

HAMILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
&
HAMILTON FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

October 19, 2020

BOS Members present: Darcy Dale, Shawn Farrell (Chair), Rosemary Kennedy, Jamie Knudsen, and Bill Olson (Vice Chair).
FinCom Members present: Valerie McCormack (8:05 pm), John Pruellage (Chair), Christina Schenk-Hargrove (Vice Chair), Nick Tensen, and David Wanger.
Others present: Tom McEnaney (KP Law), Joe Domelowicz, and Marisa Batista.

Call to Order

This Hamilton Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm via Zoom.
Roll call: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye.

This Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm via Zoom.
Roll call: Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, David Wanger – aye, Nick Tensen – aye, and John Pruellage – aye.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Discuss Warrant and Special Town Meeting

11-1-1 Consent Motion.

11 2-1 Prior year bills (\$1,084.87). The Council on Aging bill (\$875) for Beauport Senior Transport was misplaced and not paid. The other bill was for paper supplies at Staples (\$200). The bills required a 9/10th vote.

Motion made by Rosemary Kennedy to recommend favorable action to approve the prior year bills.

Darcy Dale seconded.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

The FinCom would vote later but their consensus was to recommend favorable action.

11 2-2 Capital funding (\$576,334). According to Marisa Batista the \$61,000 for the library had already been charged as an assessment to Hamilton and would be removed from the items.

Capital items included all other proposed items except for the Town Hall construction or the Water Treatment Plant as they were borrowing items. Joe Domelowicz questioned if the water supply feasibility study belonged in the Capital Plan or the Water Fund. Members discussed whether the current year was the right time to propose the study but Mr. Domelowicz argued that the study should be done sooner to project the future and to be eligible for grant sources. A financial analysis was needed to determine if joining Manchester, Beverly/Salem, or MWRA were better options. The Town had previously applied for a \$100,000 grant but did not receive it. If the Town joined Manchester, they might need to bifurcate the system. An engineering company might need to be hired to run the Tier IV facility. Members decided to wait until spring to present the article.

The existing patrol vehicle had 120,000 miles and needed \$6,000 in maintenance. The Town typically purchased one vehicle every year for three years. After the three years, the Town needed to purchase two vehicles. The Town was purchasing vehicles through the municipal bid system but could investigate leasing vehicles as had been done in the past. Members discussed whether the acquisition belonged in the Capital Budget. As this was the second vehicle to be purchased during the current year, it was appropriate. A lease would be an annual payment in the Operating Budget. It was unclear if the first vehicle was still in the Police budget. The Police Department budget had already been funded so the purchase could not be relocated to that budget even if it were the only vehicle purchased/leased. According to Tom McEnaney, if the vehicle was leased, it would need to be a stand-alone article. The decision to lease or buy would be decided in the future. If a vehicle was sold, rather than traded in, the money would be deposited into the General Fund.

The purchase of repeaters would bring the Town into compliance. The three existing repeaters were so old that parts were no longer available. The Town would replace two of the repeaters and use the old repeaters for spare parts to repair the third repeater. Members discussed whether Free Cash should be used due to the current financial situation or if items would be paid for by raising and appropriating the funds. David Wanger did not think it was prudent to lower the fund close to the policy minimum. The balance would be 7% whereas the policy minimum was set at 5%. Joe Domelowicz countered that it was better to use the money in the account rather than increase taxes, especially if a 2.5 override might be pending in the spring.

The gas tanks would cost \$250,000. The one-year gas share pilot program with Wenham didn't start until July 2020. Joe Domelowicz said the Town needed to determine if Hamilton would be building an above-ground gas tank with Wenham or by themselves. A contract could not be signed without appropriated funding. The existing tanks had been emptied and decommissioned. Members discussed that the appropriation could wait until an exact number was available, but it was noted that the approved funding would not be spent until the number was known. An estimate of \$250,000 was received for Hamilton's share of a larger, shared tank. A coordination with the Town Hall Building project was also a concern. The Selectmen would vote on the article on October 26, 2020.

11 2-3 Water Treatment (\$1M expected request). John Pruellage recalled that the FinCom had previously voted unanimously to support the action.

William Olson recommended favorable action on article 2-3.

Rosemary Kennedy seconded.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

11 2-4. Transfer (\$824.25) to cover the deficit to close the pool.

Motion to recommend favorable action on article 2-4 made by William Olson.

Darcy Dale seconded.

