

# HAMILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Teleconference

August 10, 2020

Selectmen Present: Chair Shawn Farrell, William Olson, Darcy Dale, Rosemary Kennedy, and Jamie Knudsen

Town Manager: Joe Domelowicz

*\* This meeting was conducted via Zoom teleconference with all the above participants remaining in their homes.*

Chair Shawn Farrell called the Board of Selectmen (BOS) teleconference to order at 6:32 p.m. and took roll call. All members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **Board and Committee Openings**

The Council on Aging (COA), Hamilton Historic District Commission (HHDC), and Community Preservation Committee (CPC) each have one opening.

### **Selectmen/Town Manager Reports**

Rosemary Kennedy said she watched the School Committee meeting. She complimented the Department of Public Works (DPW) on a good job replacing the sidewalk on Linden Street. She and Darcy Dale attended their first Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) meeting as members. She invited THBC and BOS members to the CPC meeting on Aug. 13 to voice their opinions on the CPC grant request amount (whether it should be \$2M, \$3M, or \$4M).

Jamie Knudsen said at the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) meeting, COA Executive Director Mary Beth Lawton gave a presentation on why having affordable senior housing in Town is important. The 59 Willow St. project was also discussed. He attended the COA meeting and said the COA was looking for people to serve and was working on programming. He also attended the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) conference call at which the HDC approved its budget, and the 59 Willow St. project and a new tenant for 63 Willow St. were discussed.

William Olson said the School Committee was going through a two-step process: first, to vote on the plan for hybrid and remote learning (what school will look like) and second, to

determine what needs to be in place for safe school opening. Meetings are being held this week.

Darcy Dale said she learned at the THBC meeting that the THBC had saved another \$100K and is considering using copper gutters and downspouts because it saved money in other areas of the project. Ms. Dale also attended the Board of Health (BOH) meeting. She said the scope of the BOH work is far beyond what can be done with the current organization so the BOS is looking at a reorganization. They have a need for oversight, she said, to look broadly and forward. They are also thinking of having school nurses work with the BOH. Mr. Farrell added that Massachusetts is currently "under" in terms of what it needs for contact tracing.

Mr. Farrell said Town Manager Joe Domelowicz will send out a BOS Code of Conduct for BOS members to review and sign this week. The CPC will meet Thursday to discuss the status of CPC finances and funding request for the Town Hall building/restoration. The CPC also received a grant request for the steeple and clock at the First Congregational Church. The CPC closed out grants and is looking to hold a joint meeting with the Wenham CPC and joint training session with KP Law facilitating.

Town Clerk Carin Kale gave an update regarding stats on the number of ballot requests received to vote by mail (approximately 1,100) and absentee ballots (300). Next step is to plan for in-person early voting in the Memorial Room at Town Hall on Aug. 22 and 23. Hours are posted on the Town Clerk website.

Ms. Dale said she received an email saying early voting was at the Rec Center. Ms. Kale said voting on Sept. 1 will be at the Rec Center but early voting was at Town Hall. Mr. Farrell encouraged people to send ballots early due to the slowdown of the USPS. Ms. Dale noted residents can drop their ballots off in the drop box for that purpose at Town Hall. Recruitment of volunteers and poll workers was discussed.

Mr. Domelowicz said the Town of Hamilton Fire Department along with that of Rowley and Boxford received a grant for radios, which will require a small match. He said it will make emergency public communication more stable and resilient. The COA is gearing up for social programming outdoors; outdoor patio furniture and repair work were donated. The Recreation Department has had bigger numbers and have had no health issues. Programs will run into September. The DPW is upgrading/renovating the Patton Park bathrooms and are under budget. A local business in the region has reached out to Patton Homestead Director Kaleigh Pare about utilizing the stables. Also a private entity, Incubate, wants to utilize the Homestead's third floor for office space. Ms. Dale asked if the businesses would be conducting business with clients or just doing their own work. Mr. Domelowicz said the latter and that there would be restrictions regarding social distancing, etc.

### **Public Comment**

None.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- Approve minutes of July 13, 2020 BOS meeting
- Approve Hunter Carroll appointment to AHT
- Approve Kim Dietel appointment to CPC
- Approve Bruce Gingrich and Erik Salines appointment to Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)
- Approve route for 4th Annual For the Love of Peter Motorcycle Ride
- Accept tree donation from the Ricker family

Ms. Dale asked for a hold on the appointment of Hunter Carroll to the AHT and on the tree donation. Ms. Kennedy put a hold on the two ZBA appointments.

### **Decision #1:**

Ms. Dale made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of the held items. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

### **Discussion of Held Items:**

Ms. Dale asked if there were other applicants to the AHT. She noted Mr. Carroll lives on the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) campus and wondered if he might have a conflict of interest when the AHT discusses GCTS. She also said, per BOS policy, that the BOS likes to hear from committee chairs about whether they were supporting the applicants. Mr. Knudsen said the discussion by the AHT had been positive in support of Mr. Carroll although no official vote was taken. Mr. Domelowicz said Mr. Carroll had supplied an updated resume and was the only candidate to apply for the position.

