

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §18-25, written notice posted by the Acting Town Clerk delivered to all Committee members, a public meeting of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held on Thursday May 20, 2021. *Due to the COVID19 Virus pandemic, and restrictions concerning in-person gatherings ordered by the Governor, this meeting took place virtually on Zoom.*

Wenham CPC

At large members: Patrick Waddell, Chair; Thomas Starr, Vice Chair; William Weihs
Town Board /Commission Representative Peter Clay, Planning Board

Not present: Leo Maestranzi, Conservation Commission; Denis Curran, Jt Recreation Department; Barbara Locke, Historic District Commission; Elizabeth Craig-McCormack, Wenham Housing Authority; At-Large member Janet Burt

Also present: Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Service/CPC staff support; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary
Officials present, not participating: Catherine Harrison Select Board.

Hamilton CPC Hamilton CPC present:

At large members: Jay Butler, Chair; Robert Preston, Vice Chair; Rick Johansen
Town Board /Commission Representative Shawn Farrell Select Board

Not Present: Katherine Mittelbush, Historic District Commission; Chris Currier, Conservation Commission; Sherry Leonard, Housing Authority; Richard Boroff Planning Board; At-Large member Kim Dietel

Also present: Mary Alice Cookson, Secretary

There was no quorum and therefore this meeting was limited to informational only. No votes were taken.
The discussion began at 7:20 pm.

- Public Comment – *There was none.*
- Approval of outstanding minutes – *The minutes were held to the next meeting*

- Discuss 2% (Hamilton) vs 3% (Wenham) surcharge

Mr. Waddell referenced a excel sheet that tracked Hamilton and Wenham's current and past CPA state matches.

Wenham has a 3% CPA surcharge, and as a 3 % community, is eligible for the maximum two rounds of state matches.
Both Towns received a 28.6% state match in round 1 for 2020.

Hamilton is a 2% (surcharge) community and received \$137,651 in the first round.

Wenham received additional matches in rounds 2 & 3 for a total additional match of 59.2%.

Since 2007 Wenham, as a 3% community, has received an additional \$1,096,731 in rounds 2 & 3.

If Hamilton had a 3% match in 2020, the Town would have raised an additional surcharge revenue of \$240,426 plus funding in rounds 2 & 3 of \$289,394 (estimated) for additional \$529,820 in CPA funding.

A discussion followed regarding this data. Those from Hamilton did not believe the residents would approve a CPA surcharge increase to 3%. Mr. Johansen suggested residents be better informed and what can be paid for with CPA funds i.e. turf field, historic renovation of Town Hall.

Mr. Waddell mentioned there are CPA design restrictions related to turf fields and only "rug" is not covered by CPA, adding he recently spoke to Stuart Saginor, executive director of the Community Preservation Coalition regarding the funding of turf fields.

Mr. Butler summarized the progress of the turf committee and referenced the May10, 2021 meeting, at which time, it was reviewed that the school committee previously signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with TURF Field Fund Raising Group. This is a group of three local residents. The goal outlined in the MOU was to raise \$1.5 million over 2 years.

In 2017, an engineering study was done and produced an estimate of \$9.5 million for a sports complex at the high school, without tennis courts or a softball field. An updated study was funded in the FY22 HWRSD's capital budget for \$65,000 to include a softball field and tennis courts in the plan, potentially increasing the project cost to more than \$10 million. Mr. Butler went on to give a general overview of additional work outside of the estimate that would also need to be done e.g. field lighting, legal documents, funding, a turf maintenance and turf replacement plan.

Both Towns have agreed that any CPA grants would be directly awarded to the school committee with a carefully worded, structured grant agreement for a turf field.

Draft

Mr. Butler noted that the TURF Group proposed to include in their fund raising the \$500,000 set aside from the sale of the Patton Estate, of which Wenham CPC would have to match their fair share for these funds to be used for turf fields.

The TURF Group also would rely on both CPC's to contribute to their fund raising.

Mr. Waddell added that the Institute for Savings Bank historically pays for field naming rights (\$600,000) which was also included in the TURF Groups fund raising. He mentioned that CPA Funds should not be included in private fund raising. The Committees concurred that with so many financial challenges facing both Towns there is no room in either Town's tax rate, or the school budget, to fund a turf field.

Mr. Butler opined that even though Hamilton has CPA funds to contribute towards a turf field, there is nowhere near \$10 million dollars and questioned other funding sources.

Mr. Clay suggested when there is a complete plan, that includes fund raising, there be another joint meeting to have a serious discussion.

Mr. Waddell referenced the Town of Hopkinton that two years ago built three sport fields for about \$3 million.

Mr. Farrell elaborated on Hamilton's immediate need to address their aging Town hall and observed that the Town could be ordered to vacate the building at any time; Hamilton voters did not approve the Town hall renovation project this year, but because the CPA grants were previously approved, funds are held in escrow. If this project is finally approved, these grants will be released otherwise they will expire due to "sunset" provisions in the grant agreements.

Ms. Bresnahan observed Wenham has a sunset provision in the grant agreements and gives the Select Board authorization to amend Town Meeting approved agreements without going back to Town Meeting.

- Discuss both Town's processes for reviewing and approving CPA applications including 'friends of groups. Hamilton CPC has a two-step application process. The first is an eligibility application and the second a funding application. Wenham has a single process for the applicant to present their application which is discussed by the Committee and voted at subsequent meetings. The Wenham CPC meets approximately 4-5 times annually. Hamilton meets monthly, unless there is no need for a meeting, and therefore meet about 10 times a year.

- Shared projects

There were no immediate shared projects identified other than possible turf field. The communities often each receive an application for those entities that have an interest in both Towns, i.e. playgrounds, Community House.

Hamilton maintains an ongoing list of ideas proposed for CPC grants. Wenham does not maintain a project list, but is aware the Pingree Park is of interest for tennis courts and/or skateboard park. Wenham also has an underutilized playground on Topsfield Road in West Wenham. This potential uses for this property is being discussed along with open space including to protect the watershed.

There was a lengthy discussion which included the upcoming need to build a new elementary school as another financial expenditure facing the Towns.

- Discuss other possible upcoming joint projects and Master Plans.

Hamilton and Wenham are both doing Master Plans, but the CPCs are not participating officially to date. Both Towns will have steering committees to work with the consultant.

The meeting ended at 8:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

5.31.21