

TOWN OF WENHAM

Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of, October 13, 2015  
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) was held on TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2015 at 7 PM in the Selectmen Chambers.

**WELCOME: CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present, Ms. Harrison called the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting to order at 7 PM. Selectmen present Catherine Harrison, Chair; Jack Wilhelm, Vice Chair; John Clemenzi, Clerk  
Also Present: Peter Lombardi, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Public Information

Recorded with permission by HWCAM

Agenda

**PUBLIC INPUT: ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Appointment Openings: Conservation Commission: 1 Opening for a 3 Year Term  
Iron Rail Commission Member: 1 Opening for 1 Year Term
- Wednesday, October 28, 2015 the BOS/ School Committee will have a joint meeting to interview five candidates for the (Wenham) open seat on the School Committee.

**REPORTS**

Town Administrator

- The new Permitting Coordinator/ Special Projects Assistant, Jackie Bresnahan, has started; the permitting office is now open regular town hall hours.
- Steve Gasperoni, Chief Assessor, has announced his retirement, effective the end of February 2016. The position will be posted in time to allow for cross training before Mr. Gasperoni leaves.
- The installation of the LED retrofit streetlights will begin next week. (October 19)
- The William Fairfield Drive paving project will be completed this week.
- Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the Veteran's Memorial project, phase II project, are due tomorrow
- The RFP for the feasibility study for the Iron Rail heating conversion has been issued. Bids are due by October 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Paton Park Pool sub bids are due Oct 21, 2015 and General Contractor bids on the October 28, 2015; the estimated cost from the third party cost estimator was \$1.886 million. The Hamilton Planning Board and Zoning Board approved the project with a few minor conditions.

Selectman

Mr. Wilhelm asked for an update regarding the Town securing general legal counsel.

Mr. Lombardi responded that he met with Paul Weaver, Town Counsel and talked about a plan and process going forward as well as firms to solicit.

Mr. Wilhelm asked for an update regarding the Boulder Lane and Mr. Lombardi stated he has a list of people to contact to assist the town with an appraisal.

#### Chairman

Ms. Harrison and Mr. Clemenzi attended a presentation on the Athletic Field Study – to maximize the use of athletic fields at the High School. This will be on a future agenda.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Tax Rate Classification Hearing

Steve Gasperoni, Chief Assessor was present for the Tax Rate Classification Hearing.

Mr. Wilhelm read the legal notice asking if the town should establish separate tax rates for business and residential property owners, or continue one rate for all classes.

The Board of Assessors voted to recommend to the BOS that the town continue to have a single tax rate of a factor of one.

*Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, the Town continues one tax rate for all classes, businesses and residential owners. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### Appointments:

1. Building Committee Re-Appointment - Mr. Darling was present and recommended the Building Committee be reappointed through the end of the calendar year to complete work that has been started. The landscaping was completed in the fall. A keyless system is currently being considered for the town hall.

*Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to reappoint to the Building Committee for a three month term ending on December 31, 2015 -John Darling, Don Bannon, Harriet Davis, James Howard, Judy LeBlanc, Peter Lombardi, William Nichols, Tom Perkins and John Clemenzi as ex-officio non-voting member. The motion carried unanimously.*

2. H-W Cultural Council – Maureen Maier

*Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to appoint Maureen Maier to the Hamilton Wenham Cultural Council for a three-year term ending on June 30, 2018. The motion carried unanimously.*

Discussion and vote - To discontinue use of current voting equipment and begin use of new equipment Mr. Clemenzi announced the Town Clerk has notified the Board that the town's voting machine is 18 years old and outdated making maintenance and repairs more difficult. With a primary election next year, the Town Clerk is recommending the Town go forward with the process to discontinue the use of the current voting equipment and replace it with a new machine. Under MGL Ch. 54 Sec. 34 the BOS must vote to discontinue using the current equipment and vote to use the new equipment going forward.

*Vote: Mr. Clemenzi moved to approve and grant permission to discontinue using the current voting equipment and begin to use the new voting tabulator in all elections. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### Sustainable Water Mgmt. Initiative Grant application and update

Water Commissioner Chair Ernest Ashley gave an overview of the proposed project to conduct a regional evaluation of water management alternatives in the Ipswich River Watershed.

The proposed grant to fund this evaluation would help provide solutions for towns in the Ipswich River Watershed area to reduce water use, maximize mitigation, and identify new sources to reduce the impact of water demand.

Mr. Ashley said in talking with other town water departments, there is limited support with only three willing to continue discussions for either this year or another year.