Ms. Kennedy said the policy states there should be a recommendation from the board one is applying to and also that the candidate come forward to talk with the BOS. She said they needed to ensure they moved forward in a way that is beneficial to the Town. She advocated tweaking the BOS appointments policy. She said the AHT didn't have the benefit of having received the applicant's resume and cover letter, which is why she said she placed a hold on the ZBA appointments, to give the BOS more time to review the candidates. Mr. Farrell said the ZBA candidates were endorsed by the ZBA and had been attending meetings. Mr. Farrell asked Mr. Domelowicz to send the appointments policy out to the chairs and the BOS agreed it would review the policy at a future meeting.

Ms. Dale initiated a discussion of the maintenance and location for the tree donation. Mr. Domelowicz said it would be treated like the other tree donations, and the DPW would work with the family to find a site where it will grow with minimal upkeep. A plaque and bench are planned also.

### **Decision #2:**

Ms. Dale made a motion that the BOS table the appointment of Hunter Carroll to the AHT until after the BOS has received an endorsement from the AHT. Ms. Kennedy amended the motion saying she would like Mr. Carroll to present himself to the BOS so they can discuss

his resume/cover letter. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

**Decision #3:**

Mr. Olson made a motion that the BOS table the appointment of the two ZBA candidates until the next meeting. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Kennedy, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

**Decision #4:**

Ms. Dale made a motion to accept the tree donation from the Ricker family. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

Mr. Olson asked if anyone from the ZBA or AHT wanted to speak. Nobody responded.

**AGENDA**

**Approve Election Ballot for September Primary**

The ballot for the Primary was in the BOS packets. Mr. Domelowicz said it will need to be signed sometime before Wed. morning as it needs to be sent to the State by the Town Clerk. Ms. Dale asked if Mr. Domelowicz could email them a reminder. He said he would.

**Decision:**

Ms. Dale made a motion to approve the election ballot. Mr. Olson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

**Hamilton Historical Society Presentation by Anne Marie Cullen**

Ms. Cullen introduced herself as a lifelong Town resident who worked at the Hamilton-Wenham Emergency Center for 39 years, 30 as chief dispatcher. She thanked the BOS for supporting the Patton Homestead. (The Historical Society is housed at the Homestead.) She said for its 2020 project, the Historical Society wanted to take photographs to illustrate the current times, but with everyone needing to wear masks, they are delaying that until 2021. However, she reported they are working on a Pandemic Project and looking of different age groups to participate. She supplied an email address for submitting photos and writing about the pandemic. She said the Registry of Deeds is publishing a set of five books and has asked each community to contribute something relating to deeds or a property. The Town chose Patton Park as its subject. Ms. Kennedy said she has a registry of births and deaths someone gave her that lists a cause of death as "old age and chronic complaints." Ms. Cullen said she'd like to have it. The Historical Society sends out a newsletter four times a year and will be sending one out shortly. She encouraged people to become members. The Historical

Society books speakers throughout the year, but had to cancel its March one due to COVID. The annual October dinner was also cancelled.

### **Discussion of Return to Every Other Week Trash Collection—Waste Reduction Committee (WRC)**

BOS members had received information in the packets. Mr. Farrell had reached out to the WRC for its “tips and tricks” to offer the public; it was decided to focus on composting, which will reduce tonnage numbers. Mr. Farrell said a Citizen’s Petition will be coming back at STM regarding keeping every-week trash pickup. WRC Chair Gretel Clark said the WRC feels the Town should stay with the every-week pickup as long as there is a COVID crisis. However, she said for the two months when the Town had every-other-week pickup, they did see a significant drop in tonnage. It went back up when the Town returned to every-week pickup and people who had expressed an interest in composting abandoned the idea.

Ms. Clark said if everyone composted, the Town’s solid waste tonnage would drop by about 30%. However, she said that would require getting everyone to compost. She said it could be done by mandating that no food waste go into the solid waste stream. She suggested utilizing a robo call to offer free compost liner bags and perhaps creating a short film to get info. out to the public. Mr. Farrell asked if there was money in the coffers for green bags to distribute to residents. She said yes, because public events have come to a halt, they do have supplies on hand they could distribute. The WRC receives points for programs it puts in place and is ready to do so, she said.

Mr. Olson asked for clarification on the numbers showing the difference in tonnage from when the Town went from every-other-week pickup back to every-week. The data showed more people composting during the lockdown, although that could have been due to the fact that people were home more. Mr. Farrell charged the WRC to work on a public service announcement perhaps utilizing high school students.

The BOS discussed keeping the every-week pickup for now but asking the public to make a concerted effort to compost. Mr. Farrell said the BOS needs to have a broader discussion of when the Town should go back to every-other-week pickup and if it should line up with the Governor’s phasing. Ms. Clark said everything was in place for composting—the Town bought composting bins for everyone and is paying a hauler for them. A video tour of Brick Ends Farm was discussed. Ms. Clark said there was one on the Brick Ends’ website.

### **Open Warrant for Special Town Meeting (STM) on November 14, 2020**

#### **Decision:**

Ms. Dale made motion that the BOS open the warrant for Special Town Meeting. Mr. Olson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with “ayes” from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

Mr. Domelowicz shared a draft onscreen of possible warrant articles for STM. Mr. Farrell read through the list. Ms. Kennedy commented on the final phase for the water system, noting an additional \$600K is expensive. Mr. Domelowicz discussed that it went out to bid in the Spring and cited some of the work it included, such as replacing fire hydrants.

### **Review Draft Special Town Meeting Calendar—Discussion and Vote**

Mr. Domelowicz noted the two-page calendar includes all meetings to prepare for STM set for Nov. 14. Mr. Farrell said no vote was needed; he just wanted the BOS to review it and make suggestions, additions, etc. Heather Ford of the Capital Committee sent in an edit pertaining to a date for the CapCom Meeting. Mr. Farrell said the CPC generally meets the second Thursday of the month. A date for a joint meeting of the BOS and Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) has not yet been set.

### **Review Draft Calendar for Annual Budget Prep and Annual Town Meeting (ATM)—Discussion and Vote**

Mr. Domelowicz said before the draft budget prep calendar can be made, the ATM date needs to be determined. April 10 and May 1 were dates previously discussed as possibilities. The Town also wants to coordinate the date with Wenham; Mr. Farrell will reach out to the Wenham BOS. Mr. Domelowicz said while May 1 seems late for Hamilton, it is not unusual for other towns to hold their meetings in May and June. May would be better than April in terms of weather for holding the meeting outside.

### **Town Manager Goals—Discussion**

Mr. Domelowicz's contract is up for renewal and he needs to be notified of his status in January. He has been with the Town for almost two years and said he would like to stay for another three. Mr. Farrell noted some of the current Town Manager goals, including the Master Plan and Town Hall restoration.

Ms. Dale said there aren't oversight policies or controls, for example, when money is given by the CPC to private and religious nonprofits. She discussed the issue of oversight also concerning the BOH. She said money going to private nonprofits could instead go toward the Town Hall renovation. Ms. Kennedy said there needs to be transparency and accountability anytime taxpayer money is given away. Ms. Dale said fiduciary responsibility means people clearly know where their money is going.

Ms. Kennedy said she would like to see the Town make a more concerted effort to improve communication with residents. She said the website is not up to date and sometimes it is hard to find things. Mr. Farrell said the website won an award in the past and is vastly improved, but there is still work to be done to on having a searchable database. He asked about having an intern help with the task of records management.

Mr. Olson said they need to make sure the Town has the right global technology moving forward. Mr. Farrell said the paperless initiative hasn't been started yet. Mr. Domelowicz

noted the products the Town is currently reviewing for that purpose, which will be tied into what neighboring towns are doing. He discussed the regional IT initiative. Eventually all old files need to be scanned in, and he is gathering cost estimates. Mr. Olson mentioned adding virtual technology, new technology at Town Hall, and adding clickers for Town Meetings. He said another big item on the Town Manager goals list would be the Gordon-Conwell project and improvements to the water plant. He also wanted Mr. Domelowicz to continue the cause of having less litigation, which he said Mr. Domelowicz had been successful at. Another item on the list was that the Town is going to need a third cell phone tower and where it will be. Mr. Olson asked if a new agreement needs to be written or if they use the current one. Mr. Domelowicz said he was fine with the basic framework of the contract. Mr. Farrell said that once the contract is opened, all things are on the table.

Mr. Farrell wanted to add a goal of downtown improvements, such as better parking, village branding, and new sidewalks. He said when they put the goals down on paper, they need to add specifics and concrete things to accomplish. Mr. Knudsen declined comment at this point.

It was decided that the BOS would hold a meeting/workshop to discuss the Town Manager goals. Mr. Farrell said that the BOS could take on some of the projects individually. He said he'd like Mr. Domelowicz to write down some goals he sees for himself. It was discussed that the Town Manager Goals meeting could take place at the Patton Homestead.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Dale made a motion that the BOS adjourn for the evening at 8:31 p.m. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Olson, Mr. Knudsen, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Farrell, (5-0) unanimous.

Prepared by:

Mary Alice Cookson / 9-29-2020  
Mary Alice Cookson Date  
Minutes Secretary

Attest:

Jamie Knudsen / 9/30/2020  
Jamie Knudsen Date  
Board of Selectmen Clerk

