

Town of Hamilton Town Manager Report

Week of November 18, 2024

Department/ Project	Weekly Update (New Information in Green)	Timeline	Status
Town Manager's Office 1. Town Hall to be closed for Thanksgiving Day holiday	1. In keeping with the town's long-standing policies, Town Offices will close to the public at Noon on Wednesday, November 27 and will reopen Monday, December 2, 2024.	1. Wed., Nov. 27 - Mon., Dec. 2	1. Closed for Holiday
2. Town Hall - Commencement of Construction	2. The town has signed contracts with the construction teams managing the different aspects of the Town Hall renovation project. A project kick-off for all partners took place on November 20. Look for that story in the next Town Manager Report. The General Contractor will be providing the town with a project schedule and timeline within the next week and is currently projecting a 12-15 month construction schedule if construction begins on December 1. That would set the projected timeline to a March - April of 2026 return to Town Hall operations on Bay Rd There is of course a great deal to do between now and then and we will be opening walls that haven't been touched in over 100 years, so some project delays may occur, but we are optimistic that town offices can return to Town Hall in the first half of 2026. More to come.	2. 12-15 months	2. Construction starting
3. Willow Flats - Car Fire	3. On the evening of Sunday, Nov. 10, an automobile fire in the parking lot at Willow Flats was reported by a resident on a community social media account as being an EV car fire. Please always refer to the Town of Hamilton official page or the Fire Department for accuracy. Hamiton Fire Chief reported that the car fire was in a regular-automobile with an internal	3. Nov. 10, 2024	3. Past

	combustion engine and not an EV auto. The car that caught fire did damage the property's EV charging station that was nearby. There have been questions to Town Hall about the safety of the EV charging station models installed at Willow Flats and whether it represents a danger to the surrounding neighborhood. We want to clear up a couple of points about the charging stations at Willow Flats. Both charging stations are off-line due both to the damage incurred from that fire and because the Willow Flats management is aware of the current investigations into the manufacturer of their stations (Enel X) that were installed at their property. Willow Flats two charging stations are not for public use. Their EV stations are for their tenants of the Flats and those EV spots are assigned by building management. As building management works toward bringing their units back online safely for their tenants, they will remain in contact with the Hamilton Fire Department for permitting. Lastly, the Hamilton Fire Department is equipped with specialized equipment designed to make fighting EV fires safer and more effective. The Town of Hamilton remains committed to		
	specialized equipment designed to make		
4. Staff Holiday Party	4. The Town Manager's annual Staff Holiday Party is Thursday December 19, beginning at 12:30 P.M. As has been our practice to ensure all staff are included, all town offices, except public safety, will close at Noon that day and re-open the following day, Friday, December 20 at 8 A.M.	4. Dec. 19	4. Planned

Public Works		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. UpComing Events	1. E-Waste Day 11/16/2024 Leak Pick-Up Day 12/7/2024		
2. Facilities	2. Hamilton Town Hall The Contractor, Campbell Construction Group, LLC officially will begin the project on 12/1/2024. The last office moves are taking place to complete the full relocation of town hall offices. There will be more information coming on the location of the DPW office. Please stay tuned.	2. Start 12/1/2024	2. Final Town Hall Cleaning Out
	Replacement of AHU1 Cooling System DPW solicited bids for the replacement of the AHU1 cooling system at the PSB on 9/10/2024. The town received one bid from Ultra Services, Inc. for \$66,384.00. Equipment has been ordered to convert the old R-22 system to R-410A.	Oct. 2024	Equipment ordered
	Patton Homestead Pavilion Hamilton has contracted with EJ+P, Inc. for design services necessary for the Homestead Pavilion project	Fall 2024 Const. Spring 2025	Under Agreement
3. DPW Administration	3. Employment Opportunities If interested please email Tim Olson @ <u>tolson@hamiltonma.gov</u> or call 978-626-5227 for position details. OPEN - Secondary Operator - Water Dept	3. Open	3. Open
4. Highway Department	4. Essex Street Drainage DPW continues to communicate with the engineering consultant and owner of 470 Essex Street in hopes of a collaborative effort to address drainage upgrades along Essex Street near Appaloosa Lane.	4. On-going	4. Waiting for owner and development submittal
	Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements. The Town recently bid out the 2024 Roadway Improvements project that will include mill and overlay of Bridge Street from School Street to Essex Street, reconstruction of a portion of Greenbrook Road, New sidewalk along Essex Street, between Forest Street and School Street, and some miscellaneous drainage improvements. Two bids were received and DPW is reviewing bids and funding. Base bids received were ~\$820k with some additional alternatives for consideration and additional price.	Fall 2024 bid - Spring 2025 Const.	In-progress

