



Town of Hamilton

Town Manager Report

For week of July 15, 2024

Department/ Project	Weekly Update	Timeline	Status
1. Town Hall project	1. Bids for the Town Hall came in higher than expected. The Select Board, Finance and Advisory Committee and other boards will be reviewing options for closing the gap in funding over the next two weeks and will likely call for a Special Town Meeting in the fall at a date still to be finalized. The Select Board will discuss again at its next meeting on August 5.	1. Two weeks	1. <i>On-going</i>
2. Town offices at Patton Homestead	2. Just a reminder that many town offices have moved to the Patton Homestead, during the Town Hall renovation project. The offices located at Patton Homestead include: Town Manager office, Finance Office, Treasurer, Assessors, Planning Department, Conservation Department, and Town Clerk. The Inspectional Services Department and Health Department are now permanently housed at the Council on Aging Building on Bay Road.	2. 18-24 months	2. <i>On-going</i>
3. Town Center Visioning Workshop: Thursday, July 25 from 6-8 pm at the Miles River Middle School Multi Purpose Room.	3. Please see the project website under the "Get Involved" section for more information.	3. July 25th	3. <i>On-going</i>
4. Chebacco Road project completing	4. The Chebacco Road paving and improvement project is now nearly complete and workers will be cleaning up the site, finishing their work and removing their equipment. We appreciate the input from the neighborhood over these past years. Though it has taken us longer than we had anticipated, we believe the project has been well-received by the residents and still protects the resource area surrounding it.	4. Two weeks	4. <i>Nearly complete</i>

5. Chebacco condo proposal withdrawn	5. At its July 16 meeting the Planning Board voted unanimously to authorize Town Counsel to sign off on the withdrawal of the appeal for the previously proposed senior housing project on the property at 133 Essex Street, near the intersection with Chebacco Road. Coupled with the developer's previous withdrawal of its 40B application during the July 10 ZBA meeting, all of the recent efforts to build at 133 Essex are now ended.		5. <i>Complete</i>	5. <i>Complete</i>
<u>Public Works</u>			Timeline	Status
Facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hamilton Town Hall <p>Sub-bids for the project were received on 6/17 and General Bids are due on 7/1 at 2pm.</p>		Construction Start Summer 2024	<i>Out for Bid</i>
DPW Administration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Opportunities <p>The Town still has two Truck Driver/Laborer openings. If interested please email Tim Olson @ tolson@hamiltonma.gov or call 978-626-5227 for position details.</p>		Open	Open
Highway Dept	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Essex Street Drainage <p>DPW continues to communicate with the engineering consultant and owner of 470 Essex Street in hopes of a collaborative effort to address drainage upgrades along Essex Street near Appaloosa Lane. No new update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements <p>The TEC proposal has been accepted by Hamilton DPW and an agreement is being processed. Plans are to construct new sidewalks, repair existing, mill and overlay streets, and minor drainage improvements. The extent of this project is contingent on available funding and contractor bids. Planning and priority areas for roadway improvements are as follows: Chebacco Road, Miles River, Bridge Street. Sidewalk improvements are planned for Essex Street and Highland Street. The extent of the scope of work is still being discussed, but the town will make every effort to maximize the work with the budget available.</p>		On-going	Waiting for owner and development submittal
			Summer 2024 bid	In-progress

