



Town of Hamilton
Select Board
Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2024

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Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, MGL Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Select Board members, a meeting of the Hamilton Select Board was posted for September 9, 2024 at 7:00pm. This meeting was held at the Hamilton Wenham Library at 14 Union Street, on Zoom, broadcast live on HWCAM & recorded for playback.

The Select Board functions as the Chief Executive body of the Town. Its five members are elected to three-year terms with one or two seats up for election each year. The Board acts as the chief policy making body of the Town and directly supervises the activities of the Town Manager. The Select Board typically meets the first and third Monday evening at 7:00 p.m.

Select Board: Caroline Beaulieu(2025); Thomas Myers(2025); Bill Wilson(2026); William Olsen(2027); Rosemary Kennedy(2027).

Call to order: *Chair Beaulieu called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and identified those present: C. Beaulieu, Chair; B.Wilson, Vice-Chair; T.Myers, Clerk (via zoom) R.Kennedy, W. Olsen. Also present: Joseph J. Domelowicz Jr., Town Manager; and others as noted.*

The Chair announced Board and Committee openings as displayed on the agenda:

- Conservation Commission – 1 opening
- Council on Aging - 2 associate openings
- Human Rights Commission - 1 opening
- Hamilton Development Corporation – 1 opening for a 3-year term
- Historic District Commission - 2 openings for 3 year terms, 2 openings for 2 year terms
- Cultural Council – 1 opening
- Finance & Advisory Committee – 1 associate opening

Select Board Member Reports:

- **T.Myers** gave an update from the School Building Committee: There are upcoming workshops planned as well as a traffic study; consultants will be present at the upcoming school open houses to talk to people and answer questions.
- **R.Kennedy** gave an update on the Conservation Commission: Specifically on some of the Bridge St properties. She noted there was discussion of the school athletic fields project and concerns expressed about compliance with PFAS testing and other issues. The Zoning Board of Appeals reviewed plans for an accessory dwelling unit at their meeting. She also attended a meeting regarding the plans for the Gordon Conwell site.
- **B.Wilson** noted that the School did get an enforcement order from the Conservation Commission to stop work, and that they are considering hiring a wetland scientist to oversee the project. He also highlighted the upcoming workshops regarding the school building project and encouraged people to attend. The Historic District Commission would like to meet with the Select Board to discuss capital requests.
- **Chair Beaulieu** thanked everyone who worked and helped out with the elections. She noted that a number of people came to the election to vote on 3A, and she reminded everyone that the vote on 3A will happen at the Annual Town Meeting in April.
- **J.Domelowicz** announced that the Town was awarded a Green Communities grant of \$500,000 towards the Town Hall decarbonization project, and thanked Town Energy Manager Vikky Masone for her work on this grant.

Public Comment – Three (3) minutes per person on items not already on the agenda

- **Tosh Blake, Sagamore St.** commented he watched the Select Board workshop and was surprised his name came up. He alleged Chair Beaulieu incorrectly quoted him from a previous meeting and implied that he was part of calling public figures out, and he wished to correct those statements. He questioned whether Chair Beaulieu had the appropriate temperament to serve as Chair. Chair Beaulieu offered to relinquish her role if anyone wished to take over; no one from the Board stepped forward.

Consent Agenda:

- **Minutes of the July 29, 2024 Select Board Workshop**

Vote: The Board voted 4-0-1 by roll call to approve the Select Board Workshop minutes with W. Olsen abstaining as he was not present.

- **Request for electronic sign board, Friends of the HW Library** - R.Kennedy pointed out the Friends of the Library are not technically a Town entity, therefore, the event should not be endorsed or advertised by the Town. Others believed that the organization is supporting a Town entity exclusively, and therefore it should be allowed. Discussion continued on this point and the Board was able to reach a consensus.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the request for the electronic sign board from Friends of the Library to go up for a week and limited to subject matter, time and date.

Agenda:

- **Appoint Ken Wilson to the Hamilton Foundation – Discuss & Vote**

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Ken Wilson to the Hamilton Foundation.

- **Set age, income & asset limits for Chapter 91 program, with Principal Assessor Todd Laramie – Discuss & Vote**

T.Laramie was not present, but J.Domelowicz explained that this is a standard annual vote, and the Board needs to decide on the age threshold. The assessors recommended staying at age 65 for the senior exemption program.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the senior exemption program at the existing 65-year age, the outlined income, & asset levels.

- **Presentation from ESG regarding the Town Hall decarbonization project -** A consultant from Energy Systems Group presented by zoom, with slides explaining the Town Hall decarbonization project. He explained the system and how the components work together, and that it will be self-funding. He explained the funding model and the sources of funds that will apply to the project, as well as the savings. The Board asked a number of questions regarding the specifics of the project from the ESG consultants. Deb Safford asked about the geothermal energy and the consultants explained the wells that and the ground water that is used to power the open loop system. John McGrath from the Finance Committee explained the project will add a million dollars of value to the Town, and explained the Finance Committee examined the risks and did not find any. Discussion continued about the specifics of the project, the components, and the savings to be realized.

- **Approve use of Cemetery Perpetual Care Funds for purchase of walker/mower – Discuss & Vote**

This is the purchase of a commercial mower to be used for Cemetery maintenance, the request is from the Department of Public Works Director Tim Olson. There was brief discussion about the purchase and the type of mower.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the use of the funds for the purchase of the mower.

