report highlighting the activities and accomplishments of your Police Department during the calendar year of 2023.

This past year proved to be a busy year for the police department. We reviewed and updated our entire policy manual to comply with the new sixth edition accreditation standards set forth by the Massachusetts Accreditation Commission. We have been a fully accredited police department since 2012 and will be ready for our triannual reaccreditation assessment in 2024. We are currently in compliance with all the standards required by the Massachusetts's Police Officer Standards and Training Commission (POST) and this past July, we successfully initiated a Body Worn Camera Program with funding received from state and federal grants.

We have, and always will, welcome and encourage citizen interaction and we look forward to all of your comments. The philosophy of the Hamilton Police Department is that of preventing crime and being proactive while maintain a high quality of life for the people for which we serve. We remain committed to utilizing a Community Orientated Policing approach in dealing with the calls for service we receive every day. Working together with citizens, businesses, schools and civic organizations, the Hamilton Police Department is building partnerships for a safer community.

During 2023, we held several community events and public safety related classes to include;

- Citizens Police Academy
- Public Safety Day
- Public Safety Food Drive
- Silver Alert Program
- RAD Training
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)
- Autism Awareness Month (April)
- Bike Safety Awareness, Ride Walk to School Day
- High School Internship Program

As in years past, I have had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with many of you regarding concerns you would like to see addressed. Because of these discussions, I continue to gain better insight into the town and am able to address many of the issues presented. We continue to work diligently with other Federal, State and Local law enforcement agencies as well as the District Attorney's Office in an effort to thwart criminal activity and provide a safe community for our citizens.

We continue to work efficiently and effectively with other departments within the town in an effort to maximize resources while minimizing costs. We are always exploring ways to provide better services to our residents while reducing overall spending.

As Chief of Police, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the men and women who make up our Public Safety Team and would like to thank all of the police officers and dispatchers for their dedication and compassion as they perform their duties each day.

We will continue to provide Hamilton residents and guests with the highest level of professional law enforcement services possible. We will strive for crime reduction through proven techniques and approaches. Solving quality of life issues and working closely with the public is our goal.

On behalf of the Public Safety Team, we remain thankful to our residents for their unwavering support and for their endless acts of appreciation shown to us throughout the year. Please know that we remain committed to providing you with the best services possible and look forward to serving you in 2023.

Classification	2023
Motor Vehicle Citations Warnings	288
Motor Vehicle Citations Civil	40
Motor Vehicle Citations Criminal Complaints	100
Motor Vehicle Citation Arrests	5
Operating Under the Influence	2
Motor Vehicle Verbal	1253
Parking Tickets	9
Motor Vehicle Accidents Total	95
Motor Vehicle Accidents Investigated	80
Crimes Against Persons	28
Crimes Against Property	58
Crimes Against Society	33
Municipal Citations	0
Animal Calls	386
Medical Calls	499
Alarms	151
Pistol Permits/FID Cards.	86
Total Arrests	73
Traffic Stops	1255
Total Calls for Service	19,043

Respectfully submitted,

Russell M. Stevens

Russell M. Stevens

Chief of Police



FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire department continues to provide quality customer care to the residents of Hamilton. We provide a wide range of services designed to protect the lives and properties against all types of emergencies, whether that be from fires, medicals, manmade and/or natural disasters. My staff and I are always striving to be better as an organization by honing our skills through training and professional development programs.

Last fiscal year the fire department focused its efforts on starting a fire based ambulance service. We made great strides towards achieving this initiative and will continue with this in FY24. At the present time, I am searching for a well maintained used ambulance to purchase for this project.

2023 Achievements

- For the fourth year in a row, we hosted the Massachusetts Call and Volunteer Recruit Firefighter class. Two of our own firefighters graduated with the class on March 1, 2023.
- For the second year in a row, the department submitted a grant application to the Department of Fire Services for an equipment grant and we were once again successful in this endeavor. On December 9, 2022, we received our award letter from the Governor's office, informing us we would be receiving \$15,500.00 to purchase new firefighting equipment.
- At this year's budget hearing meeting, we were able to show the need for an additional full-time Deputy. This new hire will be responsible for assisting with, planning, directing, managing, and overseeing the daily activities of the fire department as well as responding to emergency responses 24/7.



Andre Mezza and Matthew Enos, Graduation from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Wednesday, March 1, 2023.

Staffing

The Hamilton Fire Department is a combination department comprised of a mix of full-time and part-time staff. We currently have 5 full-time and 28 part-time firefighters, along with a part time mechanic that assist the residents of Hamilton. Our staff responds to all types of emergencies, whenever there is a need for our services (24/7).

New Recruits

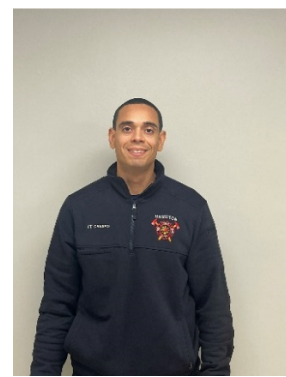
This was the fifth year for our call firefighter recruitment campaign. By the using of social media in conjunction with the Town's signboard, we were once again able to hire new call firefighters to the fire department. This time around we hired three applicants that started on June 30, 2023. They were subsequently enrolled in the firefighting recruit program, which started on October 16, 2023.



Brandon Becker



Jeremy Clark



Alex Crespo

Robert Cross was enrolled in the FY23 recruit program, unfortunately he was injured and couldn't finish the academy class. We were able to reenroll Robert in the FY24 class and he finish his training along with our newest hires.



Robert Cross

HAMILTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
FY2023 Personnel Roster

NAME	RANK	Status	DEPT#	Year of Service
Raymond Brunet	Fire Chief	(FT)	(C-1)	33 years
Andrew Ellison	Captain	(PT)	(C-2)	22 years
Robert Wallace	Lieutenant	(FT)	(C-3)	11 years
David Dolan	Lieutenant	(PT)	(C-4)	17 years
Ryan Goodwin	Lieutenant	(PT)	(C-5)	17 years
Dave Raymond	Lieutenant	(PT)	(C-6)	8 years
Marc Anderson	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-13)	3 years
Ross Appleton	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-13)	4.2 years
Cameron Borrelli	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-26)	2 years
Wesley Buckley	Firefighter	(PT)	(F25)	2 years
Jesse Cook	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-23)	2 years
Robert Cross	Probationary	(PT)	(F-29)	1 year
Alex Dale	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-6)	11 years
Laura Dixon	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-22)	2 years
Jared Dolan	Firefighter	(FT)	(F-4)	14 years
Colt Donahue	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-18)	5 years
Kristine Ellis	Firefighter	(FT)	(F-3)	19 years
Mathew Enos	Probationary	(PT)	(F-30)	1 year
Timothy Everitt	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-10)	6 years
Jerome Frontiero	Fire Mechanic	(PT)	(M-1)	9 years
Dan Grew	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-12)	4 years
Dane Jorgensen	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-19)	3 years
Kim Maguire	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-16)	3 years
Dan McCormack	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-15)	4 years
Andrew Mezza	Probationary	(PT)	(F-28)	1 year
Justin Mullen	Firefighter	(FT)	(F-7)	9.years
Dustin O'Neill	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-30)	1 year
Chris Raymond	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-11)	6 years
Scott Seiler	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-14)	4 years
Andrew Smith	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-20)	3 years
Benjamin Tuneburg	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-5)	15 years
Rick Villa	Firefighter	(PT)	(F-17)	6 years
Glen Preston	Firefighter Instructor	(PT)	(F-2)	29 years
Kevin Baird	Chaplain	(Volunteer)		9 Years

INCIDENTS – FY2023

NFPA Survey	
Residential Fires (1-5)	14
Other Fires School & Colleges (6-12)	6
Outside & other Fires (14a-17)	10
Rescue/Medical Aids/EMS (20)	823
Fire Alarm responses (21)	407
Mutual Aid Responses (22)	52
Hazardous Material Responses (23a)	19
Other Hazardous Materials (23b)	15
<u>All other Responses (24)</u>	<u>131</u>
Total Fire Calls	654
Emergency Medical Calls	823
TOTAL CALLS:	1477

Training

The Hamilton Fire Department strives to be professional. We hold monthly training drills for our members in order to keep our firefighter skills sharp and current with the latest technologies. We were proud to also hold a certified fire instructor class last fall, which is a prerequisite to the officer class. In addition we held the fire officers class to complete the series of training, which was held in the spring of 2023. Now all our fire officer are National Certification as Fire Instructors and Fire Officers.

This is the Fourth year that we have hosted the Call/Volunteer Recruit Program here in Hamilton. By having the class in our station, not only does it makes it easier on our recruits, it also helps local departments as well. Each recruit must, complete the sixteen-week class designed to teach them the basic skills of firefighting. Once they have completed this course and have graduated, they will have earned their National Firefighter 1&2 Certifications.as I mentioned before, we enrolled three of our newest firefighters in this class.

Equipment:

2017 Pierce Impel 1500 gallon per minute pumper, “Engine 1”
1985 International Ranger Pumper, “Engine 2”
2004 Pierce Saber, 1250 GPM Pumper, “Engine 3”
2014 Pierce Impel Quint Pumper & Ladder, “Ladder 4”
2022 Ford F-550 Brush truck, “Squad 5”
2020 F-350 Utility Pick up Chiefs Truck,” Squad 7”
2014 F-250 Utility Pick up/Non transporting Ambulance, “Squad 8”
1994 E350 Support Utility Van “506”

New apparatus ordered

After a year and half of delays, Squad 5 was finished. The cab was delivered to us from MHQ, our local municipal vehicle dealer, on October of 2021. It was then scheduled to go CET in Canada, to have the utility body and pump installed However, once it arrive it was stored in the station because of COVID 19 delays. The vehicle was finally picked up and the retrofit was under way in August of 2022, at CET. The Mechanic, Jay Frontiero and the Fire Chief, Raymond Brunet went to Canada to pick up the finished Squad on December 8, 2022.



Apparatus ordered

After the voters approved the purchase of a new frontline apparatus, on April 6, 2023 Joseph J. Domelowics Jr, the Town Manager, signed the contract to build and replacement our existing E3.

This new vehicle will be taking the place of a twenty two year old fire truck that is well past its front line use, per Nation Fire Protection Standards 1901. Due to delays from COVID 19, this new fire engine will take approximately twenty four months to be build and deliver. As of right now we are looking at a delivery date of August of 2025.

NEWLY CONTRACTED

2023




HAMILTON, MA FIRE DEPARTMENT
Enforcer 1500gpm, 750 Gallon Pumper

Fire Prevention

The department has been work with the Elementary, Middle, High and the Pingree schools training students in the new ASHR program. The Hamilton Fire Dept. continues to develop and fine tune our active shooter response guidelines. Monthly meetings are held with Hamilton PD, Wenham PD and Fire, as well as representatives from the schools, EMS and the dispatchers. Recent meetings are leading up to a multi- agency drill in March. The drill will take place at Pingree School. The purpose is to merge skills learned through classes and training in a “real world” scenario based drill. Police, Fire, and EMS will take previous lessons and apply them as a team in a controlled scenario mimicking an actual event. This drill will also help acclimate first responders

to buildings they do not often have cause to access. Hamilton Fire also continues to inform students of all levels about the best ways to handle an incident that they hopefully never experience. The Fire Dept. is working closely with SRO Bertelli in educating both teachers and students on using these skills anywhere, not just in school.

The Hamilton Fire Department continues to offer a smoke/carbon monoxide detector program to our seniors. In cooperation with the Council on Aging, we replaced old detectors with new ones at no cost. We also provided and installed lock boxes in senior's homes as well. Many seniors have taken advantage of this program since its inception. We will continue this program for as long as possible.

The increased need for housing in the area has brought us more construction than we have seen in quite some time. Development projects like 434 Asbury Street "Habitat for Humanity Project"; 133 Essex Street "Chebacco Woods" and the Bridge Street Development "The side of Gordon Conwell Hill" projects have taken up a lot of our time. The fire prevention office has conducted plan reviews, zoom meetings for pre-construction conferences, along with the regular inspections. We continue to provide an array of permits along with smoke & carbon monoxide detector inspections, propane tank installations, oil tank removals & installs, etc.

Prevention Stats

Permits – 377
Inspections – 361
Plan Review – 30
Public Education – 25
Fire Drills and/or lock downs – 44
Fire Prevention Programs – 10

Open Burning

Open burning season runs from January 15 to May 1, 2023. We kept our permit fees the same as last year, \$20 for the season with a discounted rate of \$10 for senior citizens. There are still some agricultural permits issued to qualifying farms in the area, however, the EPA has started to restrict these activities. We currently have five agricultural burning permit holders left within the town. With the Fire Chief's approval, these farms can burn year round as long as weather conditions are favorable.

