

**TOWN OF HAMILTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2010**

The Board of Selectmen met at the Hamilton Town Hall at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, September 13, 2010 with William Bowler, Jennifer Scuteri, Dave Carey, Jeff Stinson and Marc Johnson present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, current and former Finance Committee members John McWane, Arthur Oberheim and Bob Bullivant, Planning Board Coordinator Marcie Ricker also present.

**One-day Liquor License – Timothy S. Hopkins – 9-19-10 – Myopia Polo**

Seventy guests will be attending event at Myopia Hunt Club polo field on September 19 with Timothy S. Hopkins catering serving malt and wine.

Jennifer Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the one-day liquor license requested by Timothy S. Hopkins catering for an event to be held on September 19, 2010 at the Myopia polo field from 2 to 7 p.m. William Bowler so moved. Marc Johnson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Senior Property Tax Exemption**

Discussion on Senior Property Tax Exemption ballot question that will be voted on by Hamilton registered voters November 9 asking them whether or not the Town should implement senior property tax abatement for FY'12 on July 1, 2011.

Intent is to offer property tax relief to senior citizens based on age, household income and assessed valuation of homes. Applicable age, 65 or 70 years old, has to be defined. Applicants would have to be Hamilton residents for 10 years and have a maximum annual income of \$49,499, if single and \$74,250, if married.

Discussion on how \$175,000 a year is budgeted for real estate tax exemptions and abatements and that the cost of abatements associated with the senior property tax abatement would have to be budgeted into an overlay account going forward. This year, the Town could have as much as \$90,000 depending on what

happens with a Verizon liability (\$62,000) and state reimbursement on statutory exemptions (\$28,000) or as little as \$3,000.

If the exemption ballot vote passes, \$9,100 would have to be budgeted annually to support the anticipated cost.

Applications for the exemption could be submitted to the Town as early as January 1, 2011.

Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the Senior Tax abatement with the single (income) qualification of \$33,499 and a married (income) qualification of \$49,500 and an age qualification of 70 years old. Johnson so moved. Bowler seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Town Manager Michael Lombardo will work on the ballot question language. Selectmen will take a leadership role in educating voters about the senior tax abatement relative to the ballot question. It was noted that Town Counsel Donna Brewer and state would weigh in on ballot question language.

If the Senior Tax abatement program is approved, the Town has the option to change the parameters each year.

### **BOS Task List**

Selectmen reviewed their task list.

Lombardo is analyzing the Town government's organizational structure based on Massachusetts General Law and will report to the Board in six to eight weeks about how structure should be reorganized.

He is also working on the police union contract where tentative agreement has been reached and on two AFSCME union contracts. Mediation is occurring with fire union contract negotiation where Lombardo is working with labor counsel.

Lombardo is also investigating ways to control costs at Town Hall within budget guidelines and parameters especially related to litigation. He is identifying duplicate steps that could be eliminated so Town can operate more efficiently.

The Board is looking into more sharing arrangements with Wenham related to public works and maintenance of fields, parks and schools. This also applies to

the Council on Aging where 600 senior households were sent a survey inside a newsletter mailing asking for feedback about senior services needed and what they think about a joint director for the COA.

Also discussed was the proposed regional emergency (dispatch) center, Town Hall staff will prepare a summary of costs by end of week.

Other topics addressed included: grants associated with green communities and ESCo, proposed Donovan land acquisition and grant status, firm selected to perform operational audit of regional school district, importance of improving relations with school district, and \$4,000 Town invested in legal research related to potentially challenging Chapter 70 education funding formula.

In addition, Selectmen discussed need for Hamilton to try and control property taxes and spending as well as bringing revenue into Town in part to prompt empty nesters to choose to remain in Town.

Also that the Board will help educate voters about Willow Street Overlay District proposal to be voted on at Special Town Meeting. If approved this bylaw could assist effort to encourage development in Town especially at the unsold Hansbury property. Other areas in Town that Selectmen hope will be developed are: Canterbrook Farm for senior housing and landfill where Town recently rejected two bids received.

The Board also discussed expanding P.I.L.O.T., selling unusable Town land, improving cellular telephone coverage in Hamilton, adding affordable housing, analyzing recreational playing field needs, continuing Town Hall renovations, facilitating better communication with Town employees since Selectmen found recent tour of water treatment plant positive for personnel.

Discussion was on putting BOS task list online so Board members could update it by having access to their individual assignments.

### **Great Estates Bylaw**

The Great Estates bylaw is designed to provide an alternative option for great estate parcel owners similar to what has been done in Ipswich, Stockbridge, Lenox and North Andover other than subdividing the land for single-family homes. Estate homes have to be larger than 5,000 square feet and built during or before 1950 to meet bylaw criteria.

Part B of the bylaw applies to 10 parcels in Town with 20 acres or more. Uses for these properties would be for the estate house and land where a new building (not for residential use with a 45,000 square foot limit) could be added to the site.

Proposed uses are for multi-family condominiums, hotel or inn, bed and breakfast, for-profit catering hall or conference center, sports facility, artisan bakery, craft studio, child or adult care community, photography studio, museum, and nursing home. Other uses could be for outdoor facilities such as cross-country skiing and bicycling trails.

Planning Board Coordinator Marcie Ricker said the Planning Board would look at each special permit application individually under the bylaw to assess the best use for a site.

The intent is to preserve the open space at these great estate sites while encouraging uses that would bring tax revenue into Town. The bylaw is targeted at landowners interested in protecting the land before their properties are transferred through the probate process.

Johnson will incorporate Board's comments on bylaw language and submit changes to Planning Board. Selectmen will attend upcoming Planning Board meeting on September 21 when proposed bylaw will be discussed.

### **Willow Street Overlay District**

Discussion on how warrant article on Willow Street Overlay District needs a two-thirds vote at Special Town Meeting to pass. Discussion on extent of district whether it should include the north east end of Willow Street from Asbury Street to Gourdeau property on Willow Street or beyond.

Discussion on if Hamilton is going to form an EDIC then a zone has to be defined that could be larger than that defined in Willow Street Overlay District bylaw.

Selectmen took straw vote and decided to promote smaller overlay district with hope that residents would vote favorably for Willow Street Overlay District.

**Discuss Other Warrant Articles**

Lombardo said personnel bylaw changes proposed in Special Town Meeting warrant articles are designed to reflect changes in current form of government in Hamilton that includes a Town manager and five-member Board of Selectmen.

Scuteri entertained a motion to reopen the warrant for the Special Town Meeting to be held on October 30, 2010. Bowler so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Scuteri entertained a motion to approve the addition of the personnel bylaw changes for the new form of Town government that will be added to the warrant for Special Town Meeting. Bowler so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Scuteri entertained a motion to close the warrant for Special Town Meeting to be held on October 30, 2010. Bowler so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Scuteri entertained a motion at 9:29 p.m. to adjourn. Bowler so moved. Stinson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk