



Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, MGL Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Interim Town Clerk and delivered to all Select Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held Tuesday December 6, 2022 at 6:30pm via Zoom. *On July 16, 2022 the Governor extended the suspension of certain provisions related to public meetings including members of a public body may continue participating in meetings remotely through March 31, 2023.*

The Select Board serves as the chief executive body of the Town. The Select Board's duties include in part appointing the Town Administrator and other board/committee members, developing goals & policies, preparing the town report, the annual budget, & presenting the warrant for Town Meeting. The Select Board typically meets the first & third Tuesday of each month; meetings are posted on the Town calendar. The Town has a three-member Select Board elected for three-year terms with one seat up for election each year. The Select Board has a representative on the Veterans Committee (Bucco/Clay), WISSH (Clay), Wenham Affordable Housing Trust (Cheeseman), and ad hoc committees for the School Building Committee (Clay), and the Master Plan Advisory Committee (Bucco/Cheeseman).

Select Board Members: Gary Cheeseman (2023); Dianne K. Bucco (2024); Peter Clay (2025)

Call to Order - *With a quorum present, Mr. Cheeseman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, identified the meeting was being recorded and those present: G. Cheeseman, Chair; D. Bucco, Vice Chair; P. Clay, Clerk*

Also present for the Town of Wenham: Steve Poulos, Town Administrator; Joseph Pessimato, Assistant Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Public Comment

Bob Knowles, Main Street, spoke on behalf of the Hamilton Wenham Climate Action Team to request to be on an upcoming Select Board meeting agenda to further discuss Sue Petrolia's email to the Board regarding potential action items, ie. municipal vehicle conversion study.

Mr. Poulos added that the town is a part of the electric vehicle study and is in the process of submitting inventory information.

Announcements – *Additional information is on the Town's website.*

- Wreaths Across America, Saturday, December 17th at 12:00 PM – Bill Wilson spoke on the event that coincides with Arlington Cemetery to place wreaths on all veteran's graves in the Main Street and Iron Rail Cemeteries. Mr. Wilson recognized and thanked those residents that donated to help purchase wreaths.
- Final Bagged Leaf Collection Pick Up is Saturday, December 10th. Bags only curbside (no sticks)
- Mattress & Textile Waste Ban Effective November 1, 2022 – The Town initially received a grant to cover the cost of mattress disposal at the DPW. Drop off hours are Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 8am – 2pm.
- Winter Parking Ban is in effect from November 2 through March 31 that no vehicles may be parked on town roads for more than an hour from 12 midnight to 6am.
- Wenham Police Department Package Theft Prevention Tips During the Holiday Season – Police Chief DiNapoli was present and reviewed safety information as posted on the town website.
- Hamilton-Wenham League of Woman Voters is hosting the HW Volunteer Fair on Wednesday, February 8th from 5-8 PM at The HW Community House, Bay Road, Hamilton. The Board agreed to reserve a table.

Reports

- Town Administrator – S. Poulos
- Mr. Poulos and member Clay met to discuss options to improve the air quality in Town Hall, including replacing the HVAC with either ARPA or CPA funding. The Internal Air Quality Division from the State of Massachusetts spent the day on Friday measuring CO2, moisture and testing air circulation/quality and will follow up with an advisory report.
- The town department budget meeting is this Saturday, December 10 at the Buker School. The Select Board will meet at 8:30 followed by overall budget review, department head budget presentations, capital requests, and 5-year capital plan.
- MIAA has released their requirements for IT security, effective July 1, 2023.
- Chair's Report- G. Cheeseman

Mr. Cheeseman summarized the HW Select Board/ Finance Committee/ School Committee meeting saying there was a cooperative attitude. The preliminary Hamilton Wenham Regional School Department budget overall increase is 5.5%. With a decrease in student enrollment from Wenham, the town's appropriation is a 3.02% increase. Currently there are a total of 400 students attending the HW Regional High School.

- Select Board Member's Report

Members Bucco and Clay commented on the joint budget meeting noting there seems to be good communication but the budget challenges continue.

Consent- Executive Session Minutes Release

*Vote: The Board voted **unanimously by roll call to release the executive session minutes dated December 13, 2021; December 29, 2021; January 5, 2022** subject to the redaction of privileged information protected by the attorney-client privilege as well as confidential personnel information pursuant to Exemption (c) of the Public Records Law, in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, § 22(f).*

New Business

The Agenda was taken out of order with permission.

- Discussion and potential vote to donate a tree to Human Rights Committee*

7PM – Conduct Town Bylaw Public Hearing

- Discussion & potential vote to amend The Town of Wenham Employee Handbook, Section 5- 2: Vacation Time.
- Discussion & potential vote to add June 19 (Juneteenth) as an observed holiday.

The hearing was open by unanimous roll call vote at 7 PM.

Mr. Poulos gave an overview of the proposed amendment to replace language in the vacation time as outlined in the Town of Wenham Employee Handbook, Section 5- 2, to align with the experience of the incoming employee to help attract experienced staff to Wenham.

In summary, the current vacation time allowed a new employee is limited to two weeks after one year of service.

The proposed change would allow an appointing authority discretion to a greater amount of vacation time.

The second request of the Select Board was to officially add the Juneteenth (June 19) as a paid holiday to the Town of Wenham Employee Handbook, Section 5-1: Holidays. It was noted Juneteenth is a Federal and State holiday.

The hearing was open for public comments. There were none. The board had no additional comments or questions.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to give the town the discretion to offer more vacation time commensurate with the prior experience of incoming employees by deleting the language in strikethrough and adding the language in bold.

Full-time employees shall be entitled to vacation with pay in each fiscal year as determined by reference to the employee's anniversary date of continuous employment on the following schedule:

One week after six months of service

Two weeks after one-year of Service (but in no event more than two weeks in one year, until after five years of service) Three weeks after five years of service

One additional day for every year of service beyond five years, to a maximum of four weeks.

Regular part-time employees shall be entitled to pro rata vacation with pay benefits. All other employees are ineligible for vacation with pay.

The Town may, in the discretion of the Appointing Authority, determine that a new employees to the town is entitle to a greater amount of vacation time than is provided in the schedule above, based on prior experience with another municipality (or other municipalities) or comparable work experience or commensurate with the amount of vacation to which they were entitled in a prior position. Incoming employees may provide the town with proof of their annual vacation entitlement from their immediately prior position, and the Appointing Authority may consider such proof in making its determination. If a new employee is granted a greater starting vacation entitlement than what the schedule provides, any subsequent increase in their annual vacation entitlement shall be governed by and consistent with the above-referenced schedule.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to include Juneteenth to the Town Bylaws Section 5-1 of the Town of Wenham Employee Handbook, to the list of paid holidays for all full time and regular part-time employees.

Vote: The Select Board voted unanimously by roll call to close the Public Hearing at 7:07pm.

- Review & potential vote to approve Library Solar Commissioning Agreement
 - Massachusetts Electric Company (d/b/a National Grid) M.D.P.U. 1468 **Exhibit H** - Agreement Between the Company and the Company's Retail Customer (Town of Hamilton)

It was noted Town Counsel has not reviewed the final Agreement.

HW Energy Manager Vickie Masone, P.E., was present and reported the library (recreation) solar rooftop project at 14 Union Street, Hamilton was completed by Select Solar, that owns and operates the array, and all that remains to be done is to connect the system to the grid.

The Agreement with National Grid outlines the terms and conditions of being a powerplant generator for the utility and defines the rates National Grid will “pay” the town(s) for the power, shown as credits on the library’s billing statement. The Agreement must be signed for Select Solar to interconnect and start sending power back to National Grid.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the signing of the Library Solar Commission Project Agreement, contingent on Town Counsel’s review, effective December 6, 2022.

Appointments:

- Council on Aging: *The Board voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Debbie M. Aminzadeh to the Council on Aging for a term starting December 7, 2022 ending June 30, 2025.*
- Council on Aging: *The Board voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Lisa M. Craig to the Council on Aging for a term starting December 7, 2022 ending June 30, 2024*
- Community Preservation Committee: *The Board voted unanimously by roll call to appoint Susan L. Mehlin to the Community Preservation Committee for a term starting December 7, 2022 and ending June 30, 2025.*

- Donation of printer from David Mehlin - Discussion & potential vote to accept

The printer is in good working order and has the capability to print 36” prints. The printer has an approximate value of \$2,000. The Planning Department is pleased to have this equipment.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to accept the donation of Canon professional printer from David Mehlin.

