

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AUGUST 9, 2010**

The Board of Selectmen met at the Hamilton-Wenham Community House at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 9, 2010 with William Bowler, David Carey, Jennifer Scuteri, Marc Johnson and Jeff Stinson present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and Finance Committee member John McWane also present.

Acknowledgement – Teachers Union Contract

Brief discussion with new Superintendent of Schools Raleigh Buchanan and new Assistant Superintendent Peter Gray about their roles in the regional school district, details about the upcoming school year as well as acknowledgement of the one-year teachers' union contract that had no COLA and step payments.

Dr. Buchanan is interested in improving communication with the community regarding decisions made in the regional school district. He will hold office hours one Saturday morning a month.

Five bids have been received from companies interested in conducting the operational audit of the schools. Town Manager Michael Lombardo will develop a matrix of bid information to illustrate if bidders complied with all bid specifications in preparation for a Thursday meeting.

Discussion on no texting while driving law that goes into effect in September and that Hamilton and Wenham police chiefs could be asked to explain law to school students.

Board of Selectmen downtown walk update

Discussion on walk Selectmen took with Lombardo and interested citizens around Hamilton's downtown to view Town-owned land on Hatfield Road for sale, condominiums at corner of Asbury and Willow Streets since a similar development could be considered for nearby vacant Hansbury property, Hamilton Housing Authority complex overseen by state (CPA request is going to be submitted for electronic locks at facility), and Acord food pantry site that will be renovated to include affordable housing and a permanent location for food pantry.

Request for One-Day Liquor License – Hanson Financial Group

Thirty-five people will attend event at Myopia Hunt Club polo field in a designated area where a badge will be required to get in. Beer, wine and food will be served.

Jennifer Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the one-day liquor license requested by Hanson Financial Group for Sunday, August 15, 2010 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Myopia polo field. William Bowler so moved. Jeff Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Request for One-Day Liquor License – Essex County Trail Association

Representative from Essex County Trail Association will follow-up with Assistant Town Administrator Christine Lindberg regarding a police detail during fundraising event on Friday, September 10 at Myopia since as many as 100 guests are anticipated. Parking and event will be at club's schooling field.

Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the one-day liquor license request from the Essex County Trail Association for September 10, 2010 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Myopia Hunt Club schooling field. Stinson so moved. Bowler seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Recommend Laurie Wilson for appointment to Finance Committee

Discussion was on BOS recommendation of Laurie Wilson as appointment to Finance Committee. Selectman Jeff Stinson wants to ensure Board's transparency when recommending appointments. Selectmen want more notification time to learn about interested candidates for Town boards prior to voting on a recommendation.

A write-up on Wilson from Town Moderator Bruce Ramsey will be distributed to Board. Wilson will submit letter describing her interest in serving on FinCom before a BOS recommendation is made. Bob Bullivant will serve on FinCom until October to ensure there is a quorum until new appointment is made.

Discussion on services available to senior citizens in Town

Wenham resident Sue Karp, interim director of Wenham Council on Aging and elder van supervisor for Hamilton and Wenham, discussed with Selectmen need to provide more services for 1500 senior citizens in Hamilton. This could include having senior center at former Hamilton public library building open more hours per week.

She did not advocate merging COA services in both towns. Karp recommended that more outreach be done to notify seniors about programs and services available to them.

Discussion of Senior Tax Abatement

Town Manager Michael Lombardo said in regard to Chapter 91 the act is deficient on implementation of senior tax abatement. He is working on this with FinCom and Assessors. The state Department of Revenue (DOR) has to provide a formal opinion on implementation. Lombardo is consulting with Town Counsel Donna Brewer to understand how local intent meshes with what was voted statutorily.

This does not require a Town Meeting vote but has to be vetted in a ballot vote either this fall or in the spring to institutionalize the senior tax abatement. Hamilton does not have the funding to support this initiative that would require some taxpayers to pay more while others would pay less.

There is a funding mechanism in the special act. Possible sources could include free cash or override. DOR said not to use utility pole tax money for this purpose.

Applications would be pro rated if they exceed \$175,000. Details on this still have to be determined and could address the eligible resident age as 65 or 70 years old. Lombardo will complete forms in time for May ballot. Town officials agreed that communication has to be done to ensure understanding and buy-in from community.

Other business

Town officials agreed that the Selectmen's signed off agenda should be made available on Thursday afternoons.

Scuteri entertained a motion at 8:32 p.m. to adjourn. Bowler so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Clerk