

**TOWN OF HAMILTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN and FINANCE and ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2014**

The Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, September 29, 2014 with Scott Maddern, Jeff Hubbard, and Jennifer Scuteri present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena, Finance and Advisory Committee members: Chair Rick Sprenkle, Nancy Gerardi-Walsh, Charles Chivakos, Jeff Stinson, Fire Chief Phil Stevens, Deputy Fire Chief Kirby Brand and Town Moderator Bruce Ramsey also present.

**Call to order**

Scott Maddern called the BOS meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Rick Sprenkle called the FinCom meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Maddern offered condolences regarding the recent passing of Margaret Neill.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Town Manager's report**

Town Manager Michael Lombardo reported that the Town Hall steps will be reset and sealed in early October by Jeffrey's Creek so the side entrance may be used for access and egress to the building for a short period of time. A water pressure and flow test is scheduled for 9 p.m. on Myopia Hunt Club property. Any discoloration in water should subside by morning but it is recommended that residents let water run when first opening tap for the day. Letters are going out from the DPW to property owners on private ways concerning snow and ice treatment policies. The Town is not in compliance with its own by-law regarding what the Town can or cannot plow. Hamilton has been plowing ways that it should not be plowing in accordance with by-law. Further discussion could occur on this matter. He thanked Hamilton Police Officers Michael Girolomin, Joe Achadinha, Michael Wetson and Kent Richards and Officer Justin Ellenton and canine Falco of Danvers police force who received Meritor Service award.

Chairman/Selectmen reports

Jennifer Scuteri reiterated condolences for Margaret Neill. Also, that CPA funds were used for new kitchen at Senior Center where Senior Care is using it for Meals on Wheels, and at the American Legion facility. Also the importance of Open Space Committee and Open Space Plan being current relative to potential grants for open space. She referred to recently held downtown merchant event.

Jeff Hubbard spoke to Fall Festival done by the merchants and related food drive for Acord. Also that third grade at Buker School ranked #1 out of 942 schools in MCAS results in math. HW Regional High School ranked #107 out of 14,000 nationwide in preparing students for college. He noted coalition meeting to reform Chapter 70 hosted by State Representative Brad Hill (Hamilton has 12% to 14% of its school budget funded by the state versus cities that receive 100% of funding) where the coalition is analyzing if a lawsuit should be pursued to modify Chapter 70 formula.

Scott Maddern described how turf working group is searching for volunteers and it is executing turf study plan and soliciting community input, his meeting with Joint HW Recreation Board Chair Steve Ozahowski to discuss priorities (i.e., pool and turf field), his meeting with FinCom Chair Rick Sprenkle about financial items, that he met with Lombardo regarding goals, that he met with Town officials about need for fire truck, and Lombardo is finalist for town manager position in Danvers.

Appointments

Hubbard moved to appoint Virginia S. Eaton and Charlotte Lidrbauch to the Hamilton Wenham Cultural Council to terms expiring June 30, 2017. Seconded by Scuteri. Sasha Nostrand summarized details about HW Cultural Council including the small amount of funding available from the state for community activities (\$8,000 to \$12,000 a year), and that the Council meets three times a year, and needs more members. Discussion ensued about how the Council should be involved, and how the Town has received grants from the state Cultural Council for the Patton Homestead. VOTE: Unanimous.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Maddern read items on Consent Agenda.

- **Vote to approve AFSCME – Dispatch Collective Bargaining Agreement**
- **Approve Minutes – September 8, 2014 Regular Session**

Maddern entertained a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as read. Scuteri so moved. Hubbard seconded the motion. Discussion ensued about the September 8, 2014 minutes, how they should be factual, represent what was discussed and include information provided by Gretel Clark. The vote was modified to not include the September 8, 2014 regular session meeting minutes approval. VOTE: Unanimous.

## **EMERGENCY AGENDA**

### **Consideration of an emergency replacement of a Ladder Truck. Discuss. Vote.**

Fire Chief Phil Stevens congratulated firefighters for job well done last night on Cunningham Drive. He described the need for funding for a new ladder truck since the existing ladder truck purchased in FY2010 from the City of Beverly (for \$10,000 that had \$15,000 of work done on it and was to be replaced in 2021) has unforeseen problems. The Town needs a ladder truck with 100' ladder to reach chimneys of local houses and larger buildings such as at the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary for life safety for firefighters and the public at rescues, ventilation and salvage, also because the Town cannot depend upon mutual aid ladder trucks to address fires in a timely fashion (i.e., Wenham's ladder truck only reaches 75').

Also, if the Town has a ladder truck it brings the insurance costs down for Hamilton. An inspection was done by Underwriters Laboratory on September 17 of the current ladder truck and severe corrosion problems were found with the frame. A second evaluation was done by another organization and problems were identified with chassis, suspension, aerial system, electrical system and hydraulic system as well as corrosion.

Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena spoke to purchase of #4 ladder truck in 2009 and total investment of \$25,000 and capital investment planning looking ahead two to six years to replace the ladder truck and pumper truck (purchased in 1985) for over \$1 million. Discussion ensued about consideration of a \$950,000 quint vehicle (aerial ladder/pumper) to replace both trucks that has 105' aerial ladder, 2,000 gallon per minute pump, 500 gallon reserve tank, full complement of ground ladders, and carries 1,300 feet of 4" supply line. So this one truck could be used instead of two on many runs, and it has a life expectancy of 25 years. Used quint trucks being marketed are 20 or more years old. The Town anticipates a trade-in of the pumper truck for approximately \$10,000. The ladder truck is salvage. Hamilton is proposing using \$100,000 of Free Cash to reduce the cost of financing. If the Town finances for 12 years with these reductions the cost would be \$860,328. If financing were used for the full

amount the cost would be \$96,605 annually with 3.5% interest. Depending upon what funding mechanism is used the total cost would be from \$1 million to \$1.15 million. The truck would be delivered in 60 days from the purchase order relative to just in time inventory and there is little secondary market since newly purchased trucks are retained throughout lifecycle.

Discussion ensued about residual value of pumper truck (i.e., \$9,000) that has low mileage although there are mechanical problems. The Town has two back up pumper vehicles. For a \$400,000 home in Hamilton, residents would see a \$20 annual increase on property tax bill. Discussion addressed how the proposal for a quint truck replaces two vehicles, that the Town had purchased another ladder truck from Beverly that was used for 10 years, it was reiterated that Wenham has a 75' ladder truck and that more reach is needed in Hamilton, that buying a new truck was advisable given used vehicle market, that a wash bay at the public safety building would be useful due to the highly corrosive area where salt is used on roads, that it would cost \$1.25 million to replace two trucks separately (\$875,000 for ladder truck and \$275,000 for pumper truck). Town officials agreed to re-evaluate maintenance cost on existing pumper truck.

Hubbard suggested opportunities with merging fire departments with Wenham and at least a mutual effort between Hamilton and Wenham to purchase a ladder truck should be investigated. Lombardo responded about the importance of Hamilton having its own apparatus to respond to calls especially if a mutual aid truck is tied up and need for a front line response vehicle to address an event in a short amount of time to reduce amount of loss of structure. Stevens described if there are lightning strike fires there could be a need for multiple ladder trucks. Also, that the ladder truck is used in any event that involves structure. He suggested that half of the houses in Town would need the 125' versus 75' ladder to reach the building.

Discussion was on how corrosion was accelerated on existing ladder truck and Town looking to purchase truck six years earlier than expected in the cycle. Also, how trucks are constructed better and importance of a bay wash at the public safety building. In addition, how the larger ladder truck is essential for ventilation and getting a person out. Maddern suggested that Stevens speak to his counterpart in Wenham about that community's perception on mutual aid. Town officials offered to investigate if there would be any insurance cost increases relative to homeowners' insurance, ISO rating and all entities in Hamilton. Also mentioned was that Town officials will look at the budget implication for the next few years especially relative to CIP noting that Hamilton is in sound financial shape.

FinCom members thought the Town's proposed financing plan would bring value to the purchase due to amortization rate especially using the \$100,000 offset of Free Cash. Also, they concurred that a wash bay would be beneficial for Town vehicles relative to longevity of usefulness. It was noted that Hamilton has had a house fire once a month this year and there have also been structure fires. Town officials offered to provide numbers on that to the Board. Deputy Fire Chief Kirby Brand described how every fire event is an emergency until proven otherwise, and that mutual aid system is being taxed resulting in the need for Hamilton to have its own truck.

Discussion was on how to approach Special Town Meeting moving forward with Town clerk's preferred method to cancel October 6, 2014 STM and open a new warrant for a STM on October 20 that incorporates the previous articles and additional emergency replacement of ladder truck warrant article to streamline registration process.

Sprenkle entertained a motion. Charles Chivakos moved that the FinCom recommends favorable action on replacement of the ladder truck to be decided by the voters at STM. Nancy Gerardi-Walsh seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Maddern entertained a motion. Scuteri moved that the Board of Selectmen consider an emergency motion to replace the fire truck and the motion would become a STM warrant article. Hubbard seconded the motion and suggested an amendment to modify the motion to read that the Board of Selectmen vote favorably for emergency replacement of the ladder truck. This removes any language about STM. Maddern seconded the amended motion. VOTE on the amendment: Unanimous. Maddern entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to recommend favorable action for emergency replacement of the ladder truck. Scuteri so moved. Hubbard seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Consider cancellation of Warrant Hearing, scheduled for tonight.**