- Open Burning Permits - 242
- Agricultural Permits - 5

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Raymond A. Brunet

Raymond A. Brunet
Fire Chief / EMD



Please follow us at the Hamilton Fire department page and/or Facebook.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Department of Public Works employees continue to perform their many and varied functions and continue to provide public services to the residents and other departments. Fiscal Year 2023 included the following highlights:

ADMINISTRATION

DPW Staff

Internally in the DPW, Richie Campana, a Truck Driver/Laborer in the Highway Department, transferred to the Hamilton Cemetery to fill the new position of Cemetery Truck Driver/Laborer. With Richie transferring from Highway the DPW hired Robert Preston as a Truck Driver/Laborer in the Highway Department.

Annual Reporting

The Town of Hamilton has maintained compliance with all the annual reporting required by MassDEP. Reports include the Water Annual Statistics Report (ASR), the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), and the Solid Waste Survey.

FACILITIES

Hamilton Town Hall Preservation Project

After failing twice at the election polls for a debt exclusion to fund the Hamilton Town Hall Preservation Project, the town has taken some time over the last several months to focus on the high priorities of the preservation project. The Town has continued to work with the Architect in efforts to redefine a scope of work that includes addressing the code violations, historic preservation, and associated components. Many of the original components of the original project will be included in the reduced scope such as building accessibility, structural, fire protection, exterior envelope, electrical, and plumbing upgrades. Of the items removed, the building systems were the most costly. The town made the decision to issue out a Request for Qualifications for an Energy Management Company that will perform an energy audit on Town Hall in hopes of finding building system de-carbonization alternatives under MGL 25A. Items to be studied will be the HVAC system, lighting, and potential for a geo-thermal heat source. If the audit comes in favorably for Hamilton, the Energy Management Company will assist the town in applying for grants to fund the designed systems. The two projects, running in parallel, will provide the town with the overall project, within the funding available.

Hamilton Fuel Facility

Hamilton Public Works has continued to pursue a new fuel facility in the Hamilton DPW yard. DPW was able to secure the funding required to design and construct the facility in FY24. The facility will be constructed in the rear of the DPW yard to allow other departments to utilize the facility with limited impact to DPW. The construction is planned for late fall/early winter of 2023.

DPW Garage Bay Door Replacement

The Hamilton Public Works Department procured new overhead bay doors for the DPW Garage behind Town Hall. Work is scheduled for the fall 2023 and will include all new doors, tracks, operators, and weather-stripping.

DPW Garage Roof

The DPW Garage behind Town Hall received a new rubber membrane roof, replacing an old gravel tar roof that was prone to leakage. The new roof project included repairs to the wood decking, insulation, and rubber membrane all with a 20 year warranty.

HIGHWAY

Chebacco Road Reconstruction

In FY23, the design plans were revised to include the roadway in its current footprint. In addition, plan updates also included increased stormwater and runoff controls and public safety and traffic calming measures along the roadway. The revised project was planned to be advertised in the winter of 2022, but was delayed due to permitting. The project is now planned to be advertised in July 2023 with construction to begin in the fall of 2023 and be completed in the spring of 2024.

Tree Maintenance

DPW issued a new Tree Services contract for FY24 and Cicoria Tree & Crane Services received the bid award. DPW will continue to perform routine tree maintenance and remove diseased and hazardous trees. In FY23 National Grid again provided multiple rounds of tree clearing under the National Grid Hazard Tree Mitigation Program. Both programs have proven successful in limiting the frequency and duration of power outages town wide.

STORMWATER

NPDES MS4 Permit Compliance

The Town of Hamilton is regulated under the EPA Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit for their stormwater system. As part of Permit Year 5 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), the Town continued to implement a public education and outreach program and encouraged public involvement and participation through their annual Hazardous Waste drop off day. The Town's Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program continued this permit year by conducting investigations to determine if/where potential illicit connections may be in the Town's stormwater system. The Town also continued their annual requirements of catch basin investigations/cleanings, street sweeping, and quarterly inspections of the DPW garage. Lastly, the Town's Stormwater Management Plan was updated and uploaded onto the Town's website. The Town will continue to implement and improve Best Management Practices over the permit term to protect water quality and reduce the discharge of pollutants into the stormwater system.

CEMETERY

Cemetery Restoration and Treatment

The Hamilton DPW continued efforts in FY23 in the Hamilton Cemetery by restoring 50,000 square feet of damaged grass and soil and replaced with new topsoil and seed. This large area was heavily damaged by grubs and was in need of a full restoration. The treatment and techniques performed over the last few years have proven to be successful in transforming the area back into the well-preserved sacred grounds.

SANITATION

Waste Collection

The Town continues to provide scheduled leaf pick-ups in the fall and spring and continues to provide monthly E-Waste drop off events to allow residents to leave: monitors, televisions, computers, white goods, etc. for a small fee at Town Hall.

Household Hazardous Waste Day

The annual Household Hazardous Waste Day was held on October 22nd, 2022 and nearly 100 vehicles brought close to 1,000 pounds of waste for disposal.

Recycle Dividends Program (RDP)

The Department of Public Works continues to prepare solid waste annual reports to MassDEP to receive state funding through the annual Recycle Dividends Program “RDP” which has allowed the Town to purchase solid waste and recycling materials as well as pay for printing and postage for Townwide educational mailers.

Hamilton Landfill Environmental Monitoring

On behalf of the Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts, CDM Smith conduct semi-annual groundwater, surface water and sediment monitoring and quarterly landfill gas monitoring at the Hamilton Landfill located on Chebacco Road in Hamilton, Massachusetts. The landfill monitoring is conducted in accordance with the Post-Closure Monitoring Plan, which was approved by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) on May 16, 2018. The monitoring is also conducted to satisfy the monitoring requirements of the Massachusetts Solid Waste Management Regulations (310 CMR 19.132). The semi-annual groundwater, surface water and sediment monitoring results and quarterly landfill gas monitoring results are documented in semi-annual and quarterly reports and provided to MassDEP in accordance with 310 CMR 19.132.

Mattress Recycling

On November 1, 2022, mattresses were no longer allowed in the trash collection. New Massachusetts state rules require mattresses be kept out of the trash, so they can be recycled or donated for reuse. In order to comply, the Town of Hamilton implemented a curbside mattress program for Hamilton residents. The program requires residents to pre-purchase a “Mattress” sticker at the Hamilton Department of Public Works. Mattresses would then be collected curbside by our hauler, Casella Waste Systems every other Thursday and Casella would transport them to a local recycling facility.

WATER ENTERPRISE

Water Treatment Plant (WTP) GAC Filtration Project

The construction of the new GAC Facility at the Town’s existing water treatment plant which was awarded back in January 2022 continued throughout the year. Based on relocating the new GAC Facility downstream of the existing plant per the results of the completed pilot study, the new GAC Facility will now remove TOCs along with TTHMs formed through the treatment processes at the existing plant. As of November 2023, most of the work has been completed including the new pre-engineered metal building, GAC adsorption vessels, new chemical feed system, process piping, electrical and mechanical systems, controls, site work and restoration. The new GAC media has been loaded and is in the process

of being conditioned per the manufacturer's requirements. The facility should be ready for startup and final inspection by December. Upon approval by MassDEP, the facility will be placed into service.

Future Supply Connection with the Salem Beverly Water Supply Board (SBWSB)

In July 2022, Hamilton completed a WMA grant study that evaluated alternative sources to improve its ability to supply potable drinking water to its residents during times of below normal precipitation conditions where withdrawals from the Ipswich River Basin are limited and provide flexibility in operating the Idlewood wellfields. Based on the recommendations of the study, Hamilton has begun the process of discussing options with Wenham and the SBWSB on how best to deliver supply from the SBWSB through Wenham and into Hamilton. We are also evaluating the option of constructing a new pipeline to connect directly to the SBWSB per the findings of the WMA study to allow additional supply to be available as needed.

Backflow Preventer/Meter Vault for Asbury Grove

To address a potential cross-connection concern with the Town's supply connection to Asbury Grove, the Town completed the installation of a new 6-inch backflow preventer device and new 6-inch compound water meter on the existing main serving the area. The new equipment was installed within a new pre-cast concrete vault and replaced the older water meter and manhole. The new device will protect the Town's drinking water from any contamination that may occur within the privately-owned Asbury Grove system.

GIS/Asset Management System

The potable water system operated and maintained by Hamilton serves approximately 7,800 people and currently includes six (6) groundwater supplies, one (1) storage tank, two (2) water treatment plants, and approximately 54 miles of distribution piping. The Town uses GIS and work order management software on a limited basis to assist with managing its water system. The Town is in the process of upgrading its GIS and asset management capabilities to a more comprehensive and accessible system that staff can use for future data collection, planning, maintenance, and design purposes. The Town will first start with its water system as it is already in a GIS-compatible format which can be used to establish a base plan for building the new GIS/Asset management program. Field reconnaissance work will also be needed to verify the actual location of hydrants, valves, and services. The first phase of the project is completed including the development of the GIS base plan for the major water system components based on record drawings. Field work is scheduled to begin in the next month to collect missing information and to adjust the location of valves and hydrants as needed to reflect existing conditions.

Well Maintenance

The Caisson Satellite and Idlewood 1 Satellite was serviced and redeveloped in FY23. These wells were brought back on-line following the service work and producing optimum withdrawal to satisfy the water demand of the Town. With the substantial drought conditions in the summer of FY23, our well sources were taxed to deliver the quality and quantity to service Hamilton.

WATER LEAD AND COPPER ASSESSMENT

The Town has contracted with Stantec to complete an initial water service line inventory in response to the EPA's recent Lead and Copper Rule Revisions. These revisions require public water systems (PWS)

to document the material of both the customer and public side of each water service line within its service area. The water shutoff valve or property line are typically the point of delineation between public and private side of the water service.

The Water Department has long relied upon paper records and books with historical water service information used primarily for locating services and the shutoff valve. In some cases, service line materials were documented within this historical information. Stantec worked with the Water Department to locate, scan and digitize all of the available water service records to not only begin setup of the electronic service line inventory, but also provide valuable electronic copies and collections of the service information that will make retrieval and use in the field much easier for years to come. In combination with the digitized service records, Stantec is also preparing a geospatial map of service lines relative to parcels in order to optimize the data management and seek trends in service line materials over age and geography.

While gaps in service line materials remain due to an absence of fully documented material within historical records, preliminary results indicate little to no lead service lines in the system between the house and the water main. Confirming the unknown service line materials in the system is the next step in the process before submitting a final service line inventory to EPA/MassDEP on or before the due date of October 16, 2024.

The Hamilton Water Department will be requesting participation by customers to assist with the evaluation of residents “private” portion of the water service. More information will be sent in the February and May water bill.

ENERGY MANAGER

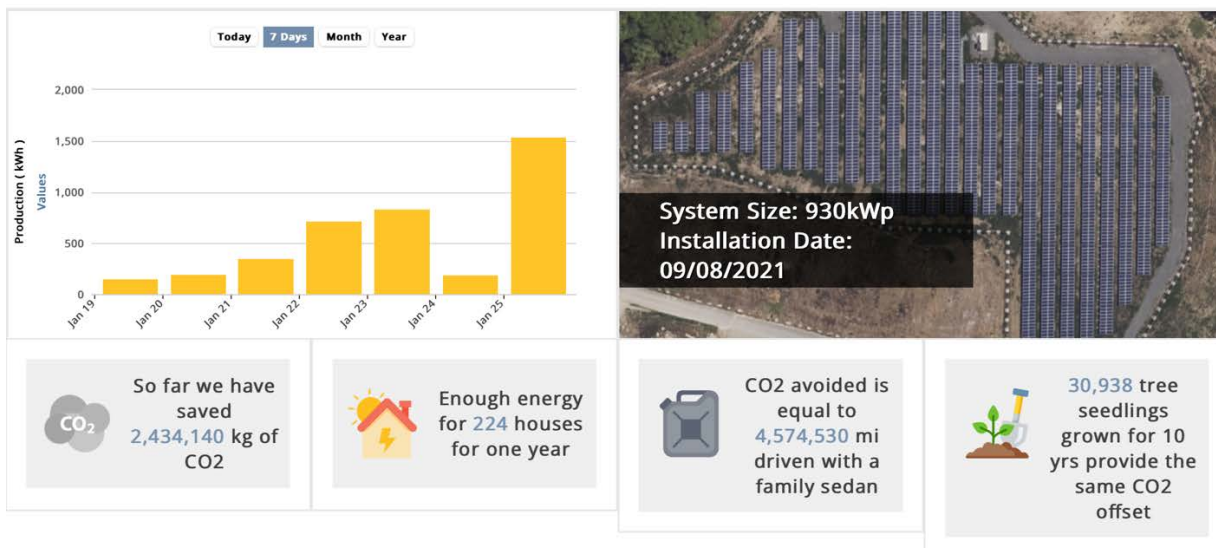
The Energy Manager position is shared between the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham and the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District. The Energy Manager position is currently funded for up to 7 hours per week total. The Energy Manager is responsible for a number of ongoing tasks in addition to specific project work. Primarily, the Energy Manager is responsible to continually measure and monitor the comprehensive energy use at all municipal facilities in the Town of Hamilton. This task allows the Town to measure the performance of completed energy efficiency projects and identify opportunities for future projects. The Energy Manager also serves as a liaison between municipal Departments to facilitate energy projects, and routinely works with the Town Manager, the Finance Director, the Public Works Department, the Facilities Department of the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) and various other branches of municipal government. Finally, the Energy Manager serves as a primary contact point for state agencies on energy grant programs and other energy initiatives.

