

Town of Hamilton
Finance and Advisory Committee
Meeting of October 6, 2011

Minutes

In attendance: John McWane, Laurie Wilson, William Boesch, Joseph Santarelli, Michael Lombardo, Deborah Mena.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10

1. SMART Program

- 1.1 Mr. Lombardo outlined his proposal for modification of the Town's trash, composting and recycling program
- 1.2 The proposal would change the frequency of trash collection from weekly to bi-weekly. Collection of compostable material would remain weekly. Collection of recycling would go from bi-weekly to weekly.
- 1.3 New bins for trash, compostables and recyclables would be issued free to all households. The new bins are necessary to permit automated pickup by our collector's trucks
- 1.4 Households would no longer be required to separate paper and non-paper recyclables. They would be combined in a single 96-gallon bin for weekly collection.
- 1.5 Households would be required to limit their non-recyclable, non-compostable trash output to one 36-gallon bin per two-week collection period, or use pre-paid overflow collection bags
- 1.6 Mr. Lombardo considered an alternative proposal in which collection of non-recyclable, non-compostable trash would remain weekly, but would be collected exclusively in the pre-paid bags—a so-called “pay as you throw” program. But there was vocal resistance at public hearings to the idea of requiring widespread use of the pre-paid bags. Ms. Wilson argued that a “pay as you throw” program would be preferable to having only bi-weekly collection of trash.
- 1.7 Mr. Lombardo estimates that the proposed program would result in savings to Hamilton of \$50,000 to \$60,000 in collection fees charged by our collection company
- 1.8 The other purpose of the change is to provide additional incentives to households to use the recycling and composting programs, and thus reduce the fees we pay for traditional disposal of trash. Depending on the

effectiveness of the incentives, there may be additional savings to the town of \$50,000 to \$70,000.

- 1.9 A motion was made to recommend approval of the proposed program. The motion passed 3-1.

2. Warrant Article on Timing of Spring Town Meeting

- 2.1 The Committee was asked to consider an article for the Fall Town Meeting warrant that would change the date of the Spring Town Meeting from the second Saturday in May to the first Saturday in April
- 2.2 The reasons given for this proposal are (i) that it would shorten the period for preparing Town and School budgets, thereby imposing additional discipline on the budgeting process, (ii) that issues of the Town's support for budgets would be resolved earlier in the fiscal and school years, allowing additional time for planning based on the Town's decisions; and (iii) that an April meeting may be more convenient for some residents
- 2.3 An earlier Town Meeting date would require the school system to prepare its budget at least a month earlier than it currently does—by the end of February rather than the end of March. Mr. McWane expressed concern that at that time of the year there would be greater uncertainty as to the state's likely contribution to the school's funding, making the budgeting task more difficult
- 2.4 Mr. Santarelli expressed concern that the Finance Committee did not have specific information about what the new budget timetables would look like, and a commitment from those involved that they could comply with the new timetable
- 2.5 A motion was made to recommend favorable action on the warrant article. The vote on the motion was 2-2.
- 2.6 A further motion was made to recommend no action on the warrant article. The vote on this motion was likewise 2-2.
- 2.7 The Finance Committee therefore has no recommendation on the article.

3. Warrant Article on Sunday Liquor Sales

- 3.1 The Committee was asked to consider a warrant article authorizing the Selectmen to approve liquor licenses for sales beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays, rather than 12:00 noon
- 3.2 A motion was made to recommend favorable action on the warrant article. The motion was passed 4-0.

4. Warrant Article on Consent Agendas at Town Meeting
 - 4.1 The Committee was asked to consider a proposal by the Moderator to amend the procedure for placing warrant items on a "consent agenda" for more efficient consideration at Town Meetings
 - 4.2 Mr. Lombardo and Mr. Boesch questioned whether the change was necessary or advisable, and whether it would unnecessarily lead to increased inefficiency at Town Meetings
 - 4.3 A motion was made to recommend favorable action on the warrant article. The motion was passed 3-1.
5. Committee Vacancy
 - 5.1 The Committee discussed whether to recommend that the Selectmen move forward to accept one of two current candidates for the vacant seat on the Committee, and agreed to recommend
6. Next Meeting Date
 - 6.1 There will be no meeting as scheduled on October 20. The next meeting will be on the normal scheduled date in November
7. Liaisons
 - 7.1 The vote at the September 8 meeting with respect to budget liaisons was amended by making Mr. Santarelli the Police & Fire liaison, and Mr. Boesch the DPW liaison

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.


WILLIAM L. BOESCH
Secretary Pro Tem

