



**School Committee Joint Meeting with  
Towns of Hamilton & Wenham Board of Selectmen and Finance Committees**

**Zoom Virtual Meeting [Link](#)**  
**Webinar ID: 995 3391 7536**  
**Passcode: 833559**  
**Thursday, December 17, 2020**  
**7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Present:**

Michelle Bailey, Chairperson  
Michelle Horgan, Vice Chairperson  
Dana Allara, Secretary  
Anna Siedzik, Vice Secretary  
David Polito  
Peter Wolczik  
Julia Campbell

**Hamilton Board of Selectmen**

Shawn M. Farrell, Chair  
Darcy Dale  
Jamie Knudsen, Clerk

**Hamilton FINCOM**

John Pruellage, Chair  
Christina Schenk Hargrove, Vice-Chair  
Nicholas Tensen  
David Wanger  
Valerie McCormack (later arrival)

**Wenham Board of Selectmen**

John Clemenzi, Vice Chairman (later arrival)  
Gary Cheeseman, Chairman

**Wenham FINCOM**

Jim Purdy, Chair  
Alex Begin  
Susan Mehlin  
David Molitano

**Also Present:**

Mary Beth Banios, District Superintendent  
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance and Administration  
Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Operations  
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary  
Tom Younger, Wenham Interim Town Administrator

Joseph J. Domelowicz Jr., Hamilton Town Manager  
Yeimi Colon, Wenham Finance Director & Town Accountant  
Jackie Bresnahan, Wenham Director of Administrative Services

**1. Call to Order**

7:00 PM

Ms. Bailey reviews the ground rules for the meeting to allow for a brief and effective meeting with all entities allowed to voice their opinions.

With a quorum present, Ms. Bailey calls the *Hamilton - Wenham Regional School Committee* meeting to order at 7:07 PM. All seven (7) School Committee members are present. This meeting is being recorded by HWCAM and held remotely per the Governor's emergency order.

With a quorum present, Mr. Purdy calls the *Wenham Finance Advisory Committee* meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Those present: Jim Purdy, Alex Begin, Susan Mehlin, David Molitano.

With a quorum present, Mr. Farrell calls the *Hamilton Board of Selectmen* meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Those present: Shawn Farrell, Darcy Dale, Jamie Knudsen.

With a quorum present, Mr. Pruellage calls the *Hamilton Finance Advisory Committee* meeting to order at 7:09 PM. Those present: John Pruellage, Christina Schenk Hargrove, Nicholas Tensen, David Wanger.

**2. Citizen's Comments**

[Exhibit](#)

**3. New Business**

A. FY22 Budget Discussion

**HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Superintendent Banios and Mr. Leone present the Hamilton - Wenham Regional School District budget.

There is discussion surrounding increased tax rates to town residents; percentage versus overall budget increases; enrollment numbers per town; Chapter 70 and other State Aid; pandemic related changes to the budget; etc. Mr. Farrell understands that State Representatives have indicated that budgets can be developed based on prior year numbers. He offers support to the district (e.g. sending a letter) should this be needed.

With a quorum present, Mr. Cheeseman calls the *Wenham Board of Selectmen* meeting to order at 7:26 PM. Those present: Gary Cheeseman, John Clemenzi.

**WENHAM FINCOM**

Mr. Purdy introduces Jackie Bresnahan, Wenham Director of Administrative Services. Ms. Bresnahan provides an overview of the FY22 Budget for Weham, including:

- Current and past budget drivers;
- Assumed FY22 School Budget Drivers
- FY22 Budget forecast: revenue assumptions;
- FY22 Budget forecast: additional assumptions;
- FY22 Preliminary Budget Forecast (01/09/21 presentation);
- Certified Free Cash FY14-20;
- Use of Free Cash and Excess & Deficiency;
- Free Cash over time;
- How do we get to a balanced budget

- Review of Revenue increase/Expenses decrease

Mr. Purdy follows up to this presentation, noting that Wenham has a very thin levy limit as well as policy regarding free cash. Mr. Purdy also explains the override impact from the previous year, highlighting that Wenham wishes to avoid an override this year.

