TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SEPTEMBER 21, 2012

The Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 3:15 p.m. on Friday, September 21, 2012 with David Neill, Jeff Stinson and Jeff Hubbard present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, Police Chief Russell Stevens, Financial Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and Brian Kiely, Huntsman Myopia Hunt Club

Call to order

Chair David Neill called the Meeting to order.

Special Meeting

With a quorum present, Chair David Neill stated that the sole purpose of the meeting was to discuss the disposition of whether to allow the hounds of the Myopia Hunt Club to run off leash on Town property in the Fall Festival Parade scheduled for Saturday morning September 22, 2012.

Neill noted that the Town has a leash law, which requires dogs to be on leashes at all times, except while on their owner's private property or with the permission of the owner of other private property.

As representatives of the owners of the Town, Neill and the Board members sought Police Chief Russell Stevens' insight on the matter. Chief Stevens replied that the law is dogs must be on a leash. He reported that he had conferred with Town Counsel Donna Brewer on the matter. Brewer replied that the Board of Selectmen does have the authority to grant permission for the dogs to run on Town property without leashes.

With that established, Chief Stevens visited Brian Kiely, Huntsmen at Myopia Hunt Club and as such responsible for the care and control of the hounds. Chief Stevens found the dogs friendly, jumping on him but not biting or threatening despite his uniform. He found Kiely to be in control and that the dogs followed his commands. The Chief spent a half hour observing and interacting.

Chief Stevens inquired if the dogs would nip someone. Kiely replied no but could go after a hot dog in a child's hands. From a public safety point of view, Chief Stevens said this is a concern. The Chief further stated, while it would be wonderful to see a hunt parade, as featured in the video circulating on You Tube of one in Middleburg, VA, the video also captured the hounds running in and out, jumping and approaching children.

Town Manager Michael Lombardo interjected that this is where the Town bumps up against an insurability issue. Lombardo reported that Financial Director Deborah Nippes-Mena was awaiting confirmation from Nick White of the Business Office at Myopia Hunt Club as to whether Myopia's insurance policy had a rider covering dogs off leash. The Town could then be added as an Additional Insured under its policy. In consultation with MIIA, the Town's insurer,

the risk, should Myopia fail to provide a certificate of insurance. Hubbard asked if MIIA's rider to the Town's policy would cost additional premium. Lombardo replied in the affirmative and that the cost could be as high as $5,000. Stinson stated he would be unwilling to pay that much. Chief Stevens opined that if the Town did not have insurance that he would suggest the Selectmen vote no.

At 3:50, Finance Director Nippes-Mena entered the meeting with answers to the insurance questions. After consulting with its' underwriters, the MIIA representative reported that the Town of Hamilton is a member of self insured group policy, covering liabilities defined by the group at signing. Special riders cannot be added without the consent of every member of the group. The Town would have to secure coverage independently of MIIA from the specialty insurance market. While Nippes-Mena stated she could explore this option in the future, coverage could not be obtained for tomorrow.

Nippes-Mena then reported that the issue was moot. Mr. White of the Myopia business office had advised Nippes-Mena that the Myopia hounds would not be participating in the parade on Saturday. After reviewing Myopia's coverage with its' underwriter, it was discovered that Myopia had in fact no coverage for the hounds under their existing policy and therefore, it was impossible to issue a certificate of insurance to the Town.

Neill declared that there was no need to vote. Lombardo stated the Town will look for Special Event coverage outside the insurance pool. Hubbard graciously thanked all attendees for all the effort extended to make the parade work. Neill made a motion to adjourn at 3:57. The motion was seconded by Stinson. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Hickey, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Clerk