		1	
	Route 22 Paving Hamilton was chosen as a community to have Route 22 paved under the MassDOT Municipal Pavement Program. The full extent of the project and schedule has not yet been released.	TBD	Selected by MassDOT
5. Vehicle Maintenance	5. New Purchased Vehicles	5. Complete	5. Received
	DPW received the 1st of two front-line sander.	Complete	Received
6. Cemetery	6. Walker Mower DPW has purchased a new Walker Mower for the Cemetery using Perpetual Care Funds.	6. Winter 2024/2025	6. Preliminary Discussions
7. Sanitation	7. No Sanitation Updates	7. N/A	7. N/A
8. Parks and Grounds	8. Patton Park Improvements The DPW and Rec Dept. have re-engaged CBA Landscape Architects to discuss the first phase of drainage and park improvements as outlined in the Patton Park Master Plan. Conceptual cost estimates were discussed at the May 6th Select Board meeting. High priorities from the Patton Park Master Plan were drainage improvements and pathways.	8. Included in Town Hall project	8. Under design
9. Energy	9. Solar on the DPW Garage The Town is actively pursuing the installation of a solar array on the DPW Garage. On 2/6/2024 DPW and HEIC met with Senator Bruce Tarr to discuss the solar project as well as the Town Hall Renovation project and the importance of each energy component in the whole project.	9. In-process	9. Working on data from public side, will be reaching out to private owners for cooperation
10. Water Department	10. Lead Service Inventory & Assessment–MasDEP	10. In-process	10. Gathering field data for system wide information

The Hamilton Water Department successfully submitted the mandatory Water Service Line Inventory to MassDEP prior to the October 16, 2024 decidine. However, there are still items to complete. Hamilton and its' hired consultants, Stantec Engineers, have complied all the inventory data which is available on the toxin website at https://www.hamiltonma.gov/government/ water.department/ied.consultant.ico.opper/ Residents will receive 1 of 4 letters depending on the results from the inventory and the additional items still needed. Please read the received letter compatibility.On-goingIn-progressGIS Asset Management The town has contracted with Dewberry Engineers to ossist with establishing a GIS water asset management program. This GIS will initiality be geared to the Hamilton Water System but will then be populated with other attributes is storm water, raadway, if you a wark, order solution within the GIS Asset Management The town has contracted with Dewberry Engineers to ossist with establishing a GIS water asset management program. This GIS will initiality be geared to be tracked and documented in GIS when completed.On-goingIn-progressWell Maintenance The Hamilton/Water System but will then be populated and documented in GIS when completed.Design by Fall 2024 Construction TBDAgreement Signed 2024 Construction TBDWater Improvements - Phase 5 Stantec Consulting Services is underway with the design for the Phase 5. Water System Improvements that will be concentrated along Fork Nun. Tally Ho, Oak, Plum, Chestnut, Pine, and other surrounding streets. The construction phase timeline will be contingent upon available funding and Town Meeting appropriation. Stante chas suress. The construction phase timeline will be cont	L	1		ı
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<u>Police</u>		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Full-Time Hire(s)	Hamilton PD recently hired Officer Assagi (Guy) Wynter as our newest Hamilton full time police officer. Guy comes to us from the Boston University Police Department. Officer Guy has begun the Field Training (FTO) Program and is currently working the day shift. As part of the FTO program, he will be required to work all 3 shifts.	1. Sept. 1	
2. Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission	2. We have successfully completed our accreditation assessment and have been approved for State Re-Accreditation. We received our official award on October 30th.	2. Oct. 30	
3. Congratulations	3. We are pleased to announce the promotion of Sergeant Matt Donovan to the rank of Lieutenant. Lieutenant Donovan has been a member of the Hamilton Police Department for approximately 30 years and holds a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice. Lieutenant Donovan is replacing Steve Trepanier, who retired in July.	3. Nov. 1	
<u>Fire Dept</u>			
1. Department Stats	1. The Hamilton Fire Department responded to the following calls along with other department activities. In the previous two weeks we responded to 11 fire related calls, 22 medical calls 0 mutual aid calls, 1 MVA, 0 brush and 0 public assists. We also conducted the following fire prevention activities, 8 inspections.	1. On-going	
2. Maintenance	2. Before winter our fire personnel will be checking hydrants throughout the Town for water that hasn't drained properly out of them. When a hydrant is found with water still in the barrel it will be pumped out and winterized for the season.	2. On-going	
3, DFS Grant	3. The HFD Applied for a \$15,500.00 Department of Fire Services equipment grant. If we are awarded this, we will use the money to purchase specialized firefighting gear and equipment. We should know within the next three months if we will receive it or not.	3. On-going	
4. Hazardous Mitigation Grant	4. Last year we applied for a grant to update the Town's Hazardous Mitigation Plan and subsequently received it. This plan	4. On-going	