The Energy Manager oversaw a number of projects in FY23. A brief summary of each project is presented under each project heading below.

Land-Based Solar on Capped Landfill

The 0.93 MW land-based solar PV array on the Town's municipal landfill on Chebacco Road continued to generate renewable energy credits in FY23. The system is owned and operated by Greenbacker Capital, and the Town is under a 20-year Power Purchase Agreement to purchase all of the electricity that the array produces. The utility, National Grid, then applies credits for every kWh that the array produces to offset the Town's various municipal electricity bills. The power is sold to the Town for \$0.02 less than the value of the National Grid credits. The array generated 1,167,050 kWh in FY23, generating \$23,341 in savings to the Town. The Town also collects a PILOT of \$11,141 from Greenbacker Capital annually. The array covered 100% of the Town's municipal electricity use in FY23. The system can be monitored in real-time at: <https://dashboard-portal.solarpark-online.com/index.php?uid=dYHNF3sv>

Hamilton MA Landfill



Green Community Designation and Grants

The Town of Hamilton was one of the first municipalities to be designated as a Green Community by MA DOER in 2010. The Energy Manager maintains the designation by preparing and submitting an Annual Report in November that includes energy tracking for the previous fiscal year for all municipal energy accounts, and presents a strategy for continuing to work towards reducing municipal energy use by 20% from the baseline year. During active grant projects, the Energy Manager prepares and submits quarterly reports to the granting agency, reimbursement requests, and a Final Report to close out the grant. To date the Town has reduced their municipal energy use by 19% since the baseline year of FY09.

The Town completed three energy efficiency projects in FY23 which were 100% grant funded through the Green Communities Program; two at the Hamilton Public Safety Building (PSB), and one on behalf of the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) at the Buker School. The Town must include 2/3 of HWRSD's energy use in their Green Communities reporting, so energy efficiency efforts in HWRSD facilities help the Town achieve their Green Communities goals. The PSB Weatherization and HVAC Optimization projects are estimated to save a total of 61,757 kWh in electricity and 4,049 therms of natural gas annually, for a total of \$18,019 annually. The Buker LED Lighting project is estimated to save 23,740 kWh in electricity for a total of \$4,748 annually.



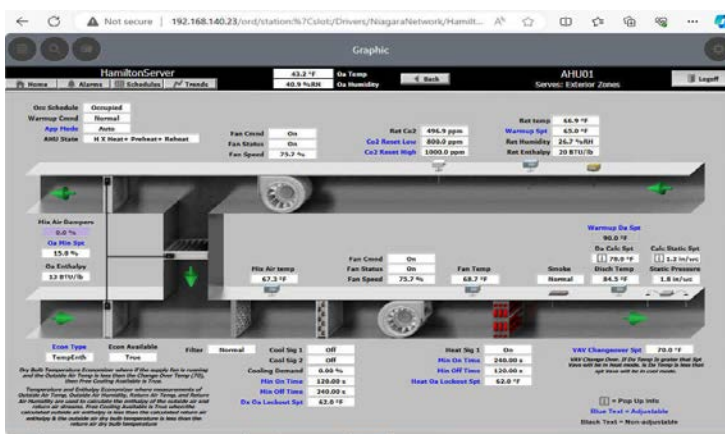
LED Lighting in Buker Gymnasium



LED Lighting in Buker Hallways



Two new VFDs at PSB for AHU-1



New User Interface for PSB HVAC System

Total grant funding received for these three projects was \$164,209. The Town also received energy efficiency rebates from National Grid for \$41,732; making the total project cost \$205,941. There was no out-of-pocket cost to the Town.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Patton Park

The Energy Manager applied for \$86,600 in grant funding for an electric vehicle (EV) DC Fast Charging (DCFC) station in the parking lot of Patton Park along Asbury St. through the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP) in April 2021. The Town received notice of grant award in May 2022, and the stations were installed and placed online by Voltrek and Hamilton DPW in April 2023. The grant funding was coupled with \$45,387 funding from National Grid and a \$10,000 Town contribution to total the full project amount of nearly \$142,000. The Hamilton Select Board approved a fee schedule for public use of the stations in July 2023. Going forward, the goal of the fees is to cover the cost to operate and maintain the stations, making them a budget-neutral amenity for folks in the Patton Park area. The fee structure also applies to the existing Level 2 EV Charging Station at Town Hall.



New DC Fast Chargers at Patton Park

Solar PV on Municipal Buildings

The roof replacement project at the Hamilton Wenham Library was completed in Fall 2022, and the 140 kW DC rooftop solar array was installed and placed online on December 12, 2022. The system was installed and is owned and operated by Solect Energy. The partnership with Solect is similar to that at the landfill; the Town entered into a PPA whereby the Town will purchase all of the power generated by the array to offset its municipal energy use at the Library at \$0.126/kWh. The array is expected to generate 151,953 kWh and save the Town \$3,000 annually. The Town will also collect a \$1,600 PILOT payment annually. For the partial year it was operating in FY23, the array generated 48,4467 kWh of electricity, offsetting 33% of the electrical use at the Library.



Rooftop Solar PV Array on Roof of HW Library

The Energy Manager engaged Solect Energy to evaluate the DPW garage roof for solar beginning in Fall 2022, after the roof replacement project at the building was complete. The Town signed a Letter of Intent to partner with Solect in January 2023. Because the DPW garage does not have a high electricity demand, the system would be tied into the Town Hall building through an underground conduit, allowing it to operate “behind the meter” at Town Hall. This would offset the Town Hall’s electricity use, similar to the arrangement at the Library. Solect was instructed to maximize the size of the system, given the upcoming Town Hall Renovation Project which will result in a higher electricity demand. Solect presented a preliminary design in February 2023, however, the project got placed into a “Group Study” by National Grid which has the potential to delay the project out into 2025. Should the project get built, the Town will be locked into a rate of \$0.195/kWh for the contract term of 20 years.



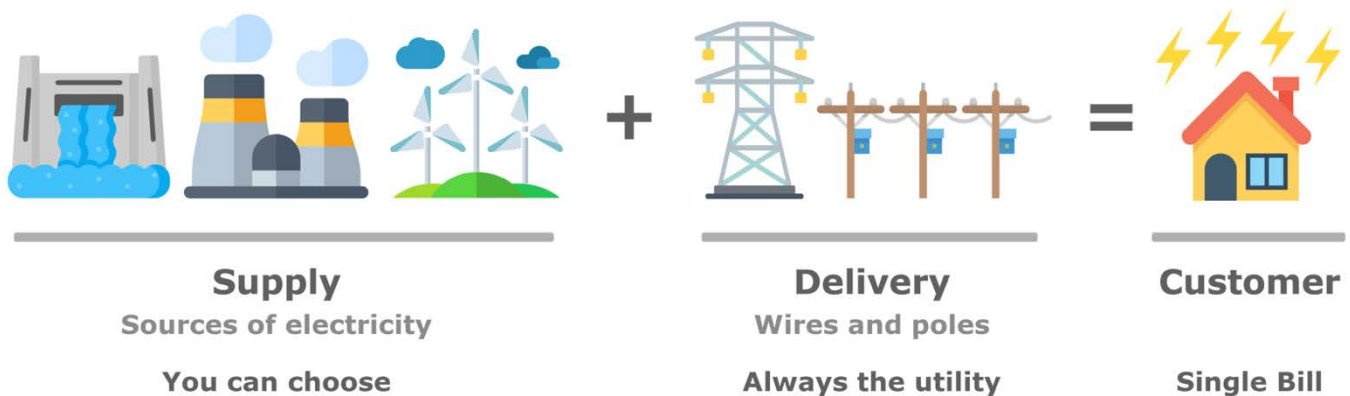
Preliminary Design of 46 kW Solar Array on DPW Roof

Competitive Energy Supply

For the eighth year in a row, the Energy Manager has overseen Competitive Energy Supply Agreements for electricity for the Town. The Town's contract for electricity supply in place during FY23 was set to expire in December 2023, so the Energy Manager began talks with energy brokers in early Summer 2023 to lock in rates for a new contract.

Community Energy Aggregation

The Energy Manager continues to monitor Hamilton's Community Choice Aggregation program; a bulk-buying program for electricity available to all Hamilton residents and businesses. The contract in effect during FY23 with Constellation is set to expire in December 2023. The Energy Manager began talks with the broker for this program, Good Energy, in Summer of 2023. Throughout FY23, the Town was under contract with Constellation who offers a 50% additional renewable energy product in addition to the Basic (0% additional) and 100% Local Green products. Constellation's rate for residential service is locked in at \$0.11038/kWh as compared to the National Grid rate through November 1, 2023 of \$0.14115/kWh. Hamilton residents saved an average of \$1,023 annually on their electric bill in FY23 as a result of this program, primarily due to National Grid's astronomical Winter '22-'23 rate of \$0.33891/kWh. This program continues to give Hamilton residents more choices in their electricity supplier and % renewable content.



Aggregation Program Summary

Total Eligible Accounts at Program Launch in 2018: 2,569

Total Accounts Enrolled as of June 30, 2023: 2,268

Participation Percentage: **88%**

Program details available at: www.hamiltoncca.com

How do I join or leave program?

- o Opt-in or Opt-out online at www.hamiltoncca.com

Hamilton Environmental Impact Committee Liaison

Annual Town Meeting voted to adopt a Climate Resolution in Spring 2022, which asserts commitment from the Town to achieve certain climate goals, including becoming net-zero in their municipal operations by 2040. As a result of the Climate Resolution, the Town formed the Hamilton Environmental Impact Committee, who began meeting in January 2023. The Energy Manager is a liaison to this Town Committee who will work to achieve the Town's net-zero goals in a measurable way.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Program

The Energy Manager worked with the Town of Wenham, HWRSD, and a consultant to prepare a grant application to the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant program in Spring 2023. The proposed project consisted of preparation of a Climate Action Resiliency Plan and would have included a preliminary study of the Miles River Watershed as well as a roadmap to net-zero for Town operations. Unfortunately, the project was not selected for funding by the MVP reviewers.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria A. Masone, P.E., Energy Manager

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT COMMITTEE

In 2023 the Select Board established an advisory committee to be known as the Hamilton Environmental Impact Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to codify the Town of Hamilton's commitment to reducing our overall environmental impact and supporting the work towards our net zero carbon energy goal as outlined in the Hamilton-Wenham Climate Action Team Resolution.

The primary responsibilities of the Committee are to:

- Assess the environmental impact of climate change to understand how Hamilton can be more resilient to the coming change;
- Develop and coordinate a strategic plan that accomplishes our net zero carbon energy goal by 2040;
- Prioritize and recommend specific short- and long-term action items based on the results of our Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Study; and
- Serve as a liaison and representative for the interests and goals of the Town of Hamilton as it pertains to environmental initiatives relative to our regional and shared services.

While the primary purpose of this group is to guide our town towards our net zero carbon goals, the Committee will also be responsible for working with our Town Energy Manager to assess opportunities across a range of factors, including, but not limited to:

- **Conservation and efficiency:** Reducing energy use through conservation and efficiency measures (e.g. lowering thermostats in winter, adopting programmable lights and thermostats, LED lights, Energy Star rated appliances);
- **Alternative energy:** Replacing fossil fuels with non-carbon energy sources (solar, wind, etc.);
- **Infrastructure and fleet electrification:** Preventing the expansion of fossil fuel usage through "net zero" requirement; and
- **Waste management and composting:** Reducing our consumption of plastics and reliance on burning our waste through composting and alternative waste management efforts.

During 2023 the Committee worked closely with the Energy Manager on the following items:

Identify Hamilton's municipal carbon footprint as monitored by Massachusetts' Green Community Designation and Grant Program. Hamilton has been actively working with the Mass Green Communities program for grant funding for energy related projects since 2010. A key part of the funding program is the monitoring of energy reduction from our 2009 baseline measurement using the MassEnergyInsight tool provided by Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). The tool aggregates CO2 emissions from different energy sources; diesel, electricity, natural gas, and gasoline to measure the metric tons of CO2 (MTCO2e) emissions. You can visualize one (1) MTCO2e to be roughly the size of a small (27') hot air balloon. The initial commitment from the Town to the Green Communities Program in 2010 was to reduce municipal energy use by 20% in five years, that is, by 2015. The Town has achieved a 20% reduction in energy use as of 2023. HWRSD has realized a 7% increase in energy use as of 2023. Reduction in CO2 emissions has been achieved both by the reduction in energy use, and by

conversion of fuel sources. The town of Hamilton currently stands at 36% reduction in CO2 emissions since 2010, but when combined with the HWRSD the number drops to a 24% reduction.

