

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FEBRUARY 25, 2013**

The Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 25, 2013 with David Neill, Marc Johnson, Jennifer Scuteri, Jeff Stinson and Jeff Hubbard present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo and Planning Board Chair Peter Clark also present.

Call to order

Chair David Neill called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None.

Town Manager's report

Town Manager Michael Lombardo noted that he and Bruce Haskell from CDM & Smith would be meeting with Board of Health for initial discussion regarding regulatory environment relative to anaerobic digester proposal for Chebacco Road landfill. A similar meeting following BOH meeting will be scheduled with Selectmen. Work is underway on technical specs for RFP for digester.

Lombardo mentioned that Town is waiting for approval specifications for capping landfill. He noted that DEP has limited staff to address permits. In addition, notice has been sent to the gun clubs at the landfill site about how once other uses are implemented one gun club would have to leave the site. There are also plans under consideration at the site for a solar field. In addition, there is a question of access road for club members to the site. Jeff Hubbard suggested that the gun clubs were part of the quality of life in Hamilton and offered to assist with effort.

Chairman/Selectmen reports

Hubbard inquired about when speakers could be added to the Memorial Room. Lombardo agreed to get that effort going.

Consent Agenda

Neill read the details about the items in the Consent Agenda:

Accept Donations for Patton Park Playground

- General Donations \$100 representing 1 donor
 - Angela W Getchell - \$100
- Brick Campaign \$100 representing 1 donor
 - Benjamin & Adrienne Stinson - \$100

Permission to hold event – 18th Annual Melody Miles Road Races on Saturday, May 25th. The three races (5 mile, a 5 kilometer run or walk held simultaneously and 1 mile fun run for children) will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 11:15 a.m. at the Winthrop Elementary School.

Approval of Minutes – January 30, 2013 – BOS and All Land Use Boards; February 1, 2013 BOS and FinCom; February 4, 2013 – Regular Session, February 4, 2013 – Executive Session; and February 11, 2013 Regular Session.

Discussion ensued about releasing February 4, 2013 Executive Session minutes. Lombardo will investigate if Board has to vote to release those minutes. If not, they will be released.

Neill entertained a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as read. Marc Johnson so moved. Hubbard seconded motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Patton Advisory Committee responsibilities and future directions

Discussion ensued about policy that sets forth the mission and objective for the Patton Advisory Committee that initially presented information at Town Meeting for the Town to accept the gift of the Patton property. Now the Committee is assisting the Town to develop an RFP for a use of property based on broad market input.

Some of the considerations thus far are for the homestead to be used as a potential bed and breakfast and/or event center, use of the stables being investigated by Peter Clark, recreation fields and access to the Ipswich River. Lombardo is waiting for approval from DEP to close the Patton well on the property before any uses could begin. In addition, Ben Patton will be renting the property for a week in July for his videotaping of veterans with PTSD.

Also mentioned was the possibility of the Town holding a field day in June where the public would be invited to the property. Town officials expressed interest in providing access to the Ipswich River via the property to Hamilton residents once the Patton well is closed.

At this point, effort is underway to have French doors installed at the homestead to secure military artifacts. Lombardo noted the need for the Town to draft a lease agreement with Gordon College involving remuneration for its use of the homestead. Jennifer Scuteri mentioned that the Patton property is a public property that would have a private use.

Clark suggested a feasibility study be done to analyze layout of rooms and management costs for a B&B at the property. He mentioned that Committee is seeking advice from a B&B specialist team based in Kennebunk who could provide advice on contracts and meeting is scheduled for March 17th. He noted that the Patton house is unfurnished now and that the military artifacts need to be secured although the Town is paying for a caretaker at the site now. Clark explained that the Town would hire an operator to manage the property. Also, that perhaps the caretaker could pay low rent in conjunction with maintaining the property.

Discussion ensued with Johnson, Scuteri and Jeff Stinson expressing interest in RFP for Patton property allowing for more than B&B at the site. Clark suggested that if event center options are considered this would require Town to spend several thousands of dollars for infrastructure such as paving large parking areas, reconfiguring house and septic system.

Also addressed was new charge for the Patton Advisory Committee where the Committee would present options on uses for the Patton site to the Selectmen for Board review. Johnson offered to draft language outlining the Committee's charge.