	is designed to aid us in the response to all types of natural disasters and emergencies. The plan was last updated in 2019 and under the Hazardous Mitigation Act 0f 2000 it must be updated every five years. We are presently working with a consulting firm to update this plan.	
5. Severe drought	5. At the present time the entire State is under a severe drought condition and we are in a red flag warning for fire. Many communities around us have had extensive brush fires this week. All types of outside burning is prohibited at this time, this includes the use of SOLO stoves in your backyard. Please call 911 if you see and/or smell smoke in or around any wooded areas.	5. On-going
6. Recruits	6. Our newest hires, Nicolia Sims and Jack Hope, just started the Massachusetts Fire Academy Class 117. This is an intense part-time program that ends on March 3, 2025. When they graduate from this program they will be Nationally Certified Firefighters.	6. On-going

Planning and Inspectional Services		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Master Plan	1. MP document has been reviewed/edited by Planning Board. Available on the town website soon - likely November.	1. On-going	1. On-going
2. Planning Board considering Form Based Zoning (FBZ) along with 3A; consultant hired (Utile).	2. The work will include a new zoning for the downtown area, with public engagement along with an approach to 3A zoning as well. Public process has begun with public forums on June 12 and July 25 - more to come.	2. Two zoning articles for public/town meeting vote are expected April 2025. Planning Board meetings on 3A and Form Based Zoning starting 11/26/24; additional meetings 12/19/24, 1/7/25, 2/4/25 and 2/25/25.	2. Ongoing
3. Planning Board evaluating various amendments to the zoning bylaw - inclusionary housing, accessory dwelling units, various other specifics as well as zoning bylaw text.	3. Expect town meeting zoning articles.	3. On-going	3. On-going

Public Health		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>Department</u> 1. Health Related	 Currently we're experiencing 1 case of influenza, 8 confirmed cases of Coronavirus and 1 case of Salmonellosis. A Public Health clinic for the flu shot was scheduled for October 29th at the COA, 299 Bay Road from 1:30-4pm. Covid test kits are now available (in limited supply) at the COA building (1 kit per person). In addition, the health department still has a limited supply of single use gloves and bandages for distribution to the community please call 978 417-6118 to order. 	1. On-going	
2. Food Permitting and Inspection	2. Permitting of food establishments/food trucks is on-going for the 2024 year. Round 2 of food establishment inspection is on-going in accordance with appendix 5 of the 2013 food code.		
3. Septic	3. Soil tests, plan reviews and septic inspections are on-going along with permitting of septic haulers. We have processed 183 septic pumping reports, licensed 13 septic installers, 5 septic haulers, 8 title inspectors and 1 maintenance provider. We have completed 59 plan reviews, 25 title 5 reports, 4 soil tests and issued 9 certificates of compliance. The Health Dept. is on the verge of rolling out a new low interest betterment loan program that would benefit residents whose septic systems have failed and are in need of replacement. The application process will soon be complete.		
4. Animals/Tobacco	4. Permitting of Animals Permitting is on-going. Barn inspections have begun and the barn book will be completed and filed with the state. In accordance with Board of Health regulations, the new expiration date for animal keeping is August 31st of each year and the Board of Health is in the process of updating the Keeping of Animals regulation (last updated in 1989), in collaboration with neighboring communities. A draft regulation has been assembled and passed at the last BOH meeting. Also, In an effort to update our archaic Board of Health regulations, the board is investigating a draft private well regulation and will have a decision coming soon. Tobacco sales regulation has already been updated earlier this year - added recently is the ban on menthol flavored		