- In 2023 the town of Hamilton emitted 626.7 MTCO₂e, the equivalent of 626 hot air balloons.

Hamilton Municipal Energy Emissions for 2009 - 2023 (MTCO₂e - Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent)												
Usage Categories	2009 Baseline CO ₂ Emissions						2023 CO ₂ Emissions					
	Diesel	Electric	Natural Gas	Gasoline	Oil	Total MTCO ₂ e	Diesel	Electric	Natural Gas	Gasoline	Total MTCO ₂ e	Baseline Reduction
Buildings		142.2	151.3		118.3	411.8		87.3	157.4		244.8	40.6%
Open Space		17.8				17.8		16.9			16.9	4.9%
Street/Traffic Lights		64.4				64.4		19.0			19.0	70.4%
Vehicles	75.8			183.1		258.9	46.9			175.9	222.8	14.0%
Water/Sewer		238.3				238.3		123.4			123.4	48.2%
Grand Total	75.8	462.7	151.3	183.1	118.3	991.2	46.9	246.7	157.4	175.9	626.9	36.8%

- In 2023 the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District emitted 1,413.8 MTCO₂e, the equivalent of 1,413 hot air balloons.

HWRSD (Schools) Energy Emissions for 2009 - 2023 (MTCO2e - Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent)											
Usage Categories	2009 Baseline CO2 Emissions					2023 CO2 Emissions					
	Diesel	Electric	Gas	Oil	Total MTCO2e	Diesel*	Electric	Gas	Gasoline	Total MTCO2e	Baseline Reduction
Bessie Buker ES		60.8	137.9		198.8		48.0	165.2		213.2	-7.3%
Cutler ES		69.6	3.5	146.8	219.9		44.8	121.4		166.2	24.4%
Hamilton-Wenham Reg HS		290.2	187.1		477.3		149.4	238.4		387.8	18.7%
Miles River MS		290.2	187.1		477.3		149.4	238.4		387.8	18.7%
Winthrop ES		104.0	133.2		237.1		61.6	109.3		170.9	27.9%
Center Admin Building		20.8	39.2		59.9		9.8	45.0		54.8	8.5%
Vehicles	24.2				24.2	24.2			9.1	33.0	-36.3%
Total	24.2	835.6	687.9	146.8	1694.5	24.2	463.1	917.7	9.1	1413.8	16.6%
						Diesel* emissions outsourced to Salter Transportation					

- **Hamilton's Community Choice Aggregation** program (HamiltonCCA.com) is a municipal electricity bulk-purchasing program operated by the town of Hamilton. The program goals are to offer additional renewable electricity, competitive prices and greater rate stability. With Hamilton CCA, National Grid continues to deliver electricity and manage all electricity billing. The only change is the source and cost of electricity supply, chosen by the town of Hamilton through a competitive bidding process every two years. Hamilton CCA's standard option 'Local Green' has five percent more renewable energy content than required by state law. Participants in the program receive 'Local Green' unless they affirmatively choose one of the other electricity options. Currently, the 'Hamilton Plus' electricity option provides 100% renewable energy for 16,455¢/kWh nearly a 2¢ savings from National Grid Basic brown electricity. Since 2018 Hamilton CCA delivered 5,370 MWh of renewable electricity avoiding over 4,070,460 lbs of greenhouse gases, and it has saved participants \$3,100,000 on electricity bills.

- **Waste Management Composting** saved Hamilton \$52,788 last year due to reduced tipping and collection fees for green barrel compost vs, the costs for black barrel trash and blue barrel recycling.
- **Hamilton Municipal Solar generation:** Chebacco Road Landfill 1 MW is a ground-mounted solar system. This project is expected to save Hamilton an estimated \$287,000 in electricity credits over the 20-year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Beginning in 2024 the town is applying the solar electricity credits to procure 100% renewable electricity eliminating 200 MTCO₂ of GHG annually. HW Library & Recreation Center roof top solar is expected to save \$4,600 annually and eliminate 43 MTCO₂ of GHG annually.

Other projects/ initiatives in-process

Priority	Org.	Project / Initiative
Hold	Hamilton	Public Safety building – 2022 solar site evaluation results: SE facing so not ideally directly south for E/W sunrise/sunset max day long production, and not a ton of scale, needs new roof before solar
Mid-Term	HWRSD	HS/MS roof Solar Canopy status – in preliminary design. Project was placed into a “Group Study” by National Grid which is ongoing
Long-Term	HWRSD	New school building discussion to include Net-Zero
Short-Term	Hamilton	DPW solar roof behind Town Hall
Short-Term	Residents	HWCAT with All In Energy to bring Mass Saves outreach
Short-Term	H & W	MVP grant - state program - for climate action & resilience planning
Short-Term	HWRSD	EV chargers installed at the schools sites
HEIC- Opposed	Hamilton	DPW Fuel storage tanks replacement – recommended against
Short-Term	Hamilton	Town Hall refurbishment: Winterization, solar and geothermal heat pumps
Completed	Hamilton	Town Electricity Contract – upgrade to 100% green with credits from .93MW Solar PV – Chebacco Landfill
On-Hold	Hamilton	Patton Homestead, Asbury Street single phase upgrade

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

The mission of the Affordable Housing Trust is to increase the availability of affordable housing in Hamilton. Approximately seven years ago, the Trust embarked on a program to determine sites that might be appropriate for affordable housing, and established a vetting process which permits a straightforward approach to selecting potential locations for development of affordable housing. During the 2023 fiscal year (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) the Trust focused on facilitating and monitoring several projects:

Ricker Circle and Annie's Lane:

In July 2022, after thirty years, the affordable housing discount factor is removed from six (6) houses, requiring these six to be removed from the Town's Subsidized Housing Index (SHI).

59-63 Willow Street:

Eighteen (18) market rate and affordable rental units are completed and fully leased. The Trust had contributed \$500,000 to this project and per the terms of the loan agreement, the Trust approved the final payment of \$50,000 in November 2022. All eighteen units are eligible for inclusion in the SHI.

434 Asbury Street:

Essex County Habitat for Humanity held a lottery at Town Hall on December 8, 2022 for the first four (4) of ten (10) units, two 2 bedroom units and two 3 bedroom units.

By June 2023, the Trust has contributed \$35,000 in FY20 and \$400,000 in FY22 to Essex County Habitat for Humanity to support this project.

As there has been a cell tower at the rear of this property, a Non-Disturbance & Attornment Agreement needed to be approved among the Lessee, the personal representative of the Estate of P. Marcovelle, the Owner, Essex County Habitat for Humanity, and the Mortgagee, the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This agreement was signed by March 2023.

General/Organizational:

This fiscal year began with the following membership - Marnie Crouch, serving as chair, and members Natalie Hildreth, David Smith, Suzanne Soffa, and Jamie Knudsen as the Select Board representative. The membership reorganized in November of 2022 and Mr. Knudsen was elected chair. Ms. Crouch resigned from the Trust in April of 2023 and Mr. Knudsen's term on the Select Board ended. Mr. Knudsen was then appointed to the Trust by the Select Board. Caroline Beaulieu, newly elected Select Board member, joined the Trust as the Select Board representative.

General/Financials:

At the end of June 2023, the Affordable Housing Trust fund total was \$314,645.96

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Hamilton Board of Health is responsible for implementing and overseeing the laws, policies and regulations of the Board of Health, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Responsibilities of the Board of Health and the Health Department include physical inspections and permitting of septic systems, installers, haulers, Title 5 inspectors, and maintenance professionals, retail food establishments, retail tobacco, public and semi-public swimming pools, recreational camps for children, and keeping of animals/stables/coops. In addition, the Board of Health conducts health clinics, addresses concerns of public nuisance, air quality, water quality, noise control, insect control, beaver, mosquito and pest management, food safety and protection, housing concerns and complaints, Title 5 concerns, and communicable disease reporting.

The Health Department is responsible for interpretation, monitoring, compliance and enforcement of the 2013 Food Code, the pool code, the housing code (minimum standards for habitation) and the state sanitary code as well as assisting and advising the Board of Health.

The Board of Health consists of three members serving a three-year term. David Smith serves as Chair and Dr. Giselle Perez and Dr. Jean Ramsey as members. Dennis Palazzo is the Health Director who conducts all food, pool, housing and recreational camp inspections as well as complaint resolution. Judith Ryan holds Hamilton's Public Health Nurse position while assisting the Town of Hamilton with all health related issues. The Regional Public Health Nurse and Shared Services Coordinator remains vacant until a suitable candidate is on boarded. Hayes Demeule is our Animal Inspector and is responsible for the proper keeping of animals, and for conducting barn, stable and animal inspections. Septic inspections, plan reviews, well permitting and soil samples are the responsibility of Greg Bernard, the town's contracted Septic Inspector.

2023 has been most challenging for the Health Department and the Board of Health. Through the Winter and Spring of 2023, the Board members, the Director and Public Health Nurse, understanding the severity and scope of public health concerns caused by a variety of health issues, including the SARS-CoV-2 virus, maintained constant communication and coordination with the state DPH, Town Manager, our counterparts in Wenham, and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee and administration to ensure that every part of Town government was acting with the best factual information about all health related issues including Covid-19, Food Borne illnesses, communicable diseases and flu to ensure the safety of Town employees and residents.

Also, the Board used all social media to constantly inform our residents of the best practices to stay healthy and minimize the risks of contracting Covid-19 and to answer residents' questions. Although Covid compliance was winding down, our Regional Public Health Nurse was overwhelmed with our legal obligation to follow-up on every positive case of Covid-19 infection, with each one entailing counseling the affected resident and then contacting all of their close contacts.

As the state DPH continued to make Covid-19 and Flu vaccines available under CDC guidelines, Judith Ryan ensured that Hamilton maintained a vaccine administration program for its residents and employees and organized vaccine clinics and blood pressure clinics at several local venues. She has

supervised administration of hundreds of doses of vaccines to residents, Town employees and first responders in an effort to ensure their safety.

The Hamilton and Wenham Boards of Health collectively joined together and continually held both flu and Covid vaccination clinics particularly on Wednesday afternoons at the Senior Center in Hamilton.

When Covid-19 tests became available through the state DPH, the Health Department worked to create testing access for its residents and secured thousands of at home test kits and KN94 masks which were made available to the residents of the Town. The Board worked closely with the Council on Aging and the HW school system to ensure that our seniors and school aged children, our most susceptible populations, had convenient access to testing and vaccines to ensure their wellbeing and safety.

The Health Department remains on the second floor of the Hamilton Senior Center at 299 Bay Road and is open for public access Monday through Wednesday from 9:30am to 1:30 pm, Thursdays from 9am to 1pm, and Fridays from 9:30am to 12:30pm. This has created more space for an expanding department and afforded increased access to the town's public service departments while being more accessible to the community. Anyone wishing to contact the Director can call 978-417-6118 at any time.

Our scope of services was significantly increased with the addition of the Regional Social Worker position filled by Jessie Palm, LICSW. She will be serving Hamilton and the three other Towns in the Region.

In an effort to streamline food inspections, a unique food safety manual has been distributed to each of the Town's food establishments and frequency of inspection has been established under Annex 5 of the 2013 Food Code. With regard to temporary food establishments, permitting and inspection was conducted at events and festivals within the Town and remains ongoing for future events.

Board of Health meetings have been standardized and will be conducted on the second Tuesday of each month at 5pm at the Senior Center (the public is encouraged to attend).

In partnership with the state's Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program, enforcement of the tobacco regulation was conducted and on-going to maintain compliance with the regulation. Several housing inspections were conducted to ensure compliance with the housing code. The barn book was completed and filed with the state and inspections and complaint follow up and resolution is ongoing.

The Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District monitors for mosquito-borne diseases in the region. This year virus levels were low although there were three Eastern Equine Encephalitis cases in the region. The Board prefers not to "routinely" spray. Taking personal protective measures and preventing the accumulation of standing water on your property is the best protection against mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases and is recommended by the board.

The Health Department has instituted a no-cost sharps collection program, where residents are provided with a sharps collection container and are asked to return it when filled.

The Health Department has several projects in process to better serve the community. Among them is the task of updating the town's private well regulation and a new Septic Systems Betterment Loan

Program, where residents whose septic systems have failed and are in need of a new septic system could borrow the funds to replace their system at a low interest rate and repay the Town over time.