Discussion ensued about Committee developing models for the site that would include financial numbers that would be ready for review by April 30. The hope is for Lombardo to develop an RFP by June 1 so that Town Meeting can vote on proposals for the Patton site at Special Town Meeting in the fall. Johnson noted that a lease proposal longer than 3 years would require Town Meeting approval. William Dery suggested that a request for qualification process could be used in addition to RFP where an outside entrepreneur might be willing to invest in the

property. Town officials expressed interest in generating revenue at the site to at least have it be self-sustaining rather than being an expense for Hamilton.

Right of First Refusal – Sale of the Pirie Property

Lombardo explained that Town had received a response from Mrs. Pirie defining the cost of the Pirie property that was in chapter land status for three parcels. He recommended that a work group be organized with representatives from the major boards in Town to analyze Town's potential intention and use for the property relative to its right of first refusal in preparation for a recommendation at STM. A decision about whether or not Hamilton would pursue purchase of the property has to be made in 120 days. He has been working with staff on issue.

Discussion ensued about suggestion from Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and Planning Coordinator Christine Cheetham regarding scenario of building a school on the Pirie property and then freeing up the Winthrop and Cutler Elementary School properties to be sold and developed. This idea showed that this revenue would finance the cost while providing for alternative housing.

Stinson mentioned that he had spoken to residents about possibility of Town purchasing the property for \$4 million and keeping it for Town use such as a site to build a new high school, locate a Town pool and build recreation fields. He referred to Nippes-Mena and Cheetham's suggestion that the Cutler and Winthrop Elementary School sites could be sold to a developer for possibly senior housing. Scuteri said that issues with the Town's tax rate and lack of affordable housing are not going away and that property values for Essex and Manchester have gone up in part due to those communities sharing a new high school. Lombardo noted that pursuing MSBA funding for a new school and construction could take as long as 10 years.

Discussion ensued about how the HW Regional High School land is owned by the HWRSD and what would Town do with Pirie property if it purchases the \$4 million property before a new school building is constructed. Scuteri emphasized how the current proposal by an interested buyer for the Pirie property would cost the Town money versus the tax revenue of \$75,000 a year Hamilton is receiving now.

Many of the Town officials agreed that serious analysis should be done in consideration of purchasing the Pirie property since this is a rare opportunity for Hamilton with a centrally located property. Hubbard expressed concern about

the Town getting involved in the final hour when Town officials have known that the property has been for sale for two years now. He also noted that the Town risks furthering its reputation as a Town difficult to work with by interfering in the purchase and sale of a private piece of property, again at the last minute and no discussion with seller. He mentioned that \$4 million is an inordinate amount of money for the Town to spend for prime real estate with no plan and questioned how the Board could responsibly recommend to the Town this type of investment within 120 days. Scuteri reiterated importance for Hamilton not to lose its few revenue sources and to take action when it can to prevent potential added expenses.

Discussion reiterated need for work group to develop a policy decision to recommend for Town Meeting vote on right of first refusal for property. Neill suggested Lombardo recommend committee members that could include someone from the HW School Committee. Lombardo noted that decision on the Pirie property is outside of the charter of the Hamilton Development Corporation.

Dery expressed his citizen viewpoint about MSBA where school buildings should be repaired rather than built again new and that the Pirie property could be purchased as an investment. Also, that the HWRSD lost 200 students last year.

Lombardo reiterated his suggestion to get a working group together as soon as possible to vet the issue since there is a 120 day deadline. Discussion followed where Johnson and Stinson were recommended as Selectmen representatives for the working group. Lombardo suggested Town committees appoint representatives in the next week so meetings can be scheduled to evaluate what could be developed at the Pirie site under the existing by-laws (i.e., senior housing by-law) and to determine what financing could be used to purchase the property.

Discussion ensued with Don Greenwood, attorney for property owner Mrs. Pirie, and Jim Kroesser, attorney for the buyer. Greenwood noted that existing buyer could buy the two parcels on Bay Road that were not under chapter land status. Greenwood explained that the Town has rights for the \$3.9 million for three parcels and the existing buyer continues to have the right to purchase the two properties on Bay Road for \$225,000. Discussion addressed how the 40' right of way road goes with the property and it has substantial trees on either side. Discussion also was on Town following statute where chapter land parcels were broken out of total 8 parcel cost for site.