	products (all tobacco sale permit holders have been inspected for such products)	
5. New Programs	5. Sharps The sharps collection/disposal program for Hamilton residents is on-going and a sharps collection container can be obtained from the Senior Center (299 Bay Road) taken home, filled and returned for disposal free of charge. Please contact the Health Dept. or the COA to take advantage of this program. Blood pressure screenings are ongoing at Lamson Hall on the 2nd Wed. of each month from 3:30-5:30 P.M.	
6. Public Health Concerns	 6. Recalls There's been a recall of more than 600 varieties of frozen waffles, pancakes and Belgian waffles made by TreeHouse Foods because they may be contaminated with <i>Listeria monocytogenes.</i> Listeria infections can cause fever, muscle aches and fatigue and may in some cases lead to stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions. Symptoms can occur quickly or up to 10 weeks after eating contaminated food. The infections are especially dangerous for older people, those with weakened immune systems or who are pregnant. Retailers that sold the recalled items include: Albertsons, Aldi, Dollar General, Target, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods and Walmart. Please check your freezers for any of the products and throw out or return any recalled items for a credit. Questions may be sent to TreeHouse at 1-800-596-2903. EEE Still a threat of mosquito borne illnesses until the winter season and looming both north and south of us. I'm slightly concerned for your safety. I'm sure you've all heard of the recent EEE fatality in Hampstead, NH and positive cases just south of us in Plymouth county. (although it is a rare illness, there is no treatment or cure for EEE and 30% of those who contract it don't survive.) I don't want you to be overly concerned but hope you'll remain vigilant and reduce your risk, wear repellent (with DEET) and long sleeves, and try to limit your outdoor activities between dusk and dawn. (And please care for your animals to prevent the contraction of this mosquito borne illness).	

	Norovirus Norovirus is still up 5%. Please wash your hands frequently - hand sanitizer is NOT a substitute for proper hand washing. (No one has time to be sick.). I encourage you to call Dennis Palazzo, Director of Health, if you have any health related questions at 978-417-6118. Please stay safe and healthy.		
<u>Finance</u>		Timeline	<u>Status</u>
1. FY24 Audit	1. Clifton Larson Allen is finishing the final stages of the FY24 Audit to prepare the Audited Financial Statements and present them to the Select Board and FinCom.		
2. FY24 Free Cash Certification	2. The FY24 Free Cash was certified by the MA DOR Division of Local Services in the amount of \$4,512,906 and Retained Earnings for the Water Enterprise of \$1,683,010.		
3. FY26 Tax Rate Setting	3. Finance is working on the FY26 estimated revenue in preparation to set the Tax Rate in early December.		
4. FY26 Budget Preparation	4. Finance is in the beginning stages of the FY26 Budget preparation.		
Treasurer/Collector			
1. Tax Title	1. We fell a little behind schedule with FY23 Tax Title. We are down to just 3 parcels. With being short staffed we have decided to wait and process FY23 & FY24 tax titles together. Working on a small balance letter for FY24 Real Estate & Personal Property preparing to start Tax Title. Also paying close attention to new legislation regarding Tax Title.		
2. Billing	2. Water bills have started to come in at a steady stream. Commitment 06 for Motor vehicle have been billed this week and commitment 05 have seen sent to demand.		
3. Month-end	3. Balancing receivables, bank statements, and cash.		
4. Benefits /Payroll	4. Sue has been busy establishing benefits with several new hires and people leaving.		
5. Regional school	5. Working on the POS statement for the school's upcoming Bonding. BOS statement has been sent to Locke & Lord.		

