

Town of Hamilton Town Manager Report

For week of September 9, 2024

Department/ Project	Weekly Update	Timeline	Status
1.Grant awarded for Town Hall project	1. The Town received notification on August 29, that we have been awarded a \$500,000 green communities grant from the Department of Energy Resources for the Decarbonization of Town Hall. This grant award, possibly the largest such award for this type of project in the state, will be key to helping us make the Town Hall a net zero carbon project. We are incredibly excited by this grant award. Thanks go out to Energy Manager Vicky Masone, Public Works Director Tim Olson and our energy consultants from Energy Services Group, Bill Garbato and Christian Michel.	1. 18-24 months	1. Awarded
2. Special Town Meeting	2. Special Town Meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Monday, September 23 at the High School Auditorium. It is imperative that the town attract a quorum, as the town needs approval to spend free cash and CPC funds to complete the Town Hall project. The Special Town Meeting Warrant and Finance and Advisory Committee Book of Recommendations are posted on the town website and a mailing card with information about how to download and print the warrant has been sent to all registered voters in the town. We hope to see you on Sep. 23.	2.Sep. 23, 2024 at 7 p.m.	2. Seeking use of fundsOn-going
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.

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Public Works		Timeline	Status
UpComing Events	E Waste Day 9/21/2024		
Facilities	1. Hamilton Town Hall	Construction Start Fall 2024	Pending STM Vote
	Additional funding to contract for the Hamilton Town Hall project will be voted on at the upcoming STM on Sept 23rd, 2024. Low bid Campbell Construction Group is aware of this schedule and, if funding is successful, could start the project as early as November 2024.		
	2. Replacement of AHU1 Cooling System	October 2024	Out for bid
	DPW has solicited bids for the replacement of the AHU1 cooling system at the PSB. The current cooling package has reached its end of life and beyond maintenance repairs. Plans are to replace the current R-22 cooling package with a R-410A package.		
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
	The Town has contracted with TEC for roadway improvements. PLans are to have a pavement project out for bid within the next few weeks for a fall paving project. Work that does not finish by winter will be completed in the spring. Planning areas are Bridge Street, Greenbrook, and Miles River. Sidewalk improvements are planned for Essex 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	TBD	Selected by
	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.		MassDOT
Vehicle Maintenance	1. New Purchased Vehicles	Ongoing	On order
	Hamilton has received the new crew cab Chevy pickup truck. DPW is still waiting for both front line sanders to be delivered.		
Cemetery	No Cemetery Updates		
Sanitation	No Sanitation Updates		
Parks and Grounds	1. Patton Park Improvements	Fall/Winter 2024/2025	Preliminary Discussions
	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.		
Energy	1. 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		private owners for cooperation

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 has initiated field inspections to assist Hamilton Water and I'm pleased to announce that as of 9/6/2024, 1066 locations have been uploaded to the MassDEP web application, an increase from 928 back on 8/5/2024. This represents approximately 43% 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 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.	In-process	Gathering field data for system wide information
3. Well Maintenance The HamiltonWater Department has contracted with Maher Services in the amount of \$91,000 for the FY25 Well Maintenance Invitation for Bid.	Fy25	Out for Bid
4. Phase 5 Water Improvements Hamilton has contracted with Stantec Consulting Services for the Phase 5 Water System Improvements that 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. Stantec has assisted the town with the first 4 successful phases.	Design by Fall 2024 Construction TBD	Received proposal

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	5. 2023 Consumer Confidence Report The Hamilton Water Department has begun formulating the 2023 Consumer Confidence Report. No new update.	Completed and available on the Town Website	Complete
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	
	Officer Guy has begun the Field Training (FTO) Program and is currently working the day shift. As part of the FTO program, he will be required to work all 3 shifts.		
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.		
	This year's Good Citizenship Program was another success. Hamilton Officers handed out dozens of coupons throughout the summer to residents in town which allowed them to go to the General Store for an ice cream supplied by Cherry Farm Creamery.		
Fire Dept	1 The Hamilton Fire Department responded to	1. On Going	
1 Department Stats	the following calls along with other department activities. In the previous two weeks we responded to 7 fire related calls, 25 medical calls, 0 mutual aid calls, 4 MVA, 0 brush fires and public assists. We also conducted the following fire prevention activities, 12 inspections.		

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





The HFD has applied for an EMPG grant through the Mass Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). If approved the grant will be used to purchase (3) cold water rescue suits

3. On Going

3, Grant

Planning and Inspectional Services			
Master Plan	MP document has been reviewed/edited by Planning Board; text requires formatting.	On-going	On-going
Planning Board considering Form Based Zoning (FBZ) along with 3A; consultant hired.	The work will include a new zoning for downtown area, with public engagement along with an approach to 3A zoning as well. Public process has begun with public forums on June 12 and July 25 - more to come.	Two zoning articles for public/town meeting vote are expected April 2025. Planning Board hearing likely in Feb/Mar 25.	Ongoing
Planning Board evaluating various amendments to the zoning bylaw - inclusionary housing, accessory dwelling units, and various other specifics.	Expect town meeting articles.	On-going	On-going

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1. Health Related

Currently we're experiencing 5 confirmed cases of Lyme Disease, 1 case of influenza, 2 cases of Campylobacteriosis, 8 confirmed cases of Coronavirus and 1 case of Salmonellosis. Public Health clinics for the flu and bivalant boosters will begin soon (an announcement will be made). Covid test kits are now available (in limited supply) at the COA building (1 kit per person). 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.