- **Approve use of \$25,000 from ARPA for security cameras at Patton Park & Patton Park pool – Discuss & Vote**

Chair Beaulieu and J.Domelowicz spoke to the usefulness of having cameras to enhance security, and in particular to identify perpetrators when there are incidents of vandalism. Last year the bathrooms were vandalized to the point where they had to be closed to the public. The hope is that the cameras will act as a deterrent to such behaviors, and will aid law enforcement in holding perpetrators accountable.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve \$25,000 from ARPA for security cameras at Patton Park and the pool.

- **Goodhue Street speed limit – Discuss & Vote:** J.Domelowicz referenced the traffic calming changes discussed at the previous meeting, that were recommended in the traffic study that was presented at the last meeting. The first step in making the traffic calming changes is for the Select Board to formally vote the change in the speed limit, which then has to be submitted to and approved by the state. Some of the other measures, such as changes to the intersection have to be approved by the Planning Board, it will be on an agenda soon. Following a Select Board vote, the Town can post a temporary speed limit while waiting for state approval.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve a speed limit of 25 mph for the Hamilton portion of Goodhue Street and Waldingfield Road, as well as to ask the Town Manager to draft a letter to the Ipswich Select Board requesting that they consider a change in speed limit to 25mph on the corresponding roads in Ipswich.

- **Review Special Town Meeting Script, assign motion movers and speakers - Discuss & Vote**

The Special Town Meeting is to be held on Monday, September 23, 2024. Chair Beaulieu read through the agenda for the special Town Meeting. There was discussion regarding the order of presentations, presenters, timing, and general content of the presentations. Jay Burnham, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee, and Town Moderator Bill Bowler were present for the discussion.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the assigned motion movers and speakers for the official Town Meeting script.

- **Update on progress for improving cell service – Discuss:** B.Wilson presented several slides regarding improving the cell service in downtown Hamilton. He displayed a map showing areas with problematic cell service and suggested some options for improving cell service, including writing an RFP to ask for bids to improve coverage. One possibility was to ask for a mesh WIFI system for along Rt 1A, where antenna could be distributed to provide more access points. This would be quicker and easier than a tower, and would provide free WIFI access. He discussed several possibilities and what the technology would look like in terms of being affixed to poles or buildings. He continued to present some possible options and the speed at which various options might be accomplished and suggested the Board, or the Town Manager, send a letter to Everest, who has right of first refusal for downtown service; this should start the conversation for generating possible service options. He could also provide sample requests for proposals for the Town to review.

- **Facility Use Policy discussion around Select Board's ideas – Discuss:** The Board continued to discuss the draft facility use policy, specifically regarding the Council on Aging building on Bay Road. The discussion proceeded around who and what groups should have free access to the space and under what conditions. Chair Beaulieu expressed concern about a policy that is too stringent in restricting use of public space, and not allowing civic organizations access, and in making determinations of what may or may not be offensive to residents of the town. W.Olson commented on the importance to make a distinction between a space that people can access for free, or for people to rent out. The deliberation included whether the COA building should be only for COA use and what to do if there are requests on both sides of an issue. The Board referenced the room use policy of the library as an example. The sense of the Board was to have the space open to everyone and use it as an asset for the residents, but also reserve the right for the Board to use their discretion as necessary. A possible cleaning fee was mentioned. R.Kennedy will put together a new draft for the Board to review.

New Business:

- J.Domelowicz mentioned that Rockport is dropping out of the Human Resources shared arrangement, which could benefit Hamilton as the Town would like more dedicated hours.
- W.Olsen raised the need to have a discussion about the process of the work stoppage order issued to the school athletic fields project by the Conservation Commission, and how one person from one committee could alone issue the order. He questioned whether the appropriate process was followed, and that there was no time given to the school to bring the project into compliance before the work stoppage was issued. He believed there should be a timeline or a deadline in the process before bringing work to a halt and incurring expenses related to the work stoppage, and requested this issue be placed on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion.
- Chair Beaulieu noted the issue of the School Building Committee process should also be on the agenda for clarification purposes.

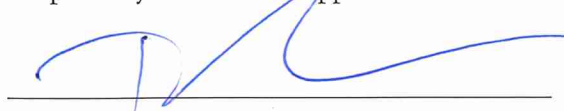
Adjournment Vote: *The Select Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:30PM.*

Meeting Packet Enclosures:

- Email from Jan Bennett requesting use of the sign board for the Friends of the Library book sale, and sample flyer.
- Meeting minutes of Select Board Workshop from July 29, 2024
- Recommendation from H. Ford, Hamilton Foundation on the appointment of K. Wilson, & application from K. Wilson.
- Chapter 91 Special Act, Senior Exemption
- ESG presentation on Town Hall project
- Energy savings guarantee and Measurement and Verification Project
- Green Communities grant award to the Town of Hamilton
- Purchase Order for Walker mower
- Letter, scope of work, and quote from ENE Security
- Special Town Meeting draft script and warrant
- Presentation on cell/wireless service
- Draft Agreement between Hamilton & Manchester-by-the-Sea for shared Conservation Agent
- Draft Intermunicipal Agreement for shared Human Resources services between Hamilton & Manchester-by-the-Sea

*Respectfully submitted by D. Pierotti, Recording Secretary, 9/10/24.
The minutes were prepared from video.*

Respectfully submitted as approved at _____ meeting.

 _____ Tom Myers, Clerk