It was noted that as a regional problem, the success of the project hinges on this being a regional application, but that this is an annual grant opportunity.

The Selectmen expressed concern that Wenham is reaching maximum permitted water limits and supported the grant.

*Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to approve the submission of the Sustainable Water Management Initiative Grant to conduct a regional evaluation of water management alternatives in the Ipswich River Watershed provided the majority of the eligible towns agree to participate prior to the October 15, 2015 deadline. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### Town Bylaw Codification Recommendation: General Code

With Town Counsel unable to attend, it was recommended the Board table this item until the next meeting October 27

*Vote: Ms. Harrison moved, and it was seconded, to table this agenda item and reserve the right to discuss this item at a future BOS meeting. The motion carried unanimously.*

#### FY2017 Budget Guidelines

Ms. Harrison provided the Selectmen with her comments on the Budget Forecast presented to the Board a few weeks ago by the Town Administrator and Finance Director.

1) Level Service Budget 2) Non-Union Salary Study in place 3) Completed Union Negotiations in time for FY17 budget

4) Decrease reliance on one-time revenues 5) Capital Plan 6) Work with RSD re: enrollment shift

7) Conservative use of Free Cash 8) Fund OPEB (long term plan)

Mr. Wilhelm added 9) that a goal not to exceed town expense increase of (3%), noting the impact on taxes with increased costs.

Mr. Clemenzi commented given the economic times, the Town should look at containing and reducing costs, including what a level budget looks like compared to a level service budget.

It was noted that the School does not have control over the increased enrolment costs, but that there is an understanding of the trend.

A general discussion regarding budgeting continued. The BOs were in agreement on the items discussed.

#### Discussion on Annual Town Meeting Date

The BOS had previously talked about holding Town Meeting in May as was done in the past.

It was noted that changing the date from May to April did not increase residential participation as was hoped. The average number of voters that attended town meetings was 207, compared to the average number of voters at the May Town Meetings was 216.

One observation was that Wenham changed the town meeting date to coordinate with the Town of Hamilton.

It was the consensus of the Board that the Town Administrator continue to get information on the pros and cons of changing the meeting to May and report back to the BOS in November.

#### Discussion and vote on designating the day after Thanksgiving as a holiday

The Town Administrator asked the BOS to opine and take action if necessary to close Town Hall the day after Thanksgiving for 2015.

Town Hall is only open half a day on Fridays and there is some ancillary savings in keeping the town hall building closed through the following Monday. Seventy-five percent of municipalities are closed the day after Thanksgiving.

The Board did not declare the Friday after Thanksgiving as a holiday, but agreed town hall be closed for business November 27, 2015. The costs and savings of town hall being closed will be tracked this year. *Vote: Mr. Clemenzi moved, and it was seconded, to designate the day after Thanksgiving as a holiday for Friday November 27, 2015.*

Discussion and vote on use of Year 4 ESCO (Energy Service Company) funds from Johnson Controls  
Ms. Harrison summarized that energy cost savings (ESCO) did not materialize over the past four years as predicted by Johnson Controls. The Town previously opted to accept a check for the savings not realized. The Town is in year five of a twelve-year commitment.  
There is an annual cost for the audit of \$6400. This was not budgeted for 2015.  
The recommendation is to net out the cost from the refund (\$11,000 - \$12,000).

*Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to approve the audit refund from Johnson Control be net of the annual service costs and the refund be used for other energy saving projects to be determined by BOS and the Town Administrator. The motion carried unanimously.*

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion on School Lease Agreement - Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD)  
The Town of Hamilton has signed the leases for their school. The Wenham BOS requested an extension to further review the lease for the Bessie Buker.

Ms. Harrison reviewed three different terms in the agreement.

1. Ten-year lease vs. a twenty year lease
2. Ten year vs. twenty year extension
3. HWRSD wants to maintain the option to partially terminate the lease to separate the Center School from the Bessie Buker School

Mr. Lombardi stated there is no specific plan to separate the center school from the Bessie Buker School but the school district wants to have the option to look elsewhere for administrative space. The BOS had was not in favor of allowing the Center School to be separated from the Buker school, but otherwise had no objections to the changes in the School Lease Agreement and directed the Town Administrator to begin negotiations.

Mr. Clemenzi suggested a building maintenance program be specified in the agreement.  
It was noted the Regional Agreement requires a school building to be in Wenham.  
This will be on the next BOS meeting agenda.

Other matters, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair (Discussion Only)  
The Chair noted there were none.

MINUTES- Held for review. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT - The BOS unanimously adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley  
11.21.15