The following are permits issued by the Health Department in fiscal 2022 – 2023:

Septic Permits Issued:	58
Certificate of Compliances Issued:	37
Septic Tank Pump Reports Processed:	530
Title 5 Inspection Reports Processed:	85
Hauler Licenses Issued:	8
Installers Licenses Issued:	31
Title 5 System Inspector Licenses Issued:	10
Operation and Maintenance Providers:	4
Soil Tests Performed:	25
Septic Installation Inspections:	61
Food/Retail Service Permits	35
Temporary Food/Retail Service Permits	24
Seasonal Food Service Permits	4
Keeping of Animal Permits	36
Stable/Coop Permits	36
Wells Permits	4
Public Swimming Pools Permits	4
Recreational Camps Permits	2
Tobacco Sales Permits	5
Complaints- Housing/Nuisance	5



Cape Ann Veterans Services: Serving the Town of Hamilton

The Town of Hamilton continues to work alongside the communities of Gloucester, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Rockport and Wenham, making up the Cape Ann District. The district is signed into an Inter-municipal Agreement until July 2025.

Hamilton is home to an estimated 436 Veterans making up approximately 7% of the total population of 7526 (US Consensus 2021).

Military Service Day

Cape Ann Veterans Services participates at the Patton Homestead each July. A booth was set up to facilitate informational resources and advertisement material from the District as well as supportive Veteran Organizations such as VA Healthcare, Veterans North East Outreach Center (VNEOC), and Company to Heroes, among others. The partnering agencies provide eligible veterans with crucial resources necessary for whole health.



Massachusetts General Law Chapter 115

MGL Chapter 115 Veterans benefits are an income based financial program aimed at assisting Veterans and their dependents living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level following state guidelines of means testing. Financial assistance may include an Ordinary Benefit amount, fuel assistance, or medical liability and copay reimbursement. In FY 2023 the Town of Hamilton assisted between 8 and 10 of its residents through this program. Currently the program's budgeted cost is (\$30,000) with 75% of those expenditures being reimbursed to the town by the Commonwealth quarterly.

VA Compensation

VA Compensation Claims are a monetary benefit provided to Veterans for injuries which may have occurred or been aggravated during time in service. According to VA statistics as of Dec 2023 the average monthly VA compensation award is (\$3,737.85). Through the Inter-municipal agreement between the communities of the Cape Ann Veterans Service District, the office has access to a paid software system (VetraSpec) where it is able to electronically file and record Veteran claims and information. This has allowed for growing access and information distribution to Veterans of the district.

Armed Forces Day

May 20, 2023 marked Armed Forces Day, celebrated on the third Saturday every May. The day is dedicated to the recognition of our Active Duty Men and Women. The day allows us to also reflect upon the service and sacrifices of Veterans as we lead into Memorial Day. On May 19th the Cape Ann Office of Veterans Services hosted an Armed Forces Event at the Hamilton Council on Aging. A general overview of benefits at a local, state, and federal level was shared to roughly 20 veterans filling the space and sharing in resources.

Veterans Coffee Socials

Coffee Socials and social gatherings have been proven to slow the progression of mental illnesses such as Dementia and deter social isolation. Many of Hamilton Veteran residents attend Veterans Coffee Socials from the surrounding communities of Wenham and Manchester. A monthly/quarterly Veterans Coffee Social is in the works in partnership with the Hamilton COA and is scheduled for the Second Thursday monthly.

Significant Town/ District Statistics:

- VA Compensation and Pension Program, The Town of Hamilton averages (\$3,737.85) in monthly payout per beneficiary for Veterans and their Families.
- There are currently 8 Hamilton Residents and their families in receipt of MGL Chapter 115 benefits. Total number of Veterans and families across our district utilizing MGL Chapter 115 program (44).
- Total population across our district is roughly 54,000. Total estimated Veterans population is 2,600.
- Total estimated number of Veterans and families receiving VA Compensation/Pension across our district (602). Total annual paid to Veterans and Families in the district (\$12 million).

Acknowledgements

Cape Ann Veterans Services would like share some information and significant changes from across our district for FY 2023

- Ongoing weekly/ monthly Veterans events across our district include (5) Veteran Coffee Socials (1) in Gloucester on Friday mornings, (1) Manchester on Saturday mornings, (1) in Rockport on Saturday mornings, and (1) in Wenham on the second Tuesday/mo. (1) in Hamilton on the second Thursday/mo. On Thursday evenings, Cape Ann Lanes in Gloucester hosts a Veterans Bowling League. Soldier Songs and Voices in Gloucester meets Thursday evenings and provides Veterans with free guitar lessons. Bi-weekly, Cape Ann Writers Group assists Veterans and families with writing their stories on Saturday mornings. Monthly Wenham Veterans Committee meets to discuss local on-goings and changes.
- Veterans Organizations in our district include American Legion Posts (Gloucester, Manchester, Hamilton, Rockport), VFW (Gloucester), AmVets (Gloucester), DAV (Gloucester).
- Significant changes to Personnel: Adam Curcuru relocated to Florida in April 2023. District Benefits Coordinator Vionette Chipperini (US Army) was appointed by the Mayor of Gloucester as the new District Director in June 2023.

Goals for 2024

We strive in maintaining a strong community-based approach. We aim to attend at a minimum (1) Veteran Centric Event Quarterly. We continue to make in-person home visits when necessary and continue to work closely with Hamilton COA in identifying Veterans or Surviving Spouses in need of additional support. Advocacy in accessing VA Benefits is at the forefront of our mission and provide Veterans and their Families with benefits and services they are entitled to.

Department staff members as of the end of 2023:

Vionette Chipperini District Director, Cape Ann Veterans Services

Brian D'Angelo District Veterans Benefits Coordinator, Cape Ann Veterans Services

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Hamilton Council on Aging is a community based social service organization that supports the social, mental and health needs of our community's senior population, those aged 60 years old and older. A portion of the funding for the Council on Aging is provided annually through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Programming is run mainly through the Hamilton Senior Center, located on Bay Road, adjacent to the Public Safety Building and the Winthrop School.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the over 60 population in Hamilton is 1902 residents. This past year we serviced a duplicated 4750 residents, and an unduplicated 375 residents.

Throughout the year, many new activities were brought to the center, as well as growth of old activities:

- Men's group continued to thrive throughout the year. Meeting twice a month a group of approximately 10-15 consistently meet to talk about current affairs, or to learn more about the happenings in town. In November 2022, we combined forces with Wenham to offer one newsletter. This merge came as a cost saving for both town. The combined newsletter was essential in saving both towns money (there was a requirement for how many newsletter we would need to send out). The feedback that we have received since has been positive.
- In January of 2023, we started a Lunch and Learn. During the second half of the fiscal year we invited 6 different departments to come in and talk about upcoming events in their departments. Conservation, Police, Fire, Town Manager all spoke to approximately a dozen residents each month.
- Open Enrollment for Medicare was October 15th-December 7th, 2022. During this time our SHINE counselor met with approximately 150 residents to help determine if the prescription plan they were on is the best plan for them. Throughout the year our SHINE Counselor met with an additional 75 residents to help transition to Medicare.
- Our Outreach Coordinator assisted over 2 dozen residents with help filling out fuel assistance and food stamp applications.
- Special events that we held throughout the year include (but are not limited too): Annual Fireman's Cookout, Ice Cream Social, Holiday Parties, Health and Wellness Fair, and A Matter of Balance Class.

We look forward to hearing and seeing from more residents as we continue to add new programming in the upcoming year.

THE HAMILTON FOUNDATION

Dear Hamilton Neighbor:

Have you heard of The Hamilton Foundation (THF)? If you haven't, it may be that you've had the good fortune of never needing emergency financial assistance. But there are Hamilton residents who experience unexpected emergencies and need immediate and short-term financial support. THF wants all members of our community to be aware that this emergency financial support is available.

THF is a non-profit foundation formed by Hamilton citizens in 2005 to provide financial assistance to Hamilton residents when unexpected emergencies occur. We provide assistance for such things as: rent, oil, home repairs, mortgage, electricity, food, medical bills, childcare, telephone, and gasoline.

Since THF was formed, over 450 requests for assistance have been met with payments for overdue bills and gift cards for food; referrals for other assistance are often made as well. Grants provided to Hamilton residents during the past year total over \$15,000. Payments are sent directly to vendors or creditors, and gift cards for food are available for residents who need them.

If you, or someone you know, need emergency financial assistance, please contact the THF Coordinator, Jane Wetson, at **978-233-1816**. All requests are completely confidential. We invite you to learn more about THF's mission on The Hamilton Foundation page of the Town's website at: www.hamiltonma.gov/government/hamilton-foundation.

Please consider making a donation to The Hamilton Foundation to assist us in serving our citizens in need. Donations may also be made online at the above website or a contribution by check made out to **The Hamilton Foundation** can be sent to: The Hamilton Foundation, c/o Hamilton Town Hall, PO Box 429, Hamilton, MA 01936.

All THF funding is provided through donations. No tax dollars are used. And 100% of your tax-deductible donation goes directly to helping Hamilton residents. We thank you in advance for your consideration and generosity.

The Hamilton Foundation Board of Directors

Heather Ford

Lori Johnson

Bill BurrIDGE

Jill Evers

Martha Farrell

HAMILTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) is an advisory committee to the Select Board. The purpose of creating the Commission was to affirm that the Town of Hamilton is an inclusive community that has, as one of its core values, the freedom from discrimination, intolerance, disrespect, bigotry, other forms of micro- or macroaggressions, hatred and oppression, and to reaffirm the Town's commitment to upholding and defending the rights of all individuals to enjoy the free and equal exercise of their rights and privileges. The Commission strives to ensure that all persons feel safe in Hamilton and enjoy the equal opportunity to participate in local affairs.

Some areas of focus during 2023 were:

- Maintain and manage a Confidential Form on the Town's website for residents and visitors to contact the HRC.
- Sponsor of the Pride and Juneteenth flag raising ceremonies.
- Organized a celebration of the 75th anniversary of International Human Rights Day at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library in December.

Looking ahead to 2024

- In 2024, the HRC continues to provide research and recommendations to the Select Board.
- Provide information to the community regarding the statewide effort to update the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state seal.
- Sponsor the Pride and Juneteenth flag raising ceremonies for 2024.
- Support the recognition of the 76th anniversary of International Human Rights Day.

Members of the Commission in FY 2023

Anne Brady, Chair

Alaina Walsh, Vice Chair

Nancy Stehfast, Clerk

Jared Hughes

Maya Beach, Student Representative

Jamie Knudsen, Select Board Representative

Russell Stevens, Chief of Police

Theresa Woodbury, Council on Aging Director

Joseph Domelowicz, Town Manager (ex-officio)

<https://www.hamiltonma.gov/government/human-rights-commission/#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20this%20Commission,the%20Town's%20commitment%20to%20upholding>

CHEBACCO WOODS LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members of the committee have been checking the trails during the year. A few blowdowns were cleared by the Essex County Trail Association. We replaced the damaged or lost markers on the red trail. More markers will be replaced in 2024.

We continue to remove the trash from the barrel at the kiosk weekly, supply trail maps and dog waste bags. The woods has continued to see an increased amount of use since COVID.

A change of leadership on the Hamilton Conservation Commission and unreturned phone calls caused problems with spending all of our annual amount this year. We will continue to find a way to work with Gordon College next year to do repairs to the eroded and hilly part of the red trail.

Most dog walkers have been cleaning up after their pets but there is still a problem with loose dogs bothering other dogs, people and horses. Owners are still allowing their dogs to go into the water at Round and Gravelly ponds which are part of the Manchester water supply.

Ralph Smith has stepped down as chair and Susanna McLaughlin was appointed to take over with Virginia Cookson as vice-chair.

Members of the Chebacco Woods Land Management Committee

Susanna McLaughlin, Chair

Virginia Cookson, Vice-Chair

Ralph Smith

Russell Camp

Michael Mack

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

In July 2022, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) hosted their Annual Public Information Meeting in a joint meeting with the Select Board.

In November 2022, the Town received the annual state match from the CPA Trust Fund, distributed by the MA Department of Revenue. The Hamilton 2% surcharge revenue of \$517,755 resulted in a state match of \$199,395 or 38.51%. The total CPA revenues were \$717,150.