There is discussion regarding Wenham's growth, with Ms. Bresnahan explaining the threshold necessary to qualify for "growth" within the DOR parameters. Mr. Begin elaborates on levy limits and the limits identified in prior budgets.

### **HAMILTON FINCOM**

Mr. Domelowicz, Hamilton Town Manager, reviews Hamilton's FY22 budget presentation, including:

- Revenues & OFS;
- State Aid;
- Local Receipts;
- Transfers/Other Available Funds;
- Free Cash (not used, adopted Hamilton Policy);
- Total Revenues \$34,312,712;
- FY21 School Budget \$20,491,737, school percentage would be 58.9%

There is discussion regarding potential override; capital expenses; potential reorganization of internal town services; Town Hall; voter perception on Town Hall versus Turf Field; etc.

Tom Younger, Wenham Interim Town Administrator, speaks about potential for shared capital expenses through increased regional services. There is further discussion exploring regional services and town merger.

There is some discussion surrounding OPEB funding; pandemic impact on district budget; assumptions about State Revenue/State Aid, and whether the towns share those assumptions; delay in State budget; State budget cuts (anticipated versus actual);

Ms. Bailey invites the towns to attend the 01/20/2021 School Committee meeting, where Massachusetts State Representative, Brad Hill, will present issues relating to the State budget.

There is discussion regarding the Turf field project and involvement from the district and towns. Superintendent Banios notes that the district is awaiting the MSBA decision, and they will know more in the Spring.

There is continued conversation about the Towns merging, shared expenses, and moving forward with regionalization. There is also discussion revisiting the OPEB funding strategy.

**The next joint meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 7:00PM.** Mr. Molatino suggests that everyone read the feasibility study before that time.

There is discussion surrounding revisiting/revising the Regional School Agreement.

#### **4. Vote to Adjourn**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN ADJOURN THE 12/17/2020 MEETING AT 8:44 PM.**

**MOTION by Darcy Dale; SECONDED by Jamie Knudsen.**

Darcy Dale YES;  
Jamie Knudsen YES;  
Shawn M. Farrell YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of three (3) members present.**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 12/17/2020 MEETING AT 8:44 PM.**

**MOTION by Christina Schenk Hargrove; SECONDED by Valerie McCormack.**

Valerie McCormack YES;  
Nicholas Tensen YES;  
Christina Schenk Hargrove YES;  
John Pruellage YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of four (4) members present (David Wanger, present for most of the meeting, previously exited),**

**I MOVE THAT THE WENHAM FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 12/17/2020 MEETING AT 8:44 PM.**

**MOTION by Jim Purdy; SECONDED by Susan Mehlin.**

Jim Purdy YES;  
Susan Mehlin YES;  
David Molitano YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of three (3) members present (Alex Begin, present for most of the meeting, previously exited).**

**I MOVE THAT THE WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN ADJOURN THE 12/17/2020 MEETING AT 8:45 PM.**

**MOTION by Gary Cheeseman; SECONDED by John Clemezi.**

John Clemezi YES;  
Gary Cheeseman YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of two (2) members present.**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 12/17/2020 MEETING AT 8:45 PM.**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

Anna Siedzik YES;  
Michelle Horgan YES;  
David Polito YES;  
Peter Wolczik YES;  
Julia Campbell YES;  
Dana Allara YES;  
Michelle Bailey YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of seven (7) members present.**

*Respectfully submitted January 24, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.*

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\*\*Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. The School Committee reserves the right to implement additional remote participation procedures and will notify the public of these procedures as soon as practicable. Please [click here](#) to read the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.\*\*

\*Zoom App Information: If you plan to participate, download the [Zoom.com](#) application now. The option to download will also be available at the start of the meeting. When opening the Zoom App, select "Join Meeting" in the upper right corner and enter the webinar id: **995 3391 7536**; passcode: **833559**. The community should ask questions via the "chat" function within the Zoom application during the Citizen's Comments section. During the Zoom meeting, participants will be given instructions on how to provide their comments. Unfortunately, we must limit the in-person conversations to just the Committee members. However, for the benefit of all, the School Committee meetings will be available on our local cable channel, HWCam, and [HWCam.org](#), for review a few hours after the meeting has ended. Members of the public can access the meeting via [YouTube HWRSD live stream link](#) the next day.