- Used Car Dealer License Renewals:
 - Burnett’s Garage, Inc. – 60 Maple Street
 - Fallon’s Auto Service, Inc. – 233 Main Street
 - Freeman’s Garage – 34/36 Arbor Street

Renewal documents have been reviewed and signed by the Police Fire and Building Commissioner.

- Burnett’s Garage - *There was a motion to approve the 2023 annual Used Car Dealer License for Burnett’s Garage, Inc.- Under discussion: Ms. Bucco observed the application does not look complete or accurate .e.g. **The vote was held for updated application.***
- Fallon’s Auto – *The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the 2023 annual Used Car Dealer License for Fallon’s Auto, 233 Main Street.*
- Freeman’s Garage – Under discussion it was noted this business does not go over well with the neighbors. After careful review the application, the address appeared to be listed incorrectly and the **Board held their vote** for further review of the application for accuracy.

- Annual Liquor License Renewals:
 - Wenham Tea House – 4 Monument Street
 - 97 Market, Inc., Albert Abdelmalak – 143 Topsfield Road

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the 2023 Annual Liquor License Renewal for High Teas LLC (Wenham Tea House), 4 Monument Street.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the 2023 Annual Liquor License Renewal for 97 Market, Inc., 143 Topsfield Road.

- *Discussion & potential vote to donate a Tree to Human Rights Committee in celebration of International Human Rights Day on December 10, 2022.
 - Slide presentation

“Human Rights Day on December 10 remembers the day the General Assembly of the UN adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.” On December 10, 2022, from 10:30 to 12:30 at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library the Town of Hamilton, facilitated by the Human Rights Commission, will be hosting a free family, friendly pop- up event to mark the 74th birthday of the Human Rights Day.

Human Rights Committee member Janet Burt was present and spoke on the request to the Board to agree to plant a tree at one of two locations decided in a “children’s vote” and noted Wenham resident, and arborist, Matthew Matin has donated his services for the project and the Wenham DPW will provide the tree/labor. The locations suggested for the tree included the Iron Rail property; the Hugh Peter Monument land, Main Street; or in Pingree Park.

The Board was supportive and briefly discussed the locations.

Vote: The Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the donation of a tree to the Human Rights Committee, in celebration of International Human Right’s Day on December 10, 2022, at one of the following locations: Iron Rail or Pingree Park.

- Discussion regarding Town Calendar as reviewed at the HW all board meeting
 - Town Meeting – April 1, 2023
 - Town Elections -April 6, 2023

Approved 1.10.23

- The Warrant for the ATM will close on March 2, 2023.
- March 15, 2023 is the deadline for input from board committee departments for presentation at town meeting to be approved by the Select Board and Town Moderator
- Approve Town Policies - pick 2 a month starting in January to review/ approve.
- Election calendar –Review at next meeting.

- ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Survey Results Summary Discussion

- ARPA Survey Results

The Board received the tabulated results from the ARPA on line survey. One hundred and seventy-two residents responded. Mr. Cheeseman proposed, and it was agreed, the board closely review the survey and independently return their final recommendations to the Town Administrator. The Board will rank the allocation of funds and discuss at the next meeting.

- Cell Tower - Update from Joe Pessimato and Discussion

Mr. Pessimato provided an update on the Iron Rail Cell tower proposal from 2017, 2020 and 2021.

He noted Verizon responded with a low offer that was accepted by the town in 2021. Upon review of the contract, it was suggested this was not the best offer for the town. The board supported restarting the bidding process Mr. Pessimato will assist in the process to get this going again asap.

Note: The Select Board voted unanimous by roll call to authorize the Town Administrator to start the cell tower bid proposal for the Iron Rail property.

Upcoming meetings

December 10 - Budget meeting at the Buker School

December 20 - Select Board meeting

Adjourn -*The Board voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn at 7:46 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

12.21.22