Roll call: Darcy Dale – aye, Rosemary Kennedy – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor. The article was moved to the Consent Agenda.

11 2-5 Community Preservation Committee (CPC) grant appropriation (\$200,000) to the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT). The funds would be used for the project at 434 Asbury St. but specific project wording was purposefully left out to allow for flexibility. The CPC balances were \$291,852.35 (unreserved), \$101,945.00 (community housing), \$61.52 (open space), and \$109,675.82 (historic preservation). KP Law would oversee the paperwork to ensure milestones were met and governors were in place. The AHT fund had \$878,000 as of March 31, 2020. \$450,000 had been earmarked for the Willow St. project. \$35,000 was used to hold the land on 434 Asbury St. The developer of the Canterbrook project would be providing \$217,000. The Asbury St. project (not yet approved) would require \$400,000 for acquisition. Habitat for Humanity had committed \$700,000. The CPC had a two year window to fund projects. In the event the projects were not constructed within the two-year window, funds would return to the CPC fund.

Motion made by Darcy Dale to recommend favorable action on article 2-5.

Rosemary Kennedy seconded.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye.

The FinCom would vote at their next meeting.

11 2-6 CPC grant (\$75,000) for the clock and belfry at the First Congregational Church. The original request was for \$120,000 but only Town related items for the original Town Meeting House would be covered. The refurbishing of the clock had been funded ten years earlier. A historic preservation restriction would accompany the funding. Members discussed funding a facility that town residents were not free to use and if the funds could be better spent on or saved for Town of Hamilton items. Members discussed the historical nature of the building and its importance to the Town of Hamilton and westward expansion. The building was located in the Historic District. Town Counsel would share his opinion with the FinCom. The grant

application would also be shared with the FinCom. The history of the belfry was important to Rosemary Kennedy.

11 2-7 CPC grant (\$3M bond) for the Town Hall Building Project. Funds could only be used for the historic portions of the building while other funds would be raised and appropriated for the project. The date would be revised to November 1. The CPC funding should be available if the building permit was obtained within two years. A ballot vote on November 15, 2020 would be required.

Motion made by Rosemary Kennedy to recommend favorable action on article 2-17 for \$3M.

Seconded by William Olson

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by David Wanger to recommend favorable action on article 2-17.

Seconded by Christina Schenk-Hargrove.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack - aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove - aye, Nick Tensen - aye, David Wanger - aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.

11 2-8 Town Hall Building Project (to borrow \$4,800,000). To avoid supplanting funds, specific language was included. Members discussed that the FY20 and FY21 tax rates and FY22 projected tax rates should be included in the Warrant to illustrate the impact of the article. Marisa Batista indicated that the estimate for a 30 year bond would be \$.65 per \$100,000. Previous expenditures and 30 year bonding would be included. The FinCom agreed to send all their recommendation to the Selectmen before the Warrant was printed.

Motion made by William Olson to recommend favorable action on article 2-8.

Seconded by Rosemary Kennedy.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Nick Tensen to recommend favorable action on article 2-8.

Christina Schenk-Hargrove seconded.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack - aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, Nick Tensen - aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Darcy Dale to accept the special election ballot question.

Seconded by Rosemary Kennedy,

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

11 2-9 Upgrade of Assessing Department software (\$10,000). The request would be funded from Free Cash.

Motion made by William Olson to recommend favorable action on article 2-9.

Darcy Dale seconded.

Roll call vote: Darcy Dale – aye, Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor. The article would be in the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Nick Tensen to recommend favorable action on article 2-9.

Seconded by David Wanger.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack - aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove - aye, Nick Tensen - aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.

11 2-10 Election equipment and staff funding for the election (\$29,785). The CARES act may fund a portion of the request. The effect would be \$.03 on the tax rate if funding was not available from the CARES act. Joe Domelowicz thought mail in voting would continue into the future and would become part of the budget.

Motion made by Jamie Knudsen to recommend favorable action on article 2-10.

Seconded by Darcy Dale.

Roll call vote: Darcy Dale – aye, Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by David Wanger to recommend favorable action on article 2-10.

Seconded by Christina Schenk-Hargrove.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack – aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove -aye, Nick Tensen - aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.
The article would be in the Consent Agenda.

11 2-11 DPW employee retirement (~~\$~~^{\$}600) for earned sick and vacation time. The item would be raised and appropriated.

Motion made by Darcy Dale recommend favorable action on article 2-11.