The following CPA grant was approved by the CPC and subsequently at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2023:

- Hamilton Wenham Regional School Department Middle School/High School Athletic Facilities Improvement Project – Open Space and Recreation - \$800k

Historical Distribution of CPA Grants (since 2005)

- Total number of grants = 93
- Total dollars in grants = \$13M
- Number of organizations receiving grants = 19
- Number of town organizations receiving grants = 11 (53%)
- Number of grants received by town organizations = 76 (82%)
- Total dollars received by town organizations = \$10.4M (80%)

Historical Distribution of CPA Grants (since 2005)

- Total number of grants = 93
- Open Space and Recreation grants = 33 (35%)
- Historic Preservation grants = 46 (49%)
- Community Housing grants = 14 (15%)
- Total dollars in grants = \$13M
- Open Space and Recreation grants = \$5.6M (43%)
- Historic Preservation grants = \$5.8M (44%)
- Community Housing grants = \$1.6M (12%)

CPC Members

Jay Butler – At Large, Chair

Robert Preston – At Large, Vice Chair

Kim Dietel – At Large

Rick Johanson – At Large

Kirstin Bridier - Historic District Commission Rep.

Sandy Coddington - Conservation Commission Rep.

Richard Boroff - Planning Board Rep.

Michelle Horgan - Housing Authority Rep.

Shawn Farrell – Select Board Rep.

Coordinator - Laurie Wilson

HAMILTON WENHAM CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Hamilton Wenham Cultural Council is part of a grassroots cultural funding network supporting community-based projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences annually. Each year, the council is allocated approximately \$12,000 in funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Through a competitive grant process, the Hamilton Wenham Cultural Council awards funds to arts, humanities, and interpretive science projects in our communities. In 2023, 21 requests for funding totaling \$15,645 were granted.

Applicant	Project	\$ Awarded
Deborah Bai Lannon	Aftermath: Reflections and Portraits of Veterans in Recc	\$300
Cutler Elementary School	LARK Elementary STEAM program	\$1,500
Mamadou Diouck	Traditions of Senegal	\$1,220
Five Ponds Festival	Five Ponds Creative Writing Festival	\$200
Hamilton COA	Essex River Cruise	\$300
H-W Garden Club	Insect Biology & Ecosystems	\$500
HW Human Rights Coalition	H-W Pride Picnic	\$1,000
H-W Public Library	Traditions of Chinese Acrobatics	\$500
H-W Public Library	Swamp Romp: A Louisiana Musical Adventure	\$500
Kendall Inglese	Golden Spiral Art & Snail Trail Tale	\$450
Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary	Nature in your neighborhood - all about birds	\$100
League of Women Voters of H-W	Civics Bee 2023	\$800
League of Women Voters of H-W	Local Issue Speaker Series - Third Thursdays	\$1,150
League of Women Voters of H-W	H-W Volunteer Fair	\$500
Miles River Middle School	Miles River Cooking Club	\$250
Miles River Middle School	Blues in the Schools	\$600
Howard Newman	Memory Café	\$375
The Community House	Stage 284 - 2023 Season Sponsor	\$1,500
The Community House	Sponsor - Sundays in Patton Park - 2023 Concert Series	\$2,500
The Musary, JRP Inc.	Musary Musical Instrument Lending Acquisitions	\$1,000
Wenham Historical Assoc & Muse	Wingmasters: World of Owls	\$400

MEMBERS:

Martha Brennan, Wenham (2025)
 Lauren Consolazio, Wenham (2024)
 Janet Glasser, Treasurer, Wenham (2024)
 Max King, Wenham (2025)
 Dacia Rubel, Wenham (2024)
 Maribeth Ting, Wenham (2024)

Susan Choquette, Hamilton (2024)
 Jennifer Drummond, Hamilton (2025)
 Emily Hayden, Hamilton (2024)
 Charlotte Lidrbach, Chair, Hamilton (2024)
 Lindsey Peabody, Hamilton (2025)
 Sara Holden Searle, Hamilton (2024)



Mission Statement

The Hamilton-Wenham Public Library is a vital civic anchor for the community. The Library connects people to information and resources, supports literacy and education, promotes lifelong learning through diverse programs, and is a welcoming space for all. (Adopted October 2023).

Values Statement

Our shared values are what guide our library staff as we work with the community and each other.

- We value equitable access to information and lifelong learning opportunities.
- We value intellectual freedom and unbiased representation of all viewpoints in collections, programs, and services.
- We value the contributions of an engaged, dedicated, and innovative library staff.
- We value the power of collaboration with community members, leaders, and organizations.
- We value a welcoming and safe environment that is open and accessible to all.

FY23 Accomplishments

- Implementation of Library Services and Technology Act grant, Access for All, which included funding for Memory Café's, Memory Kits, Assistive Technology and a pilot Home Delivery program.
- Started the process for developing a new five-year strategic plan.
- Replaced the 3D printer with an upgraded version.
- Complete installation of solar panels on the flat roof.
- First annual ComicCon event held in June.

FY24 Goals

- Completion of new five-year strategic plan.
- Installation of upgraded wifi throughout the entire building.
- Expansion of home delivery program to Hamilton.
- Implementation of new MVLC e-Card.
- Implementation of new online staff scheduling software.

Partners

The Friends of the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library are a vital and integral partner for the Library. They fund all of our discounted museum passes, special events and programs, staff training, and technology. In 2023 the Friends funded the prizes for our summer reading programs, the Pride Picnic Story Walk, the First Annual ComicCon, the new 3D printer, and our new commercial TV/display board in the lobby. Under the leadership of the Friends board, and their chair Denise Bisailon, they work tirelessly to fundraise to support the Library. New Friends members are always welcome!

Leadership

Board of Trustees:

MJ Brown, Chair (2026)
Cara Fauci, Vice Chair (2024)
Dede Johnson, Secretary (2024)
Karen Bebergal (2025)
Jane Kusel (2025)
Bethany Yu (2026)

Library Staff:

Kim Butler, Director
Jane Wolff, Assistant Director
Kim Claire, Young Adult Librarian
Lorraine Der, Children's Librarian
Sarah Lauderdale, Head of Reference
Kati Bourque, Head of Technical Services
Dede McManus, Head of Circulation
Jessica Furtado, Adult Services Librarian
Lindley Valcarcel, Reference & Technology

Part-Time Staff:

Michelle Carley, Jeanne Duffy, Josh Lear, Julie Niemann, Viktoria Paget, Ella Tran, Ashley Viator

Our FY23 Annual Report highlights some of our most inspiring work. Year after year, we continue to be re-energized and awed by the people we are honored to serve. Every new program we introduce is met with gratitude. In this report, we are excited to share some of the ideas envisioned by our passionate staff and the people and communities who continue to shape the future of our towns. We've launched new services that help patrons thrive, and opened many more opportunities for discovery, creativity and inquiry. All of our inclusive offerings, crucial resources and uplifting events play a key role in positively impacting the lives of countless residents.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Butler, Library Director

FY23 IN REVIEW



187,505
Total Holdings
(including e-books)

14,070
Total program
attendance
(live & virtual)



233,896
Total Circulation
(including e-books)



We are the 3rd
busiest library in
our population
group in the state!

8,898
Library
card
holders



34,665
Inter-library loan
items received

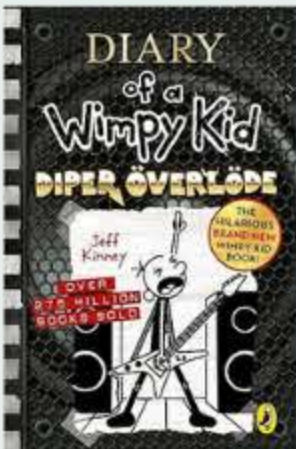


32,816
Inter-library loan
items sent

Most circulated
adult book



Most circulated
kids book



Most circulated
teen book



2,451
Hours
Open





73,609
Visitors



53,588
Total usage
of Library
databases

JOINT BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES OF HAMILTON AND WENHAM

The Joint Board is responsible for the stewardship and management of the Library and its services and facilities located at 14 Union Street in Hamilton. Board Members are active participants in promoting and supporting the mission statement of the Library.

Goals achieved in 2023:

Supported the process for developing the five-year strategic plan.

Continued oversight of the Library trusts.

Promoted the joy of reading and lifelong learning.

Goals for 2024:

Support the finalization of the five-year strategic plan and identify the steps toward implementation.

Continue oversight of management, distribution, and use of library trust funds.

Support the director in continued review and updating of library policies.

Continue to promote the joy of reading and lifelong learning.

FY23 Special Funds Spending:

Trust Funds: Children's Room aquarium

Reinhalter Family Trust: New public computers in the Children's Room

State Aid: Wi-Fi hotspots, new chairs in the Children's Room, elevator repair, water back flow system replacement, staff training, and conference attendance

Gift Accounts: Public computers, library materials

Capital: IT infrastructure upgrades including improved Wi-Fi throughout the entire building

Library Services and Technology Grant: Access for All – provided funding for Memory Café programs, Memory Kits, Assistive Technology, Home Delivery Program

Hamilton-Wenham Cultural Council Grants: Musician and Story Teller Davis Bates (July 2022), and Li Liu Presents: Traditions of Chinese Acrobatics (February 2023)

2023 was a year of being proactive, updating policies, and supporting sustainable and full employment. Library services were improved with updated Wi-Fi, computer stations, and a 3D printer. This improvement of technology and services reflects the forward thinking spirit of 2023.

Thank you to Dorothy Goudie, Chair until May 2023, for her leadership, wise counsel, and friendship. MJ Brown was reelected and Bethany Yu was newly elected in May 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

MJ Brown, Chair

Cara Fauci, Vice-Chair

Dede Johnson, Secretary

Karen Bebergal, Liaison to the Friends

Jane Kusel

Bethany Yu

HAMILTON WENHAM RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Hamilton Wenham Recreation Department provides a wide variety of programs designed to improve the quality of life for residents by meeting physical and recreational needs. We promote lifelong lessons through play, education, and community wide events.

Goals achieved/large projects accomplished during 2023:

- Added a number of Adult and Teen Programming options which resulted in a significant increase in participation and revenue. Adult program revenue increased by 221% since FY21. Our C.I.T. Program (ages 13-15) saw a participation increase of 80% during the summer of 2023.
- Continuing the trend of increased participation and revenue across all of our programs, activities, and events. Revenue has increased ~100% since FY21.
- Made upgrades to the Recreation Center by installing four (4) new commercial fans to help with air flow.
- Completed improvements to the infrastructure, amenities, & technology to the pool for a better guest experience in the summer of 2023.
- Successfully maintained financial stability in the Recreation Revolving Account which allowed the department to complete the mentioned improvements at the pool.
- Working with the DPW completed the Patton Park Master Plan, which we look forward to moving into the next phase in 2024.

POOL STATISTICS

Memberships Sold

Household:	256
Individual:	64
Senior:	31
Caregiver:	13

Swim Team Registrations

Team Members:	84
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Pool Attendance

Total Number of Membership Scans:	6071
Daily Drop-ins:	818
Guest Passes:	<u>183</u>
Total Visits	7072
Totally Days Open	68
Average Attendance	104

SUMMER PARK REGISTRATION

Total Unique Registrations:	2,224
Campers Per Day	214
Different Campers:	530





Goals and Objectives for 2024:

- Implement recommendations from the Patton Park Master Plan Report.
- Stabilize finances at both Patton Park Summer Program and Veterans Memorial Pool after the capital expenditures in 2023.
- Work closely with the Wenham Open Space and Recreation Committee to help move projects along at both West Wenham Park and Pingree Park.
- Continue upward trend of increased participation numbers and revenue for department programs, activities, and events.
- Work to find creative ways to create an improved registration process for the Patton Park Summer Park Program.

Sean Timmons, Recreation Director
Danielle Kiely, Administrative Assistant

Recreation Board:
Steve Ozahowski, Hamilton – Chair
Reginald Maidment, Hamilton
Brad Tilley, Hamilton
Daniel Curran, Wenham
Len Dolan, Wenham

HISTORIC DISTRICT/HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Members of the Historic District/Historical Commission for fiscal year 2023 included Scott Clements (chair), Elizabeth Wheaton, Kristen Weiss, Olivia Hyde (resident member), and Kirstin Bridier.

The primary mission of the Historic District Commission is to review building plans/alterations for new and existing buildings in order to preserve the historic character of the Historic District that is centered on Bay Road. Owners of property within the District must apply to the Historic District Commission for Certificates of Appropriateness for any new construction or changes to their property that is visible from Bay Road and town ways. The Commission also serves as the town-wide historical commission.

The Commission held eleven meetings and completed three regulatory reviews during this year. The Commission reviewed and approved renovations to 540 Bay Road and 588 Bay Road, as well as a new home at 550 Bay Road.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Historical Society had an active year with several presentations, quarterly newsletters and participation in the annual Military Day in July. We continue to preserve the past and chronicle the present for future generations.

Our summer edition of our quarterly newsletter was a trip down memory lane. Hamilton residents told stories of their high school summer jobs. Hamilton is a unique place in which to live and the summer jobs proved that. The stories included scooping ice cream at The Junction, directing the summer program at Patton Park, posting the polo scores on the old wooden scoreboard and being a governess on an estate.

