

**Town of Hamilton  
Community Preservation Committee  
June 9, 2011 Minutes**

**Attendees**

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Jeff Stinson, Ben Ricker, Ed Howard, Leigh Keyser, Jay Butler, and Peter Dana. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator was also present. With a quorum of CPC members present the meeting was called to order at 7:30pm

**CPA Fund Update**

Deborah Mena, Hamilton Finance Director, was present to give an update on CPA funds and investments. Deborah reported that there is currently \$1,839,875 in cash available in all the CPA accounts. We are projecting to add another \$438,000 in state match and local revenue. Of this \$2,277,875 total, \$337,000 is committed to existing project appropriations. New project appropriations for FY12 total \$259,000.

There is roughly \$1,600,000 in CPA funds not appropriated. Deborah has currently invested \$1,200,000 of that total. Deborah would like to take \$500,000 and tie it up for 5 years, leaving \$1,000,000 not tied up and available for projects. Deborah reported that the Town is very limited in what they can invest in as a government entity. They can only invest off an approved funds list. If we tie up an amount for 5 years, we can earn 6%. We have maxed out on shorter term funds. We are currently earning 3%, and we are expecting \$35-40,000 in earnings this year. There is another \$35,000 in unrealized earnings.

Deborah asked the committee to think about how they would fund an expensive project such as a pool renovation or another acquisition – would the CPC want to debt finance again, for example? Or would they want to pay cash? There would be penalties if the funds had been taken out prematurely.

Jay noted that the CPC will still be getting at least \$400,000 in state and local revenues each year, adding to unrestricted cash. Deborah noted that the treasurer and collector have the authority to manage the CPA funds, but wanted the CPC to understand and be on-board with her recommendation. Deborah stated that the CPA funds are completely segregated from the Town's general fund. There is no co-mingling. They are separate both on the books and in separate bank accounts. Tom stated that he thinks it a great idea. He thought any other large projects would be financed since rates since rates are so low. Ed inquired as to whether any of the earnings could go back to the residents. Deborah said no, but reminded the CPC that there are many Town projects that have occurred because of CPA funds. Otherwise, those projects would not have moved forward. Ed noted that we have more money than we do projects. Deborah said there are a number of projects under open space and community housing coming that could be very expensive.

Tom made a motion that the CPC follow the Finance Director's recommendation and tie up \$500,000 in CPA cash funds for a 5 year investment. The motion was seconded and approved.

Ed asked Deborah to think about reducing our collection rate, which currently stands at 2%, even temporarily. Deborah said that request needs to come from the Committee. Tom stated that needs to come from a citizen petition, town meeting, followed by a ballot vote. Tom also stated that the Coalition recently reported on communities that tried to reduce their rate and were ultimately unsuccessful.

### **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes from May 12<sup>th</sup> CPC Meeting**

The minutes from the May 12<sup>th</sup> CPC meeting were accepted.

### **Model T Update**

Jay had requested an update on the Model T project was approved several years ago, but is stalled. Chief Stevens was unavailable to attend tonight's meeting to give an update. Tom said that he met with Phil roughly two months ago and said he had it under control. Jay was concerned that that this was a reflection of funds that were awarded for a project years ago; the project has not moved forward and has languished. Tom offered to call Phil. Tom gave Phil a sketch of a pre-fab building that could work. Christine will also follow-up with Phil and determine the status.

### **2011 Annual Report**

Christine circulated a draft annual report via email. Christine said the CPC could review the report and send comments to her over the next week or so.

### **American Legion Project**

The CPC had expressed interest at the last CPC meeting about wanting to give some guidance on this project and make sure it stays on track, and is completed in a manner acceptable to the Committee. The American Legion is free to choose any bid, but there was concern that the bids were not complete. Tony Heath needs to choose one bid and bolster it. He also needs to find out if there were any rebates available. Tom noted that the work description was very vague. The CPC asked that Tony come to the August meeting, and be prepared to address these issues.

### **New Business**

Ed noted the opportunity Hamilton has to have a town beach – similar to the one in Essex. Hamilton's town beach on Chebacco Lake was shut down by the Board of Selectmen years ago after a drowning. Ed noted that perhaps the CPC could steer the new Recreation Director to explore this option.

Jay noted that there could be some very big changes coming to Town Hall, which would be very expensive (e.g. elevator, ceiling, office re-organization, etc.) Jeff reported that Michael is working with an outside contractor to determine the best way to move forward with changes at Town Hall. Tom noted that we could bond a Town Hall project just as Wenham did.

**Meeting Adjournment**

At approximately 8:30pm, Tom moved that the CPC adjourn.