Seconded by Rosemary Kennedy.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Valerie McCormack to recommend favorable action on article 2-11.

Seconded by Christina Schenk-Hargrove.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack – aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, Nick Tensen – aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.
The article would be in the Consent Motion.

11 2-12 Master Plan (\$150,000) to be funded from Free Cash. Members discussed that planning should be in coordination with Wenham and the Schools. The proposal should be postponed. Joe Domelowicz said having the funds would allow the Town to work with the Schools' consultants and pay for a planner who could use the Schools' information. Wenham did not have the funds for planning. The process would not be held to procurement law but would be a Request for Proposal. Members discussed that residents could indicate if they wanted to spend the funds for the item and that the Selectmen had determined that this was a major goal. Mr. Domelowicz added that the item had been on Annual Town Meeting and had been postponed to the fall.

Motion made by William Olson to recommend favorable action on article 2-12.
Jamie Knudsen seconded.

Darcy Dale requested that as a Plan B, if the town decided not to approve the article, the Town should continue to work toward the goal by sharing costs with the Schools and/or Wenham. Roll call vote: Darcy Dale – aye, Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Valerie McCormack to recommend favorable action on article 2-12.
Christina Schenk-Hargrove seconded.
David Wanger suggested discussing the topic further.

11 3-1 Council on Aging (COA) By-law. Members discussed that an alternate member of the Council be required to read the minutes or watch the meeting before voting. Tom McEnaney noted that the Council was an advisory board. The COA would be contacted to confirm policy. The language would be refined or a new policy written. The Selectmen and the FinCom would vote at their future meetings. The item could be placed on the Consent Agenda.

11 3-2 Home Rule Petition Acts of 2010 to authorize a Chapter 91 tax exemption on real estate properties. There would be no impact on the tax rate. A \$50,000 cap had been placed on the program. Applicants would be required to submit gross receipts of income including assets as well as tax returns. The new rule would allow the Selectmen to promulgate Rules and Regulations that would not be included in the By-law. The application deadline would be March 31 and the process would be shortened. The deadline would be consistent with Chapter 59. The item would be on the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Jamie Knudsen to recommend favorable action on article 3-2.
Darcy Dale seconded.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by David Wanger to recommend favorable action on article 3-2.

Seconded by Christina Schenk-Hargrove..

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack – aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. As the vote was 4-0, the FinCom may revote at their next meeting. The amended document would be sent to the FinCom.

11 3-3 Lease with Gordon Conwell for Town Hall (\$200,000). The funds would be used to renovate the temporary Town Hall space and for acquiring WiFi, furniture, doors, etc. Liability would name Gordon Conwell. The article could be part of the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Darcy Dale to recommend favorable action on article 3-3.

Seconded by Rosemary Kennedy.

Roll call vote: Darcy Dale – aye, Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, William Olson – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Christina Schenk-Hargrove to recommend favorable action on article 3-3.

Seconded by Nick Tensen.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack – aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, Nick Tensen – aye, David Wanger - aye, and John Pruellage - aye. Unanimous in favor.

11 3-4 Citizen Petition - By-law for disposal of refuse and garbage. The compost program would be discussed at the October 26, 2020 meeting. Composting would be required. It was hoped the proponent would rescind his request. The article would be advisory only and not binding on the Town or the Selectmen. Information would be sent to the FinCom.

11 3-5 Citizen Petition – Board of Health to adhere to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidance regarding the opening of schools for the 2021 school year regarding the global pandemic. Wenham passed the advisory article at their Town Meeting. The Hamilton Board of Health had made changes to their policy to explicitly let the Schools and public know their recommendations were advisory and not mandates. The proponent might recommend no action.

Adjournment.

Motion made by Nick Tensen to adjourn the FinCom meeting.at 9:50 pm.

David Wanger seconded.

Roll call vote: Valerie McCormack – aye, Christina Schenk-Hargrove – aye, Nick Tensen – aye, David Wanger – aye, and John Pruellage – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Darcy Dale to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 9:50.

Seconded by Rosemary Kennedy.

Roll call vote: Rosemary Kennedy – aye, Darcy Dale – aye, William Olson – aye, Jamie Knudsen – aye, and Shawn Farrell – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Prepared by:



Marcie Ricker

 11/13/2020

Attest

Date

NOTE:

* A vote to correct the typo on page 5/sixth paragraph has been scheduled for the Board of Selectmen meeting on Nov. 23.