

Town of Hamilton Town Manager Report

For week of August 5, 2024

Department/ Project	Weekly Update	Timeline	Status
1.Town Hall project	1. The Town Hall project bids came in higher than anticipated. The project will go before the Community Preservation Committee for an additional funding request on Thursday, Aug. 8 and the FinCom will review the project costs and funding options on Aug. 14 and 28. A Special Town Meeting has been scheduled for Monday, Sep. 23 to discuss those options and seek approval to move the project forward.	1. 18-24 months	1. Seeking additional funds
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. On-going
3. Special Town Meeting	3. A one issue Special TownMeeting funds has been scheduled for Monday, Sep. 23 at 7 p.m. The Town Meeting will be asked to approve the use of some additional unexpended funds and approve some additional borrowing from the Community Preservation Committee, Neither of the requests will cause an increase in the tax rate, meaning that the additional expense can be handled within the existing town budget.	3. Sep. 23, 2024 at 7 p.m.	3. Seeking use of funds
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	4. Two weeks	4. Nearly complete

	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.		
Public Works		Timeline	Status
UpComing Events	E-Waste Day 8/17/2024	8am	On schedule
Facilities	1. Hamilton Town Hall	Construction Start Fall 2024	Bids received
	Bids were received on July 2, 2024. Low bid was from Campbell Construction at \$7.4M. The town is evaluating the bid		
DPW Administration	Employment Opportunities	Open	Open
	Truck Driver/Laborer - DPW Truck Driver/Laborer - Water Dept Secondary Treatment Operator - Water Dept If interested please email Tim Olson @ tolson@hamiltonma.gov or call 978-626-5227 for position details.		
Highway Dept	Essex Street Drainage	On-going	Waiting for owner and development
	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		submittal
	2. Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements	Summer 2024 bid	In-progress
	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.		
	3. Route 22 Paving I am pleased to announce that Hamilton was chosen as a community to have Route 22 paved under the MassDOT Municipal	Summer/Fall 2024	Selected by MassDOT

	Pavement Program. The full extent of the project and schedule has not yet been released.		
Vehicle Maintenance	New Purchased Vehicles	Ongoing	On order
	Hamilton has received the new Trackless Municipal Tractor and the new Highway Dump Truck. DPW is still waiting for the new pick-up truck and both front line sanders to be delivered.		
Cemetery	No Cemetery Updates		
Sanitation	No Sanitation Updates		
Parks and Grounds	1. Patton Park Improvements		
	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.	Fall/Winter 2024/2025	Preliminary Discussions
Energy	Solar on the DPW Garage	Summer/Fall 2024 in	Under design
	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.	conjunction with the Town Hall project	
Water	Lead Service Inventory and Assessment	In-process	Working on data from public side, will be reaching out to
	The Water Department and hired consultant, Stantec Engineers, have continued to populate a service line inventory as mandated by EPA and MassDEP. A second notice was mailed out to all water users. If you have already performed the assessment you are all set!! Thank you for your participation. If you are still needing to perform the assessment please notify Stantec by email or phone included in the second notice. Stantec plans to initiate field inspections to assist Hamilton Water. There will be more information in the		private owners for cooperation

next few weeks regarding the field inspections and consultant support. As of 8/5/2024, 928 locations uploaded to the MassDEP web application, an increase from 631 back on 6/20/2024. This represents approximately 37% of Hamilton Water users. As always, if you have any questions, please call the Hamilton Water Department at 978-626-5226 or email Hamilton's DPW Director at tolson@hamiltonma.gov. 2. GIS Asset Management	In-process	Gathering field data
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.		for system wide information
3. Well Maintenance	Fy25	Out for Bid
The HamiltonWater Department has released the FY25 Well Maintenance Invitation for Bid. Bids are due 8/7/2024 at 11am.		
4. Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)	Implemented	Available
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.		
5. Phase 5 Water Improvements	Design by Fall	Received proposal
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. Hamilton has received a design proposal for consideration.	2024 Construction TBD	

	6. 2023 Consumer Confidence Report The Hamilton Water Department has begun	Completed and available on the Town Website	Complete
	formulating the 2023 Consumer Confidence Report. No new update.		
	7. Water Treatment Plant Filter Media Replacement Project	Complete	Complete
	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. This project has been completed successfully and within the grant funding.		
Police			
1. Full-Time Hire(s)	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.	September 1st	
2. Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission	We have successfully completed our accreditation assessment and have been approved for State Re-Accreditation. We will receive our official award on October 30th.	October 30th	
3. Good Citizenship Program	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.	3 On-going	
Fire Dept			
1 Department Stats	1 The Hamilton Fire Department responded to the following calls along with other department activities. In the previous two weeks we responded to 16 fire related calls, 16 medical calls, 1 mutual aid call, 1 MVA, 0 brush fires and 4 public assists. We also conducted the following fire prevention activities, 12 inspections.	2. On-Going	

2. Maintenance	Duty crews have begun inspecting fire hydrants and will be cleaning/removing rust & painting yellow hydrants red in the coming weeks	2. On-Going	
3. Ambulance License	The Hamilton Fire Dept is in the process of renewing our class V ambulance license. This year the dept will add Engine 1 as a second licensed non transporting ambulance.	3. On-Going	

<u>Planning and Inspectional</u> Services			
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
133 Essex St Senior Housing Project	Applicant appealed Planning Board decisions - one dismissed - Planning Board reviewing in Executive Session 7/16/24. Over.	Over	Over
133 Essex St 40B	Applicant withdrew application; ZBA allowed withdrawal without prejudice.	Over.	Withdrawn.
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 public forums on June 12 and July 25 - more to come.	Two zoning articles for public/tow meeting vo are expecte April 2025	n te

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 bivalant boosters have ended, residents are encouraged to seek vaccines from their health care provider or health care clinic. 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.