	<p>3. Route 22 Paving</p> <p>I am pleased to announce that Hamilton was chosen as a community to have Route 22 paved under the MassDOT Municipal Pavement Program. The full extent of the project and schedule has not yet been released.</p>		<p>Summer/Fall 2024</p> <p>Selected by MassDOT</p>
Vehicle Maintenance	<p>1. New Purchased Vehicles</p> <p>The front line sander is estimated to arrive in Hamilton in June.</p> <p>2. ATM Town Vehicles</p> <p>Following the 2024 ATM the town will purchase a new Trackless Sidewalk Machine, the second front line sander, a new dump truck, and a new pick up truck, to replace our aging fleet. No new update.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2024</p>	<p>Sander in June</p> <p>Pending</p>
Cemetery	No Cemetery Updates		
Sanitation	No Sanitation Updates		
Parks and Grounds	<p>1. Patton Park Improvements</p> <p>The DPW and Rec Dept. have re-engaged CBA Landscape Architects to discuss the first phase of drainage and park improvements as outlined in the Patton Park Master Plan. Conceptual cost estimates were discussed at the May 6th Select Board meeting. High priorities from the Patton Park Master Plan were drainage improvements and pathways. No new update.</p>	Fall/Winter 2024/2025	Preliminary Discussions
Energy	<p>1. Solar on the DPW Garage</p> <p>The Town is actively pursuing the installation of a solar array on the DPW Garage. On 2/6/2024 DPW and HEIC met with Senator Bruce Tarr to discuss the solar project as well as the Town Hall Renovation project and the importance of each energy component in the whole project. No new update.</p>	<p>Summer/Fall 2024 in conjunction with the Town Hall project</p>	Under design
Water	<p>1. Lead Service Inventory and Assessment</p> <p>The Water Department and hired consultant, Stantec Engineers, have continued to</p>	In-process	Working on data from public side, will be reaching out to private owners for cooperation

	<p>populate a service line inventory as mandated by EPA and MassDEP. Efforts have been made on the public side of the service connection, but please understand the required assessment and inventory also include the information from the private end of the service. The Hamilton Water Department has issued a notice included in your February water bill that includes information regarding the program and instructions on how to assist the department. As of 6/20/2024, 631 locations uploaded to the MassDEP web application, an increase from 617 back on 5/17/2024. This represents approximately 25% of Hamilton Water users. Let's keep up the momentum. If unable to use the MassDEP Web Application please either email Hamilton's DPW Director at tolson@hamiltonma.gov or call the Hamilton Water Department at 978-626-5226 to schedule an appointment. Again, your participation is appreciated. Stantec plans to initiate field inspections to assist Hamilton Water. There will be more information in the next few weeks regarding the field inspections and consultant support.</p> <p>2. GIS Asset Management</p> <p>The town has contracted with Dewberry Engineers to assist with establishing a GIS water asset management program. This GIS will initially be geared to the Hamilton Water System but will then be populated with other attributes i.e. storm water, roadways etc. in the future. Currently our GIS consultant is working on a work order solution within the GIS platform that will allow citizen or department requests to be tracked and documented in GIS when completed. No new update.</p> <p>3. Well Maintenance</p> <p>The contractor has begun the annual redevelopment of our wells in the Idlewood Well Field. To date, Idlewood #2, Plateau Well, and Caisson Well have been redeveloped. No new update.</p> <p>4. Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)</p>				
		In-process	Gathering field data for system wide information		
		On-going	Idlewood 2, Plateau, and Caisson Well complete		
		Implemented	Available		

	<p>The Hamilton Water Department has partnered with Action Inc. to implement the LIHWAP to qualifying residents of Hamilton. This program will provide financial assistance benefits to eligible residents. No new update.</p> <p>5. Phase 5 Water Improvements</p> <p>Hamilton Water will begin the preliminary design efforts for a Phase 5 Water System Improvement project. Phase 5 Water System Improvements will be concentrated along Fox Run, Tally Ho, Oak, Plum, Chestnut, Pine, and other surrounding streets. The construction phase timeline will be contingent upon available funding and Town Meeting appropriation.</p> <p>6. 2023 Consumer Confidence Report</p> <p>The Hamilton Water Department has begun formulating the 2023 Consumer Confidence Report. No new update.</p> <p>7. Water Treatment Plant Filter Media Replacement Project</p> <p>This project will be funded by the Ipswich River WMA grant and includes the replacement of the spent Filtronics filter media in the existing water treatment facility to optimize the removal of iron and manganese prior to the processed water entering the new GAC filtration system. This will help maximize the new carbon media. The Town has an agreement for this work with low bidder Carbon Filtration Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$69,120. The Town had previously purchased the filter media from Filtronics for \$109,100.00. No new update.</p>		<p>Design by Fall 2024 Construction TBD</p> <p>Seeking proposals</p> <p>Completed and available on the Town Website</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete by June 30th</p> <p>Under construction</p>	
<p><u>Police</u></p> <p>1. Full-Time Hire(s)</p> <p>2. Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission</p>	<p>We have recently hired Officer Assagi (Guy) Wynter as our newest Hamilton full time police officer. Guy comes to us from the Boston University Police Department.</p> <p>We have successfully completed our accreditation assessment and have been approved for State Re-Accreditation. We will receive our official award on October 30th</p>		<p>September 1st</p> <p>October 30th</p>	