Hamilton Development Corporation

Discussion ensued with Bob Bullivant about special act that approved Hamilton Development Corporation's responsibility solely for commercially zoned parcels. Scuteri noted that Town Counsel Donna Brewer had opined that HDC could assist Town in determining uses for great estate properties. Bullivant mentioned that mixed use would apply. Neill said that the HDC was designated to focus on commercial area in Town since meals tax revenue funds the corporation. Lombardo reiterated that HDC could participate in Pirie property review but could not act outside of commercially zoned area nor could it purchase a great estate. Johnson mentioned that he had spoken to a potential candidate for fifth slot remaining on HDC.

Discussion of Management Partners Organization Review

Neill noted that the findings of the review were completed in April 2012. It is an evaluation of Town Hall organizational structure to identify areas for efficiencies. Lombardo had previously referred to some items from the report with the Board.

Lombardo summarized conclusions of report and gave a broad overview of 10 recommendations. This included creating a department of finance and administrative services that would expand the authority of Finance Director to manage Treasurer/Collector's office and Assessing department. Lombardo agreed with that proposal as it would standardize functions but did not agree with moving Town clerk's administrative support to finance department since clerk needs this dedicated support. He did believe that worker's comp and insurance functions handled by clerk's office should be a finance responsibility.

He added that restructuring to create the proposed finance and administrative services department could not happen until the personnel were all located in one spot within Town Hall. Currently there is a finance staff person working within the public works department. Lombardo noted that he is working with Tom Catalano and Bill Gisness since CPC is interested in taking on renovations to Town Hall furthering work of Boston Architectural College.

Another recommendation was to elevate the assistant to the Town manager's position to an Assistant Town Manager with human resources function. Lombardo explained that the staff support was still needed to create Board agendas and administration of liquor licenses. He suggested that human resources function could be done collaboratively with HWRSD and Wenham to

address need for higher level human resources functionality and benefits where those responsibilities are currently shared between Lombardo and Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena.

Lombardo also addressed the importance for him to have fewer direct reports. He also mentioned how the inspector positions need to be evaluated so there isn't just a stipend but a number of staff hours based on the volume of work and definition of who these people report to. He noted that workload data is being collected now.

Also recommended was for the Town to create a public safety department which could be difficult with the strong chief law but could have potential if fire chief retires, the ECO director is retiring in May and position will not be replaced. Also mentioned was that bulk of calls Town receives from outside of the area are related to public works function so they do not need to go through the ECO. This will be addressed by interim DPW director that is being hired to fill John Tomasz's position since he moved on to a position in Salem.

Lombardo noted that review also addressed creating a new department in public works to elevate four foreman positions. However, he said that this would add costs without adding value. He said that the Challenge Innovation grant would be used to study regionalization and merger of Town departments on a broader basis.

Also addressed was reducing the supervisory need in public works with a work order system that could track employee work through Excel on a PDA or tablet. Apparently Tomasz had all DPW work tracked in Excel spreadsheets.

In addition was the importance of developing a land use development department for the Town with a planning development coordinator. Lombardo said he would be providing a recommendation on this to Board in mid to late March. Areas where focus is needed include inspectors as contractors or employees, and potential to do reorganization at the administrative assistant level to shift the number of direct reports and to improve communication.

Another suggestion for the Town is to redefine the Recreation Department especially given the fact that the 20-hour a week administrative assistant has moved on.

Another issue that needs attention is the wage and classification of employees. Scuteri noted that there is a 20% difference in pay between union and non-union administrative staff. Lombardo summarized the short comings of the existing wage/classification used in Hamilton saying that work load data is needed.

Discussion ensued about the expensive \$50,000 price tag for the review although Lombardo explained that cost savings was not the specific charge associated with the process. In addition to how the results from the review were reported to the Board nearly a year ago but there was no public presentation of information that is expected and should be done.

Adoption of Town Manager evaluation process

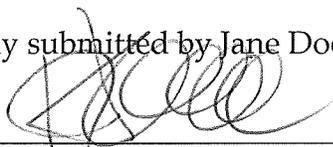
Discussion ensued about the Board's need to adopt a specific evaluation process for the Town manager. Neill and Johnson agreed to meet with Lombardo later in the week and report back to the Board with a recommendation that includes specific goals and a preference for evaluation process for the Town manager that would begin on April 8.

The Selectmen's next meeting is scheduled for March 4.

Neill entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn at 10:05 p.m. Hubbard so moved. Scuteri seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____


Clerk