Military Day is held each July at the Patton Homestead to honor the veterans of our country. Our goal was to showcase what was happening back home. We transformed the large room at the Homestead into a 1940's kitchen/livingroom to celebrate "The Homefront". We highlighted the sacrifices made by the men, women and children in this country during WWII. There were examples of saving paper and aluminum for the war effort. Emily Cook exhibited a quilt that was handmade by her grandmother Nickerson. The quilt was sewn from seed sacks as nothing was wasted. Kitchen implements were interesting to young and old alike and we had a quiz for the children to guess their use. The high school donated two mannequins which we dressed in the 1940's fashion.

In the fall, Vernon Chandler, a longtime Hamilton resident, presented a program of his travels to the American Military Cemeteries of Europe. Citizens of Margraten, Netherlands tend to the graves of "their American Liberators". A family cares for the American grave and passes on the privilege to their children. His stories of their reverence and respect for the sacrifices by the Americans brought us to tears.

We continue to have quarterly coffees with a showing of a Times Past episode. These are videos that explore the history of Hamilton through interviews moderated by teachers Edmund Josephs and William Heitz. They did the series in the 1980's. Due to our lack of space at the Homestead, these are held at the Hamilton Council of Aging building on Bay Road.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Marie Cullen, President
Hamilton Historical Society

PATTON HOMESTEAD

FY 2023 proved to be a positive year of growth and steady use for the Patton Homestead. While the Patton Homestead's goal of being fiscally independent from the Town was not yet achieved, there was growing support for continued use of the property. Throughout the year, the Director continued to oversee the Patton Homestead users, i.e. the Wenham Museum, Hamilton Historical Society, Incubate Coworking and the Board of the Friends of the Patton Homestead, as well as coordinate property maintenance with the DPW, all private events, public events and overall property improvement projects to make the grounds welcoming for the community. Some notable grounds improvements during FY 2023 include a new "Public Parking" sign to the large gravel lot, installed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) on Asbury Street. The DPW also installed a gravel path, which will connect the Patton parking lot directly to Greenbelt's Vineyard Hill Trail system, by way of a new crosswalk, which was approved in FY 2023, and will be installed in FY 2024. Also, with thanks to the DPW and shared funds from both the Town and the Friends of the Patton Homestead, the old Flagpole was finally replaced.

The Study Group which was formed in 2022 to analyze the relative success of the building vs. the projected alternate uses for the site, presented findings to the Select Board on October 3, 2022. Based on the presentation regarding the future of the property, the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of five more years of funding an annual budget of \$100k for the Patton Homestead to operate. Based on proven and continued growth amongst Patton Homestead users, public engagement, and the five years of funding, the property seemed to be on track towards being fiscally responsible in the future. Leading up to the April Town Meeting, it was decided that the Director of the Patton Homestead should be absorbed by the HW Recreation Department in FY 2024 since a natural partnership had evolved, and it made sense that increasing cultural, environmental and recreational programs onsite would be streamlined in the Recreation Department. At the end of FY 2023, the operating expenses of the Patton Homestead would no longer be allocated into its own budget, but rather be added into the overall expenses of the General Fund.

After the October funding vote, the Director continued to manage private event inquiries, however, attention was focused more on evolving enrichment programs and public events outdoors, which gave the co-working community room to operate without interruption. This shift allowed for robust activity inside the building, which ultimately increased revenue for both Incubate as well as the Town by way of shared rental revenue as per the lease agreement. Throughout FY 2023, the Patton Homestead enjoyed daily use by Incubate Coworking, where every private monthly rental space was occupied, to the point of the Town permitting the construction of three walls to form additional office space and increased monthly revenue. The Incubate Coworking spaces were fully booked from July 2022-June 2023. The building was also in weekly use by the Wenham Museum, and monthly use by the Hamilton Historical Society.

Not including Incubate's ongoing activity, FY 2023 saw over 100 property bookings including a seasonal writing workshop with A Room To Write, a seasonal monthly book club with the HW Library, another COA / Acord Food Pantry Senior Tea, six Home Base tours at the Wenham Museum Archive, eleven private events, and fifteen public events. Among the public events was the 2022

Harvest Fest, which received \$2,500 of funding through a Festival Grant from the Mass Cultural Council. The Recreation Department continued to offer seasonal youth sports programs, but also introduced its first adult art workshop and two new youth nature programs. In an effort to continue toward reliable program activity, the director worked with the Friends of the Patton Homestead and the Town Manager to apply for a capital grant, which would fund the construction of a new cultural pavilion. In May 2023, the grant application was approved for \$87,000 pending a 1:1 match. The Friends of the Patton Homestead have been working on fundraising since that time. The goal is that the addition of an onsite shelter will help book events and programs more consistently.

Planning for FY 2024, the Wenham Museum will continue to conduct tours of the Archives and the Historical Society will operate out of designated space at the Homestead. However, towards the end of FY 2023, the Town realized an impending need of the Homestead as the plan to renovate the Town Hall came into focus. Incubate was at the end of a three year lease, and due to the need of the Town to use the building as a Temporary Town Hall, the lease was not renewed. For future programming, while the Patton Homestead is occupied, the Director continues to focus on seasonal programming through the HW Recreation Department and coordinating the matching funds needed for the proposed Joanne Patton Pavilion. Increased collaboration with the Recreation Department will introduce new opportunities for the Patton Homestead, allowing it to be viewed more similarly to a Public Park than a venue, while still making the location more desirable to book for cultural programming, public and private events, alike.

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District 2023 Annual Report

This has been an exciting year as we move forward with the Athletic Facilities Improvement Project and the HW Cutler School Project. The Cutler School Building Committee was launched and we were approved by the MSBA to move into the feasibility stage. The move to feasibility opened the door to hiring the Owner's Project Manager, PMA Consulting, and Architect/Designer, JCJ Architecture.

A successful town meeting and ballot vote result secured up to 15 million dollars to begin the Athletic Facilities Improvement Project. Even more exciting is that we were able to offset 4 million of the total cost with a 1.7 million dollar transfer into the District Stabilization Fund, 1.3 million in donations, and 1.2 million from both the Hamilton and Wenham Community Preservation Funds.

Goals Achieved in 2023

- Completed the District Strategic Plan and Operationalized it to set 23-24 District and school-level goals.
- The DEIB Advisory Committee was re-established with new members representing all five district schools, students, parents, and community members. This led to the development of the following working groups:
 - Communication, Survey/Focus groups, Professional Development/Resources, and Cultural/Inclusion/Diversity experiences for students
- We have continued our focus on the MTSS structures at the elementary level and extended MTSS structures into the middle school and high school. The data is overwhelmingly positive as we work to find ways to continue to help more students reach grade-level benchmarks.
- The District has met and continues to meet all requirements for the Cutler School Building Project prescribed by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) during the 2022-23 school year and beyond. Highlights include:
 - Appropriation of funding for Feasibility Study
 - Establishing a School Building Committee
 - Submission of enrollment data
 - MSBA Board Vote for Feasibility Study
 - School Committee approval of the Feasibility Study Agreement
 - Procurement process and selection of the District Owner's Project Manager (PMA Consulting)
 - Procurement process and selection for Designer Services
 - PDP Submission Completed (JCJ Architecture)
 - Completed Educational Plan
- The District has established a process of reviewing curriculum materials and supports to ensure there is no bias in the materials presented and/or adding supplemental materials or conversations to address the biases that may be present. Bias in curriculum work was

initiated in September, district-wide, and has been reviewed throughout the year. This work included the following:

- Staff Training
- Use of the Wellesley Checklist: [Seven Forms of Bias in Instructional Materials: Teacher Checklist](#)
- Elementary Book Room review for bias in pictures and/or topic/content

Goals and Objectives for 2023-24

Goal 1: Build a District Communications Plan

The District will complete and publish a District Communications Plan by the end of January 2024.

Goal 2: Improve Teaching and Learning: Build MTSS Structures

Throughout the 2023-24 school year, the district will continue to grow an intentional and sustainable Multi-Tiered System of Support to ensure that our students' academic and social-emotional needs are met by ensuring the systematic use of data to inform all tiers of instruction.

Goal 2A: Elementary

By the end of the 2026 school year, the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District will strengthen the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model across all elementary schools targeting learning outcomes in literacy, math, and social-emotional learning.

Goal 2B: MRMS

By the end of the 2023-2024 school year, MRMS will build upon earlier math and reading MTSS work by doing the following: Goal Facilitator(s): MRMS Principal, MRMS Asst. Principal

Goal 2C: HWRHS

By the end of the 2023-2024 school year, HWRHS will enhance data review processes and tiered supports for students in ninth and tenth grade.

Goal 3: Commit to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB)

By June 2024, HWRSD will implement activities that support ongoing teaching and learning experiences that build understanding, support implementation of practices, and allow for reflection and assessment of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging practices.

Goal 4: Long-Range Planning

By the end of December 2023, the HWRSD will develop and share with our communities, a 5-10 year Capital Improvement Plan.

Significant Statistics in 2023:

As of October 1, 2023, the HWRSD serves 1,706 students mainly in grades PreK-12. 41 of these students are served out-of-district, 63 students are School Choice-In and 24 are tuition-in Pre-K students.

The HWRSD staff comprises approximately 301 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions. Professional Teaching Staff, 186 total, make up 62% of these FTEs. Teaching assistants, 57 total, make up 19% of these FTEs. The remaining 58 positions are distributed among administrators, administrative assistants, LPNs, tutors, crossing guards, lunch monitors, and custodial/maintenance functions.

The FY24 Total Expenditures Budget was approved by both Hamilton and Wenham Town Meeting for the amount of \$44,667,771. The FY24 budget request will be presented in detail on the HWRSD Website: www.hwschools.net.

The HWRSD would like to recognize the retirements of the following employees:

We thank them for their many years of service to the HWRSD!

Name	Position	Years Service	Location
Mary Adamik	Instructional Coach	34	Cutler Elementary School
John Kotch	Science Teacher	29	Hamilton-Wenham HS
Sheila Boss Concannon	Art Teacher	24	Miles River Middle School
Kim Adsit	Health & Wellness Teacher	22	Miles River Middle School
Susan Jedrey	Math Teacher	21	Miles River Middle School
Lynda Richards	Special Education Teacher	19	Cutler Elementary School
Lisa Taylor	Special Education TA	3	Miles River Middle School

School Committee Members and Staff 2023:

School Committee Members:

Dana Allara, Chair
Amy Kunberger, Vice Chair
David Polito, Secretary
Julia Campbell, Assistant Secretary
David Frenkel
Jennifer Carr
Trenton Honda

Central Office Administration:

Eric Tracy, Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Administration
Jennifer Clifford, Director of Teaching and Learning
Thomas F. Geary III, Director of Facilities, Maintenance & Operations
Stacy Bucyk, Director of Student Services

HAMILTON

Heidi T. Riccio, Ed.D., Superintendent-Director

William Lannon, III, Representative

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School (ENSATS) is Massachusetts' premier regional technical and agricultural high school, serving 17 member communities on the North Shore and 41 surrounding communities. Our mission is to create a culture of excellence, encourage continuous growth, and promote professionalism and citizenship for all students, as they develop into architects, artisans, and authors of the 21st century community. In essence, training our future workforce.

Twenty-six career technical and agricultural programs are available to students from member communities whereas students from surrounding communities select from seven agricultural areas. Enrollment at ENSATS is 1,747 for the 2023-2024 school year. We espouse the development of student qualities, ensuring that all of our graduates are future-ready. Our goal is for students to be collaborative, culturally proficient, entrepreneurial, kind, perseverant, and responsible.



ENSATS *at a glance*

*As of October 1, 2023
25 Total Hamilton
Student Population*

Grade	9 – 8
Grade	10 – 6
Grade	11 – 6
Grade	12 – 5

Barrett Cross, Arboriculture, Grade 11 from Hamilton

Our school was designed for 1,500 students and is currently organized into five program clusters:

Agricultural Programs: Arboriculture, Companion Animals, Equine Science, Landscape & Turf Management, Natural & Environmental Sciences, Sustainable Horticulture, and Veterinary Science

Construction Related Programs: Carpentry, Construction Craft Laborers, Electrical, HVAC and Refrigeration, and Plumbing

Human Services Programs: Dental Assisting, Early Childhood Education, and Health Assisting

STEAM: Advanced Manufacturing, Biotechnology, Design and Media Communications, Engineering & Automation Technology, and Information Technology Services

Service Programs: Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing, Automotive Technology, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts & Hospitality

CREATE.

ENCOURAGE.

PROMOTE.

DEVELOP.

We create opportunities for students throughout our region to have access to high-quality career technical and agricultural education. Partnering with our districts, we have enrolled 43 additional students in our CTAE After Dark Partnership Program into high-demand career areas as a model for Massachusetts' Career Technical Initiative. Current participating students are from Beverly, Gloucester, Marblehead, and Swampscott. The CTAE After Dark Partnership Program is workforce-based and developed to meet the needs of our local and regional labor markets.