3. Good Citizenship Program

Fire Dept

1 Department Stats

2. Safe Grant

3. Maintenance

We are pleased to announce that the Hamilton Police Department has once again teamed up with Cherry Farm Creamery to hand out “Good Citizen” coupons to children exercising good judgment. Officers will be handing coupons to children using crosswalks to cross the streets, wearing bike helmets while riding their bikes etc. Coupons may be redeemed from the General Store at 63 Willow Street.

1 The Hamilton Fire Department responded to the following calls along with other department activities. In the previous two weeks we responded to 20 fire alarm activations, 25 ambulance calls, 6 mutual aid calls, 5 MVA, 0 brush fires and 4 public assist. We also conducted the following fire prevention activities, 5 inspections.

2. The Hamilton Fire Dept applied for the DFS Safe grant and Senior Safe grant to help bring educational programs into our elementary schools and our Senior Center.

Duty crews have begun inspecting fire hydrants and will be cleaning/removing rust & painting yellow hydrants red in the coming weeks

3 On-going

2. On-Going

3. On-Going

Planning and Inspectional Services

1. Master Plan	MP document being reviewed and edited by Planning Board; text was forwarded to the Board by the Master Plan Steering Committee.	On-going	On-going
2. 133 Essex St Senior Housing Project	Applicant appealed Planning Board decisions - one dismissed - Planning Board reviewing in Executive Session 7/16/24.	Ongoing	Ongoing
3. 133 Essex St 40B	Applicant withdrew application; ZBA allowed withdrawal without prejudice.	Over.	Withdrawn.
4. Planning Board considering Form Based Zoning (FBZ) along with 3A; consultant hired.	The work will include introduction of a new zoning for downtown area along with an approach to 3A zoning as well. Engagement has begun with a public forum June 12 and more to come. .	Two zoning articles for public/town meeting vote are expected April 2025.	Ongoing
5. Planning Board Site Plan review of Appleton Farms Parking Lot improvement project.	Planning Board to vote on a site plan review 7.16.24 for improved parking area near Appleton.	On-going	Ongoing
6. Conservation Commission	Seeking member (2) - pls contact if interested	6. July meeting likely	

Public Health Department

1. Health Related

Currently we're experiencing 4 confirmed cases of Lyme Disease, 1 confirmed case of Tuberculosis reported, 1 case of influenza and 1 case of Campylobacteriosis. Public Health clinics for the flu and bivalent boosters have ended, residents are encouraged to seek vaccines from their health care provider or health care clinic. If a resident can't receive one elsewhere they can call the Public Health Nurse. In addition, the health department still has a limited supply of single use gloves and bandages for distribution to the community please call 978 417-6118 to order. And we no longer have Covid test kits residents are encouraged to visit a retail store if needed.

On-going

2. Food Permitting and Inspection

Permitting of food establishments/food trucks is on-going for the 2024 year. Round 1 of food establishment inspection is completed in accordance with appendix 5 of the 2013 food code. Summer camp and pool inspection has been completed.

3 Septic

Soil tests, plan reviews and septic inspections are on-going along with permitting of septic haulers. We have processed 183 septic pumping reports, licenced 13 septic installers, 5 septic haulers, 8 title inspectors and 1 maintenance provider. We have completed 59 plan reviews, 25 title 5 reports, 4 soil tests and issued 9 certificates of compliance. The Health Dept. is on the verge of rolling out a new low interest betterment loan program that would benefit residents whose septic systems have failed and are in need of replacement. The application process will soon be complete.