**Consider cancellation of Special Town Meeting scheduled for October 6, 2014. Vote, if necessary.**

**Consider opening a new Warrant for a Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, October 20, 2014. Discuss and vote articles for inclusion on Warrant, if necessary.**

**Vote to close Warrant for STM set for October 20, 2014 at location TBD.**

Discussion was on how Town could not afford to replace the fire truck with current resources, Town Meeting needs to approve the appropriation to fund a new fire truck to be purchased in the next few weeks. Options include:

1. Continuing with the existing warrant on October 6, then set another STM date to deal with ladder truck;
2. Convene and adjourn existing warrant on October 6, and convene a separate STM on October 6 to deal with ladder truck within that first STM meeting, which would prove cumbersome and more expensive due to voter registration requirements for two Town Meetings as confirmed with the state by Town clerk;
3. Close warrant for October 6 and reschedule with a new date for Town Meeting with amended warrant including existing warrant articles and adding article for ladder truck.

Town Moderator Bruce Ramsey suggested postponing warrant hearing and Town Meeting date. Discussion was on administration of mailing of warrant and posting of new Town Meeting date for October 20.

Hubbard moved that the Selectmen cancel the Special Town Meeting scheduled for October 6, 2014. Scuteri seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous. Discussion was on consideration of rescheduled date for next Special Town Meeting on October 20<sup>th</sup> being based on election date of November 4, Free Cash and tax recap meeting on November 17, and availability of HWRHS space on October 20. Hubbard moved that the Selectmen open a new warrant for STM to be held on October 20, 2014. Scuteri seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Scuteri moved that the Board of Selectmen move all of the articles that are currently listed on the warrant for October 6, 2014 STM and adopt the articles with the corresponding reference numbers to the warrant for STM dated October 20, 2014. In addition, that the Board adopt the recommendations made by the Board of Selectmen and Finance and Advisory Committee. Hubbard seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Hubbard moved to include Article 2-5 for the ladder truck for \$940,000 and Article 6-1 Free Cash Application for \$100,000. Scuteri seconded the motion. Hubbard commented that he would vote to approve this but wanted Town officials to track down any alternatives including a possible meeting with Wenham to discuss regionalizing the two town fire departments before the community is asked for \$1 million to solve an equipment problem. VOTE: Unanimous.

## **WARRANT HEARING**

**Review, discuss and make recommendations for each article on the Special Town Meeting Warrant with Moderator and Finance and Advisory Committee representative, as well as individual Board and Committee members. Designate motion readers for Articles.**

This was postponed until the Warrant Hearing on Tuesday, October 14.

## **AGENDA**

### **Discussion of Town Manager's Goals Town Hall renovations**

These agenda items were tabled until October 14 when more Board members are present.

### **Set date for next Board of Selectmen meeting**

Discussion was on not closing the warrant in case there are additional articles to be added, that the Selectmen could meet on October 2, 2014 at 6 p.m. and warrant hearing will be held on October 14, 2014 at 7 p.m. and these would be joint meetings with the FinCom where recommendations could be made. Also, Lombardo will provide the Board with more information in a memo about any possible additional articles.

### **Update on 3 year financial forecast**

Sprenkle summarized three-year modeling through 2018 with final updates to include actuals for fiscal year and a debt ladder with annual interest payments. Variability in expensive budget line items is being analyzed and plotted relative to current trends with valuations to see where tax rate is going, as well as gap between levy limit and current budget, and how debt is coming on and off the books. The model will be used for CIP and to have accurate forecasting especially regarding large expenses so budget is smoothed out moving forward. A Google docs spreadsheet would be made generally available to the public (i.e., link on Town website) once all details, current and historical, are included. Hubbard inquired about historical data being compared with forecast (i.e., actual tax increases and total Town, debt and school expenses).

NEW BUSINESS

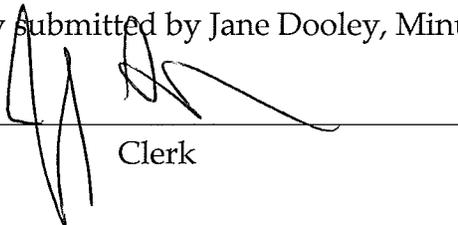
Consideration of topics for discussion at future Selectmen's meetings

Topics will include discussion of Town Manager's Goals and Town Hall renovations. Hubbard opined that there should be a hiring freeze on any new positions in Town until it is known if the Town Manager would be moving on to a new position. Lombardo explained that the department director positions would not be filled until he knows what is happening with his employment given his successor would want a significant role in make the selections. The Town is continuing with the recruitment to replace Christine Berry's staff level position which would not require Selectmen's approval.

Sprenkle entertained a motion for the Finance and Advisory Committee to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. Chivakos so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous. Maddern entertained a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. Scuteri so moved. Hubbard seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST:

  
Clerk