Our Cooperative Education Program places upperclassmen in positions where they work among professionals in their field. These opportunities often lead to full-time employment upon graduation as we continue to work with our industry leaders to meet the needs of the current workforce and strengthen the economic pathways for our students. There are currently 2 students from Hamilton participating in our Cooperative Education Program. Our graduates enter the workforce with industry-recognized credentials and hours toward professional licensure, which gives them an advantage and adds to future work readiness. Business, industry, and labor representatives serve on our Program Advisory Committees to ensure that we meet all industry standards.

Over 70% of our students enroll in post-secondary apprenticeship programs or college, with many having earned articulated college credit. The remaining 30% enter the workforce or military upon graduation.

Several of our programs offer valued services to the residents of our communities, including the Maple Street Bistro and Café, Salon 565, Pet Grooming, and Automotive and Auto Collision Repair. The Angell at Essex is a clinic on-campus that provides veterinary services to the general public.

Our CTAE students participate in community outreach projects within our 17 district communities. These projects are for local municipalities and non-profit organizations.

Essex Tech provides students with extracurricular activities including MIAA competitive sports, intramural athletics, and various clubs and service groups, including SkillsUSA, FFA, and DECA organizations that encourage students to explore and develop additional employability skills across their career and technical disciplines.

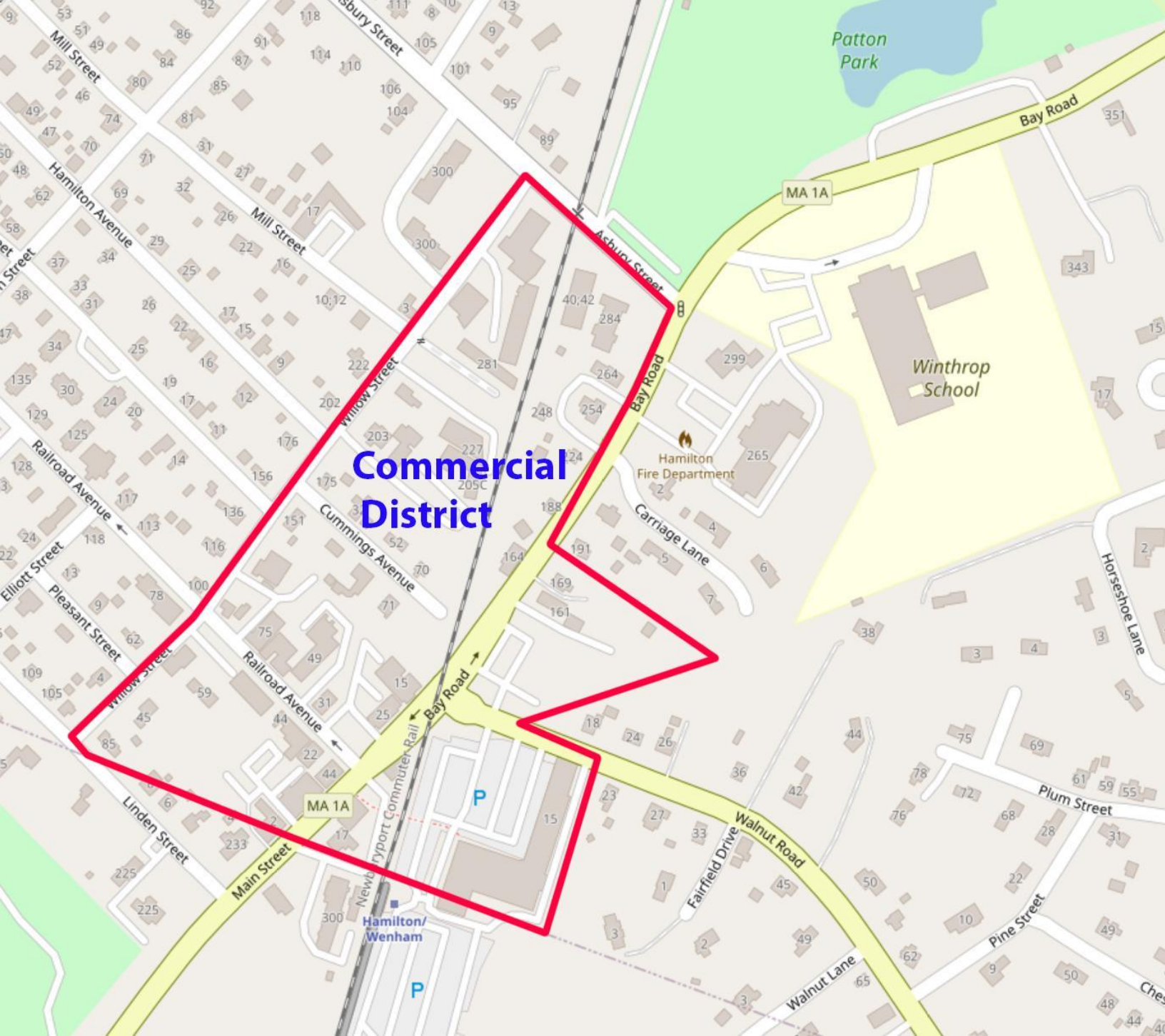
We are currently seeking approval for a new Chapter 74 Program, Metal Fabrication and Joining Technologies for SY25. This program will create more opportunities for our students and meet the needs of our current workforce.

From SY23 to SY24 we have received over \$5.1M in grant funding to increase educational opportunities for our students, secure capital equipment, provide student support, and expand and improve CTAE programs.

We continue to complete on campus projects to expand access for students. Gallant Hall has been transformed to a STEAM Academy, including new doors and front windows, an expanded electrical systems, and furnished with a significant donation from the Furniture Trust. A private donation of \$750K will upgrade Gallant's HVAC system. Windows in the Alumni Gymnasium have been replaced and a new HVAC system is on-going. Progress on the Smith Hall Cafe includes new sinks, bottle filler stations, stair treads, bathroom renovations, and fresh paint. Utilities for the Larkin Cottage have been installed, as well as the chimney and fireplace. Kitchen equipment is onsite and finalized, all exterior doors and windows have been installed.

As we look ahead to the future, we are thankful for your partnership and support of agricultural and technical education.





2023 Annual Report

Hamilton Development Corporation

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Purpose

The Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) was founded in 2012 when town meeting voted to petition the state legislature to create a public non-profit to promote economic development of the town’s commercial district. The state legislature supported the request and the enabling legislation gave the HDC specific authority to purchase, own, operate, lease property and expend funds within the commercial district to promote the economic vitality of the district. The legislative act empowers the HDC to:

- Maximize economic benefit to the town, which cannot be fully realized by the ordinary operations of private enterprise
- Leverage private investments and sources of public revenue; to retain existing enterprises, and *attract new commercial, industrial or residential development,*
- Redevelop, rehabilitate, or rebuild unused, underused and undeveloped areas for commercial, industrial, residential, institutional and public facility purposes *for which public funds may be expended for the good and welfare of the town and the commonwealth.*

HDC Funding

The state passed legislation allowing towns to adopt a .75% meals tax. Hamilton town meeting voted to adopt the meals tax and annually appropriates these funds to support HDC’s operations.

Public Input

Public participation is strongly encouraged with the HDC holding open public meetings on the 1st Wednesday of every month. All agendas are posted in compliance with Open Meeting Laws. Meeting minutes are promptly reviewed/approved by the HDC and posted on the Town’s website. The HDC solicits input from the community and some members serve on other Town boards/committees to foster further communication and planning. The 2023 members of the HDC are Rick Mitchell, Chair; Brian Stein, vice-chair; Scott Maddern, treasurer, and board members Angela Arvanites, Chad Smith, and, Anthony, Passaretti associate.

Accomplishments

The HDC has accomplished the following since our last annual report:

- Funded, along with the town, roadway, sidewalk, and pedestrian safety engineering to support a \$4.9 million grant application to MassWorks for streetscape improvements to Bay Rd, Railroad Ave, Willow St., and Asbury St. to Bay Rd.,
- Funded the town's installation of flashing pedestrian crossing sign at corner of Asbury and Willow St. and lead effort for town's adoption of new parking regulations and signage in the commercial district,
- Created schematic design and began negotiations with landowner for long-term lease and development of a pocket park at the corner of Railroad Ave and Bay Road,
- Funded the fall 2023 downtown festival promoting local businesses,
- Continued funding seasonal flower baskets and holiday wreaths throughout the business district,
- For 11th consecutive year received Town Meeting approval for the Meals Tax to support the HDC.

Planned 2024 Projects

- Finalize lease, financing, design, and begin construction of green space at the corner of Bay Road and Railroad Ave into public pocket park,
- Co-fund and help lead the rezoning of downtown and adoption of a form-based zoning code to provide design guidelines so future development protects character and small village feel.

Potential Projects Under Consideration

- Hansberry's/Dodge Tree property reuse
- Welch Lampson property reuse
- Winthrop School property reuse



Honorable Select Board
Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, and have issued our report thereon dated November 30, 2023. We have previously communicated to you information about our responsibilities under auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, *Government Auditing Standards*, and Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance), as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit in our Statement of Work dated April 18, 2023. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

Significant audit findings or issues

Qualitative aspects of accounting practices

Accounting policies

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts are described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

No new accounting policies were adopted and the application of existing policies was not changed during year.

We noted no transactions entered into by the entity during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimate(s) affecting the financial statements was (were):

- Management's estimate of depreciation expense is based on the estimated useful lives of capital assets, which are based on history and industry standards. We evaluated the methods used in determining the useful lives in determining they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.
- Management's estimate of the Total OPEB Liability is based on a certified actuarial valuation, which contains multiple assumptions regarding mortality, retirement, discount rate, healthcare/medical cost trend rate, and the inflation rate. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the Total OPEB Liability in determining that it is reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

- Management's estimate of the Net Pension Liability is based on an audit of the Essex Regional Retirement System. The Net Pension Liability, among other things, was based on a certified actuarial valuation, which contains multiple assumptions regarding mortality, retirement, etc. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used as part of the actuarial valuation in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. We have also evaluated the audit report, including the Schedule of Employer Allocations and Schedule of Pension Amounts by Employer in determining that they are reasonable and consistent with GASB Statement No. 68.

Financial statement disclosures

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. There were no particularly sensitive financial statement disclosures.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

Significant unusual transactions

We identified no significant unusual transactions.

Difficulties encountered in performing the audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

Uncorrected misstatements

Professional standards require us to accumulate all misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. The attached schedule summarizes uncorrected misstatements of the financial statements. Management has determined that their effects are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Uncorrected misstatements or the matters underlying uncorrected misstatements could potentially cause future-period financial statements to be materially misstated, even if management has concluded that the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial to the financial statements under audit.

Corrected misstatements

The attached schedule summarizes all adjustments and misstatements (material and immaterial), detected as a result of audit procedures, that were required to present the Town's financial statements in accordance with governmental GAAP. Management has accepted responsibility for such adjustments in its November 30, 2023 management representation letter.

Disagreements with management

For purposes of this communication, a disagreement with management is a disagreement on a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditors' report. No such disagreements arose during our audit.

Management representations

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated November 30, 2023.

Management consultations with other independent accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the entity's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditors' opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

Significant issues discussed with management prior to engagement

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to engagement as the entity's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our engagement.

Other audit findings or issues

We have provided a separate communication to you dated November 30, 2023, communicating internal control related matters identified during the audit.

Audits of group financial statements

We noted no matters related to the group audit that we consider to be significant to the responsibilities of those charged with governance of the group.

Required supplementary information

With respect to the required supplementary information (RSI) accompanying the financial statements, we made certain inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the RSI, including whether the RSI has been measured and presented in accordance with prescribed guidelines, whether the methods of measurement and preparation have been changed from the prior period and the reasons for any such changes, and whether there were any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement or presentation of the RSI. We compared the RSI for consistency with management's responses to the foregoing inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge obtained during the audit of the basic financial statements. Because these limited procedures do not provide sufficient evidence, we did not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

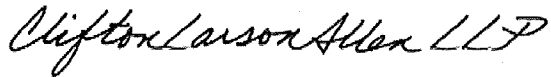
Supplementary information in relation to the financial statements as a whole

With respect to the schedule of expenditures of federal awards (SEFA) accompanying the financial statements, on which we were engaged to report in relation to the financial statements as a whole, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the SEFA to determine that the SEFA complies with the requirements of the Uniform Guidance, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period or the reasons for such changes, and the SEFA is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the SEFA to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves. We have issued our report thereon dated November 30, 2023.

Honorable Select Board
Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts
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* * *

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Select Board and management of the Town of Hamilton, Massachusetts and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "CliftonLarsonAllen LLP".

CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Boston, Massachusetts
November 30, 2023