4. Animals

Permitting of animal keeping is on-going. Barn inspections have begun and the barn book will be completed and filed with the state. In accordance with Board of Health regulations, the new expiration date for animal keeping is August 31st of each year and the Board of Health is in the process of updating the Keeping of Animals regulation (last updated in 1989), in collaboration with neighboring communities. A draft regulation has been assembled and passed at the last BOH meeting. A public hearing has been scheduled for July 30, 2024, 5pm at the COA

5. New Programs

building as an informational meeting for interested parties.
Also, In an effort to update our archaic Board of Health regulations, the board is investigating a draft private well regulation and will have a decision coming soon. Tobacco sales regulation has already been updated earlier this year - added recently is the ban on menthol flavored products (all tobacco sale permit holders have been inspected for such products)

The sharps collection/disposal program for Hamilton residents is on-going and a sharps collection container can be obtained from the Senior Center (299 Bay Road) taken home, filled and returned for disposal free of charge. Please contact the Health Dept. or the COA to take advantage of this program.
Blood pressure screenings are on-going at Lamson Hall on the 2nd Wed. of each month from 3:30-5:30.

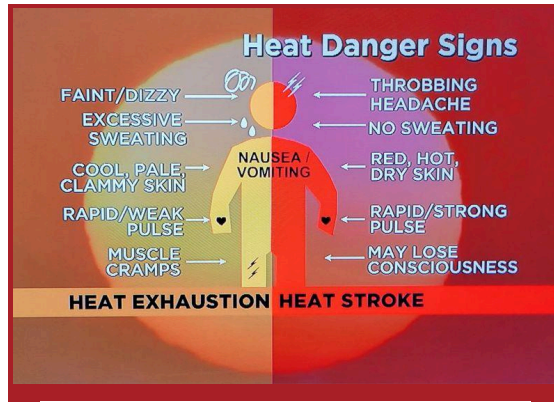
6. Public Health Concerns

There's been a recall on Ice cream products posted by the FDA. "Totally Cool", which makes ChipWich, Friendly's and other branded ice creams recalled more than 60 products because they could contain listeria. I know summertime is a great time to shop for ice cream treats (when isn't it), but if you bought any of the products please return them to the place of purchase. For questions contact Totally Cool at (410) 363-7801 or regulatory@totallycooIcecream.com, (*Listeria is an organism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in the young, frail or elderly. Symptoms often include high fever, severe headache, stiffness, nausea, abdominal pain and diarrhea. Listeria infection can also cause miscarriages and stillbirths among pregnant women.*)



Also, Since the weather forecast has been in the mid - upper 90's (with a heat index of over

100), I wanted to talk about heat related dangers and the difference between Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke. Please stay hydrated, limit exposure, take breaks and wear sunscreen (although some social media influencers are saying sun screen is bad for your health - this is misinformation and simply not true).



And finally, If you haven't heard, Norovirus is up 5%. Please wash your hands frequently - hand sanitizer is NOT a substitute for proper hand washing. (no one has time to be sick...) Stay hydrated during the heatwave. I encourage you to call me if you have any health related questions at 978 417-6118
Dennis Palazzo, Director of Health
Please stay safe and healthy.

Finance

1. Year-End Budget Review

1. This is the time of year when each department takes a close look at their budget spending to ensure that transfers are not needed to cover unforeseen expenses throughout the year.

2. FY25 ATM Warrant Articles

2. The Accounting team is working to get all certified FY25 ATM Warrant Articles on the books to secure funding and budgeting in each area of the town.

3. Wage and Compensation Sheets

3. In collaboration with each department, Accounting ensures that each employee is assigned an approved wage and compensation rate. This tool helps payroll assign new FY25 rates and allows Accounting to ensure proper allocation of wages per department of the Town.