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

On-going

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.

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@totallycoolicecream.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.)

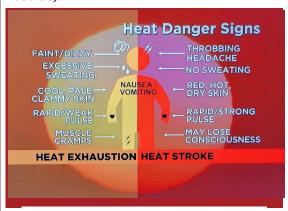
Totally Creative

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

5. New Programs

6. Public Health Concerns

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.

<u>Finance</u>		
1. FY24 Year End	1. Finalized FY24 budget transfers and cash transactions by 7/15; split year end payroll was a success thanks to the dedication of the Treasurer's Team!	
	Departments worked with vendors to encumber any additional FY24 expenditures.	
	Steadily working to close FY24 books; Detailed reconciliations of accounts and Gateway activity are in progress.	
	FY25 budget imported and accessible.	
2. FY24 Audit	2. CLA to perform audit testing the week of September 2nd.	
3. New Actuarial Valuation	3. For compliance purposes, Hamilton is engaged in a renewal of an Actuarial valuation for OPEB. The Finance team is working with the actuary to gather all necessary information to ensure the success of this study.	
4. Financial Policies	4. With advice from Hamilton's auditors, Finance is working with the FinCom and the Select Board to successfully adopt a Grants Management Policy, a Procurement Conflict of Interest Policy, and a Comprehensive Public Records and Technology Policy. On 7/24, FinCom voted in favor of adopting these policies. A favorable vote from the Select Board on August 5th will complete this process.	Completed 8/5/24

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.		

rks & Recreation			
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.	1. On-going	1. On-going
	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		
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.		

Council on Aging

1. Programming

Balance class is starting tomorrow August 6th-with new instructor. Upcoming programs include Root Beer Float Day, We are working with the Fire Department to host our annual Cookout at the end of the month.

We have started a new sign up system-all sheets for the month are in a binder on the counter. We are asking for reservations for everything except our drop in classes. Last month we had a therapy dog join us for lunch.



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.

2. Shine

Open enrollment starts on October 15th. I encourage everyone to review their plans to see if there have been any changes. I will start accepting appointments the middle of September.

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

Ongoing

3. Grants 4. Newsletter	We have given out several ipads and chromebooks. The things that we need to set up the public computers so those will be set up by the beginning of next week. We had an introduction to the grant and received from interest in it. Hoping to continue to gain interest. We have hired an instructor that will be helping at both Rowley and Hamilton. Residents will be able to go to either class. We are also looking into purchasing a drawing app and apple pencils through the grant so that we can offer more. Tablets have been purchased and should be here within the next couple of weeks. We are scheduling an information session the beginning of April so that we can distribute them to interested residents. There will be a sign out procedure. April 1st 1t 11:00 is the tablet talk. Working on September newsletter. Hoping that it will go to print earlier in the month. LPI is starting to look for new sponsors. Currently we don't pay anything for the newsletter because of the sponsors are able to cover it. LPI will be coming to the area to meet with area businesses in hopes of being able to keep our newsletter free to us. Increase of pages has been successful. We are also asking that if residents come into the senior center that they pick up their newsletter here, or they opt to get it via email from the agency. June newsletter just went to print. Second month of increased pages was more successful than last month.	Ongoing	
Human Resources 1. Openings	 1. Current Openings: for more information, see Career Opportunities on the Human Resources page of the Town Website Director of Planning Secondary Treatment Operator for the Water Department Assistant to the Town Manager / Grants & Communications 	Director of Planning: Interviews to begin on 8/13 in collaboration with the Planning Board, Conservation	

2. Collaboration3. Employee Engagement4. Notifications	 Planning and CPA Coordinator Director of Planning Regional Public Health Nurse: Towns of Hamilton, Essex, Wenham, and Rockport Water Truck Driver/Laborer DPW Truck Driver/Laborer Accounts Receivable/Accounts Payable Coordinator Regional Public Health Nurse Health Inspections (pending) Working with Union and DPW on succession planning. Developing an Employee Engagement survey focussed on team building and enrichment. Working with MIIA on Health and Wellness programs for town employees in the Spring/Summer. Attending a Racial Equity Advancement & Collaborative Hub (REACH) program in Boston. Hosted by the Metropolitan Planning Council. Next meeting scheduled 5/8 	Commission and Building Commissioner	
Town Clark's Office			
Town Clerk's Office 2024 Conflict of Interest Annual Filings MGL C. 268A	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!	Jan - Dec	Year round
2024 Dog License Renewals MGL C. 140 s.137, 137A	In 2023 we issued 1150 dog licenses. Anne has issued 955 through June. Late fees kicked in in June. Some residents are delinquent.	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	Jan - Dec	Several more expected

	year 2024. We issued 49 in 2023. We have issued an additional 19 in 2024.	
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	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.	Nov 2023 - Nov 2024
	State Primary Election Sept 3: VOTE BY MAIL: Postcard applications were mailed out and those applications will be processed. We have mailed 1236 ballots for the State Primary; 283 have been returned. IN PERSON EARLY VOTING: In-person early voting at the Patton Homestead starts Sat, Aug 24 - Fri, Aug 30 ELECTION DAY: At the Rec Center from 7:00 am - 8:00 pm	
	☐ Election details are available on the Town Clerk's webpage and info has been posted to Facebook.	
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 1983 forms in the voter system. Approximately 30% of forms have NOT been returned. We have manually updated information for all residents living at the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary.	Jan 2024 - Dec 2024
2024 Voter Inactivation MGL C.51 s.37	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 572 postcards have been returned.		
ANNUAL FLAMMABLE STORAGE PERMITS AND REGISTRATIONS	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