6. Town Borrowing	6. Working on a requirement letter for BOND Council for upcoming CPA borrowing. Bond Council had a few follow up questions that they hoped to wrap up this week.	
7. Misc.	7. We are very happy to announce we have filled the position in our office. Julie Petipas (see profile highlights online) joined our finance team Nov 4th.Julie is settling in nicely. The training process has been going very well.	

Parks & Recreation		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Winter Program Registration	1. Resident Registration for our Winter Programs opened on Tuesday, November 19th. Since Tuesday, we have had close to 300 individual registrations for our programs, trips, events, etc	1. On-going	1. On-going
	Non-Resident registration for programs will open on Tuesday, November 26th.		
	Please visit our website <u>www.hwrecreation.com</u> for information and to register.		
2. Flashlight Candy Cane Hunt	2. Our popular Flashlight Candy Cane Event is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10th, 6 P.M. at the Recreation Center. This is a free event which averages close to 175 participants each year. We are looking forward to another great event.		
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3. Patton Park Summer Program	3. Included in our Winter Brochure is registration information for the Patton Park Summer Park Playground for the summer of 2025. Registration will be held on the evening of Tuesday, February 4th. Specific Information will be provided by miid January.		

4. Family Gingerbread House Workshop	4. We will be hosting a Family Gingerbread House Workshop on Friday, December 20th at the COA Buidling. Registration is available on our website www.hwrecreation.com Figure 1 Figure 1 <		
Council on Aging		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Programming 2. SHINE Program	 October Programming is wrapping up. COA hosted a lunch with friends, KevTech, Balance, Yoga, and Qigong classes. Intro to Medicare class welcomed 12 residents. COA staff estimate the program is averaging 21 residents coming through the door each day. November activities are in full swing. COA hosted Pie Day and indoor bocce. Balance class and a talk on JFK are all coming up. The COA men group is working with the Salvation Army to put together gift bags. The Nov. Lunch with Friends welcomed Hamilton PD Officer Santerilli and Officer Neill for a talk on recognizing scams. Open Enrollment for Medicare ends December 7. Available SHONE consultation appointments for this year's enrollment are all booked. All volunteers at Age Span (who oversee the SHINE program for this area) are also booked according to their website. Hamilton's SHINE counselor recommends residents call 800-medicare if they need help before Dec. 7. 		

	Call for Volunteers - AgeSpan in Lawrence provides free training to become a certified SHINE counselor. In an effort to recruit volunteers with this growing need for Hamilton residents, Hamilton's COA is now offering travel scholarship* funding to reimburse the transportation costs of driving to and from the Lawrence training center for new volunteers. *Travel scholarships must be pre-approved before training begins and include a commitment to support the Hamilton COA. Visit <u>Outreach/SHINE - Town of Hamilton</u> , MA for information. Retirement calls continue to come in about SHINE and how to sign-up for a consultation. Residents are advised that available appointments fill-up quickly, so if they want to request help with open enrollment, they should plan ahead.	
3. Owl System	3. We will be purchasing the Owl system so that we can start hybrid classes in early January. We have plenty of Ipads and Chromebooks to pass out if one with help to connect them to classes.	
4. Grants	4. No change in grant. Quarterly report was completed and submitted to the state. We have given out an additional 5 chromebooks/ipads. We have hired an instructor that will be helping at both Rowley and Hamilton. Residents will be able to go to either class. We are also looking into purchasing a drawing app and apple pencils through the grant so that we can offer more. Tablets have been purchased and should be here within the next couple of weeks. We are scheduling an information session at the beginning of April so that we can distribute them to interested residents. There will be a sign-out procedure. April 1, 11 A.M. is the tablet talk.	
4. Newsletter	4. COA Newsletter continues to be combined with Wenham. Timing needs to be worked out so that we can get it to the printer earlier. Continue to work on list of residents that don't want the newsletter or would prefer to get it via email.	