4. Financial Policies

4. With advice from Hamilton's auditors, Finance began the preliminary process of policy adoption by delivering a summary version to the Select Board on the draft Grant Management Policy, draft Procurement Conflict of Interest Policy, and draft Comprehensive Public Records and Technology Policy. FinCom has received these policies for review and will make a recommendation to the Select Board.

5. Year-End Close

5. The fiscal year-end is June 30th. All departments will review payments to vendors to ensure all invoices have been received for FY24. Now through July 15th is extremely important to ensure funds are properly allocated to the correct fiscal year.

Treasurer/Collector

1 Tax Title

We fell a little behind schedule with FY23 Tax Title we are down to just 3 parcels With being short staffed we have decided to wait and process FY23 & FY24 tax titles together.

2 Billing

Working with Kelly and Ryan on our Preliminary Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills for FY25. Also working to send out Real Estate and Personal Property Tax bill demands for FY24. Had to wait until the deferral process was completed. Commitment 3 for Motor vehicles has been mailed this week.
Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills were mailed 6/10/24 due 6/24/24.
1st Qtr FY25 Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills will be mailed 6/28/24

3. Munis

Working with Munis to add 5 new deferrals for FY24 tax year.
Was able to add our 5 new deferral in munis this week and updated the interest rate to 2%
Approved at special Town Meeting in Nov 2023

4 Benefits /Payroll

Open Enrollment and Summer Staff members is a very busy time for Sue with payroll and benefits. She has a great handle on this process and she has worked hard to get a great system set up.

5 Misc

Sue is preparing year end payroll at this time which has a lot of moving parts.

Preparing for year-end at this point. Trying to get caught up with being one staff member down, it's been extremely busy in our office.

Parks & Recreation

1. Veterans Memorial Pool

Pool Opened this past weekend and as chances would have it we had a heat wave during the first week. The pool was extremely busy Tuesday - Thursday.

Scan-ins: 574

Drop-ins: 107

On average 227 patrons a day over the three day period.

The Pool will be closed for the Community Block Party on Saturday, and will re-open on Sunday

2. Patton Park Summer Park Program

Camp Program starts on Monday. We are excited to get the program up and running. We will be extremely busy this summer averaging close to 225 children a day!

3. Community Block Party

Block Party is this Saturday starting around 4pm. Fireworks are set to go off at approximately 9 pm.

1. On-going

1. On-going

Council on Aging

1. Programming

Upcoming programming includes celebrating National Watermelon Day, Amelia Earhart Day, Vanilla Ice Cream Day. We will have a fraud presentation with Brookline Bank. WE are working with a professional organizer, broker to discuss downsizing. In August we will have a new Balance instructor.



Regular programming including the birthday party, bingo, arts and crafts, knitting, book club, and yoga continued. We continued to offer our Fit over 50 class, yoga. Indoor bocce has come to end and moved back to Wenham. We will continue to hold the space on Thursday morning in case of rain. Indoor pickleball has also ended we will be starting outside at Patton Park on Wednesday May 15th.

Ongoing

2. Shine

More calls regarding if residents should sign up for Medicare and Social Security prior to the election. Do I know what will happen to benefits going forward.

Retirement calls continue to come in about shine sign ups. When people come in I remind them that space fills up fast from October-December so if they will need help with open enrollment they should call ahead. Or going over how to look it up themselves. Shine certification has been completed. I passed the exam this year. And will be all set to continue to help residents throughout the year and during open enrollment. We had a couple residents that looked into becoming SHINE representatives but due to scheduling and location of training were unable too.