On-going

2. Food Permitting and Inspection

Permitting of food establishments/food trucks is on-going for the 2024 year. Round 2 of food establishment inspection has commenced 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, licensed 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.

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.

5. New Programs

6. Public Health Concerns

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.

Walmart has recalled nearly 10,000 cases of apple juice sold in stores across the U.S. that were found to contain potentially harmful levels of inorganic arsenic. The affected product may temporarily cause adverse health consequences. The recall applies to 9,535 cases of Great Value brand apple juice sold in 25 states, the contaminated six-packs of 8-ounce juice bottles after discovering levels of the chemical contaminant that exceeded industry standards and can cause symptoms such as vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, numbness and muscle cramping. The EPA has labeled inorganic arsenic a carcinogen, or a substance that causes cancer.

Also, With the threat of mosquito borne illnesses looming both north and south of us, I'm slightly concerned for your safety. I'm sure you've all heard of the recent EEE fatality in Hampstead, NH and positive cases just south of us in Plymouth county. (although it is a rare illness, there is no treatment or cure for EEE and 30% of those who contract it don't survive.) I don't want you to be overly concerned but hope you'll remain vigilant and reduce your risk, wear repellant (with DEET) and long sleaves, and try to limit your outdoor activities between dusk and dawn. (and please care for your animals to prevent the contraction of this mosquito borne illness).

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) 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. FY24 Audit

1. Patton Homestead was extra busy this past week with auditors from Clifton Larson Allen on site to perform the FY24 audit testing. They will continue to request testing documents virtually in hopes to have a full presentation to the Select Board in November.

It is important to understand that although an audit is driven by finance, it takes great leadership from the Select Board, Town Manager, FinCom, and all Department Heads to implement best practices of internal controls to continue to promote fiscal responsibility and financial management while working to minimize or eliminate a high risk environment.

2. New OPEB Actuarial Valuation

2. For compliance purposes related to GASB 74 & 75, Hamilton engaged the services of Odyssey Advisors for a renewed Actuarial valuation of Other Post Employment Benefits Plan (OPEB) through June 30, 2023. The timing of this valuation helps the success of the timeliness of audit results.

3. Financial Policies

3. With advice from Hamilton's auditors, Finance worked with the FinCom and the Select Board to adopt a Grants Management Policy, a Procurement Conflict of Interest Policy, and a Comprehensive Public Records and Technology Policy. These policies were officially adopted on August 5th.

4. DLS/Gateway Submission

4. Finance worked to finalize the Department of Revenue submission of the FY24 Balance Sheet and all requirements involved in such. Those requirements are related to Cash, Accounts Receivables,

	Water Enterprise, Special Revenue Accounts, Grants and Trusts, Capital accounts, deficits waiting for reimbursement at year end, Statement of Indebtedness, Cherry Sheets, Snow & Ice and the General Fund Free Cash calculation as well as the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings calculation for certification. A successful submission could mean a quick turnaround in Free Cash and Retained Earnings certifications.	
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 2nd Qtr Real Estate and Personal Property tax Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills 2nd Qtr FY25 Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills will be mailed 9/27/24	
3 Year-end	Finalizing Treasurer's year-end cash, Outstanding receivables and statement of indebtedness for year-end State reporting on Gateway	
4 Benefits /Payroll	Sue will be closing out all summer employees and she has several new hire and health enrollments	
5.Audit	We have been working hard to prepare for last week's audit. All documentation requested Sue and I tried to send in advance.	
6 Misc	Still searching for a replacement for Leticia. We are working hard to keep up but there always seems to be something we have to put on hold.	

Parks & Recreation			
1. Fall 2024 Programs	Registration for Fall Programming opened on Tuesday, August 20th. To date we have had over 900 unique registrations for our fall activities. Our first session of fall programs started this week with fall programs continuing through arly december.	1. On-going	1. On-going
Gymnasium Floor Refurbishment	As we do each year around this time, our gym floor was refurbished or "screened". This maintenance helps maintain the "stickiness" to the floor as well as helps from further deterioration. The work is complete in one day with the floor being unavailable for two days after. The gym was back available for use on Sunday, September 8th.		
3. Winterization of Pool	The pool is scheduled to be winterized (drained, covered, chemicals) in about 2 weeks time. In order to keep the integrity of the pool itself it will run until it is closed, but it not open to the public		
4.Camp Registration Numbers	 2, 121 unique registrations 528 different campers 224 campers per week on average 		
5. Pool Statistics	 392 memberships sold 88 participants on swim team Pool Attendance		
	 6,804 membership scan-ins 863 drop-ins Average 100 swimmer per day during open swim 		

Council on Aging

1. Programming

Balance class continues to grow. Fireman's Cookout was a huge success! Thank you to the Fire Department for their dedication. We are finding an increase in programming like our lunches, and exercise class. Our numbers have increased a great deal in the past couple of weeks. During the month of August we had 175 residents coming through our doors. This is 50 more residents than we had in August of 2023. In total they visited over 450 times!