Human Resources		<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Status</u>
1. Openings	 Current Openings: for more information, see Career Opportunities on the Human Resources page of the Town Website Shared Principal Assessor (Hamilton/Wenham) Land Use Clerk Conservation Agent (Shared service with Manchester-by-the-Sea) OPEN - Secondary Operator - Water Dept* Planning and CPA Coordinator Regional Public Health Nurse: Towns of Hamilton, Essex, Wenham, and Rockport* Health Inspections (pending) Working with the Regional Coordinator on the Regional Public Health Nurse position to make it more desirable. Will present ideas to the Hamilton Town Manager (regional lead)/ongoing. 	1. The town has hired a full-time AR/AP Coordinator, the person starts on November	
2. Collaboration	2. Working with the DPW Director on incentive options to attract qualified candidates.		
3. Employee Engagement	3. Creating Employee Engagement holiday recognition handouts focusing on team building and appreciation.		
4. Notifications	4. Working with MIIA on Health and Wellness programs for town employees in the winter. Attending a Racial Equity Advancement &		
	Collaborative Hub (REACH) program in Boston. Hosted by the Metropolitan Planning Council. • Next meeting scheduled 11/13		
Town Clerk's Office		Timeline	<u>Status</u>
1. Conflict of Interest Annual Filings, MGL C. 268A	1. 2004 Training All municipal employees (including board and committee members) received an email from the State Ethics Commission regarding Ethics on-line training requirements. EVERY municipal employee MUST acknowledge receipt of the summary EVERY YEAR. Several are delinquent.	1. Jan - Dec	1. Year round

	2025 Conflict of Interest Training In Jan, 2025 the Office sends emails to all employees, appointed, and elected officials regarding the 2025 training requirements.	Jan - Dec	Year round
2. 2024 Dog License Renewals MGL C. 140 s.137, 137A	2. In 2023 we issued 962 dog licenses for 2024. The office has issued 979 through September. Late fees kicked-in in June 2024. Some residents are delinquent.	2. Jan - Dec	2. Year Round
3. DBA MGL C. 110 s.5	3. "Doing Business As" renewals due every 4 years; approx 40 to be renewed in calendar year 2024. We issued 49 in 2023. We have issued an additional 28 in 2024.	3. Jan - Dec	3.Several more expected
4. Mail - Patton Homestead	4. The Town Clerk's office stops at the COA/Public Safety Building parking lot's drop box every day to gather all mail from the Town dropbox and bring it to Town Hall/Patton Homestead. Staff also drop off and pick up mail at the post office.		
5. 2024 Election Season is DONE = 4 Elections	5. 2024 election dates: March 5 Presidential Primary, April 11 Annual Town Election; State Primary Sep 3 (the day after Labor Day); Nov 5 State/Presidential Election.	5. Nov. 2024	
	NOV 5 RECAP: OFFICIAL RESULTS Official results show voter turnout at 82.5% or 4839 voters. Early ballots (mailed and in-person) accounted for 50.5% of the ballots cast on election day.	Nov 2023 - Nov 2024	
	VOTE BY MAIL We mailed 1924 ballots for the election; 1524 (79%) were returned.		
	IN PERSON EARLY VOTING Between Sat., Oct. 19 - Fri., Nov. 1, 2024, 890 residents voted early in person.		
6. Hamilton Census/Street List process MGL C.51 s.4	6. 2024 The Census Form was mailed to 2,822 households mid-January. Forms were due back in 10 days. The mailing included the dog license renewal form and the 2024 trash schedule. Staff have updated 1995 forms in the voter system. Approximately 30% of forms have NOT been returned. Staff have manually updated information for all residents living at the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary campus.	6. Jan. 2024 - Dec. 2024 and again for 2025	

2025 Census forms will be mailed mid-December with the Trash Schedule and the 2025 Dog License application.	