Ongoing

<p>2. Collaboration</p> <p>3. Employee Engagement</p> <p>4. Notifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Public Health Nurse: Towns of Hamilton, Essex, Wenham, and Rockport Water Truck Driver/Laborer DPW Truck Driver/Laborer Accounts Receivable Specialist in the Treasure/Collector Office: Job re-posted. <p>2. Finalized Regional Health job descriptions will be posted with anticipated changes of position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Public Health Nurse Health Inspections (pending) <p>Working with Union and DPW on succession planning.</p> <p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for a Building Department open house. Developing an Employee Engagement survey focussed on team building and enrichment. <p>4. Working with MIIA on Health and Wellness programs for town employees in the Spring/Summer.</p> <p>Attending a Racial Equity Advancement & Collaborative Hub (REACH) program in Boston. Hosted by the Metropolitan Planning Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next meeting scheduled 5/8 		
<p><u>Town Clerk's Office</u></p> <p>2024 Conflict of Interest Annual Filings MGL C. 268A</p>	<p>All municipal employees (including board and committee members) received an email from the State Ethics Commission regarding Ethics on-line training requirements. I followed up with an additional email reminder. While most completed the training in 2023 and will not need to take it again until 2025, EVERY municipal employee MUST acknowledge receipt of the summary EVERY YEAR. On 5/14/24 I sent another reminder to Elected Officials that are behind. On June 4 I sent a reminder email to 39 elected and appointed officials. Approx 15 have responded!</p>	<p>Jan - Dec</p>	<p>Year round</p>

2024 Dog License Renewals MGL C. 140 s.137, 137A	In 2023 we issued 1150 dog licenses. Anne has issued 932 through June. Late fees kicked in in June.	Jan - Dec	Never ending!
DBA MGL C. 110 s.5	“Doing Business As” renewals due every 4 years; approx 40 to be renewed in calendar year 2024. We issued 49 in 2023. We have issued an additional 10 (1 total) in 2024.	Jan - Dec	Several more expected
Move to Patton Homestead	The Town Clerk’s office is stopping at the COA every day to gather all mail from the drop box and bring it to Town Hall and also to drop off and pick up mail at the post office.	November 2023	
2024 Election Season = 4 Elections [2 down and 2 to go] PLUS A RECOUNT	<p>2024 election dates: March 5 Presidential Primary, April 11 Annual Town Election; State Primary Sep 3 (the day after Labor Day); Nov 5 State/Presidential Election.</p> <p>State Primary Election Sept 3: <u>VOTE BY MAIL:</u> We will mail at least 999 ballots for the State Primary. Postcards were mailed out and those applications will be processed. <u>IN PERSON EARLY VOTING:</u> In-person early voting at the Patton Homestead starts Sat, Aug 24 - Fri, Aug 30 <u>ELECTION DAY:</u> At the Rec Center from 7:00 am - 8:00 pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Election details are available on the Town Clerk’s webpage and info has been posted to Facebook.</p>	Nov 2023 - Nov 2024	
State (Sept) Primary Ballot - Nomination Papers for Congress, US Senate, State Senate, State Representative, Clerk of Courts, Registrar of Deeds, Governor’s Council	We received 87 pages of nomination papers and certified 790 voter signatures.		
State (Nov) Ballot - Initiative Petitions a.k.a Ballot Questions	We received 214 pages of petition papers and certified 346 voter signatures. There are 9 petitions circulating, 5 are likely to be on the ballot.		
2024 Hamilton Census/Street List process MGL C.51 s.4	The 2024 Census Form was mailed to 2822 households mid-January. Forms were due back in 10 days. The mailing included the dog license renewal form and the 2024 trash schedule. We have updated 1979 forms in the voter system. Approximately 30% of forms	Jan 2024 - Dec 2024	

2024 Voter Inactivation
MGL C.51 s.37

ANNUAL FLAMMABLE STORAGE
PERMITS AND REGISTRATIONS

have NOT been returned. We have manually updated information for all residents living at the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary.

On June 3 I marked 1322 voters as inactive in the voter registration system because they had not returned the Census form. Do they still live in Hamilton? Each will receive a postcard in the mail asking that they confirm that they still reside in Hamilton. This process ensures an accurate voter registration list. **So far we 482 postcards have been returned.**

In coordination with Chief Brunet, we have sent out seven (7) applications for permits and registrations for Hamilton properties with a license to store and/or sell combustibles. Six of seven have been returned.

Apps due April 30.

DONE