Regular programming including the bingo, arts and crafts, knitting, book club. Our exercise classes continued with Fit Over 50, Yoga, balance and Qigong.

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 in the middle of September. Appointments will be available until the last week in November. We will be hosting an Intro to Medicare hour on October 21st starting at 3:00pm.

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.

Ongoing

Ongoing

2. Shine

3. Grants	Grant for iPads and Chromebooks continue to be successful. Our classes with KevTech are well attended and enjoyed. Residents report that they are learning a lot of things from him. We have set up the computers in the center that residents are welcome to come in and use. 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.	Ongoing	
4. Newsletter	We are continuing to work with Wenham around a joint newsletter. This continues to be successful, although at times confusing. Residents are coming in here looking for programming. We have also implemented a new sign up system which seems to be working. We are having more people call the beginning of the month to sign up for activities.		
Human Resources	1. Current Openings: for more information, see Career	Director of Planning:	
1. Openings	 Opportunities on the Human Resources page of the Town Website Director of Planning Truck Driver/Laborer - DPW* Truck Driver/Laborer - Water Dept* Secondary Treatment Operator - Water Dept* Planning and CPA Coordinator 	Interviews will begin on 8/13 in collaboration with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Building Commissioner	

- 2. Collaboration
- 3. Employee Engagement
- 4. Notifications

- Regional Public Health Nurse: Towns of Hamilton, Essex, Wenham, and Rockport*
- Accounts Receivable/Accounts Payable Coordinator
- Health Inspections (pending)

*Working with the Regional Coordinator on the Regional Public Health Nurse position to make it more desirable. Will present ideas to the Hamilton Town Manager (regional lead).

*Working with DPW Director on incentive options to attract qualified candidates.

3.

- Developing an Employee Engagement survey focussed on team building and enrichment.
- 4. Working with MIIA on Health and Wellness programs for town employees in the fall/winter.

Attending a Racial Equity Advancement & Collaborative Hub (REACH) program in Boston. Hosted by the Metropolitan Planning Council.

• Next meeting scheduled 8/28.

. The Second Round of interviews with the town manager and planning director is being scheduled for the week of 8/26. Interviews are complete, and references are being processed.

Assistant to the Town Manager / **Grants &** Communicat ions: The first-round interview was conducted on 8/20/2024 with the Finance Director, DPW Director, and Assistant to the Town Manager. The second-round interview is scheduled for 8/27 with the Town Manager. The job has been accepted, and the new candidate starts on September 16, 2024

Accounts
Receivable/
Accounts
Payable

		Coordinator: Pre-screen interview with the Town Accountant and Assistant Treasurer/Coll ector scheduled for 8/20/2024. A second interview with the Finance Director and Treasurer/Coll ector will be arranged for the week of 8/26. Back to the drawing board, the candidate withdrew.	
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 additional email reminders. 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. Several are still delinquent!	Jan - Dec	Year round
2024 Dog License Renewals MGL C. 140 s.137, 137A	In 2023 we issued 962 dog licenses. Anne has issued 971 through August. 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 year 2024. We issued 49 in 2023. We have issued an additional 20 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 [3 down and 1 to go!] plus a recount too! STATE ELECTION, TUES, NOV 5 EARLY VOTING STARTING OCT 19; LAST DAY TO REGISTER SAT OCT 26:

LAST DAY TO REQUEST MAILED BALLOT TUE OCT 29

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.

STATE PRIMARY ELECTION TURNOUT WAS 20%, 1153 VOTERS. 58% VOTED EARLY, 42% SHOWED UP ELECTION DAY.

<u>VOTE BY MAIL</u>: Postcard applications were mailed out; we have processed 1950 requests. We mailed 1328 ballots for the State Primary; 630, or 47%, were been returned.

IN PERSON EARLY VOTING: Only 39 people voted early in-person at the Patton Homestead starts Sat, Aug 24 - Fri, Aug 30 **ELECTION DAY**: At the Rec Center from 7:00 am - 8:00 pm

Voters can go to

www.VoteinMA.com to register to vote, apply for vote by mail, track their ballot and find other election info

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 November 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 1990 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.

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 610 postcards have been returned, only 46%.

Nov 2023 -Nov 2024

Jan 2024 -Dec 2024