

**Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee,
Town Select Boards & Town Finance Committees**

Joint Meeting March 22, 2012

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

A. McCloughan called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. at the Buker Multipurpose Room. The Hamilton Board of Selectmen, Wenham Board of Selectmen, and Wenham Finance Committees also officially convened; the Hamilton Finance Committee did not because a quorum of that committee was not present.

PRESENT:

Sean Condon, Bill Dery (6:40), Kym Donnellan, Alexa McCloughan, Ann Minois, Jack O'Keefe, Dacia Rubel, and Larry Swartz

ALSO PRESENT:

Peter Gray, Superintendent of Schools; Hamilton selectmen Dave Carey, Jeff Hubbard (6:58), Marc Johnson, and Jennifer Scuteri; Wenham selectmen John Clemenzi, Molly Martins, and Patrick Wilson; Hamilton Finance & Advisory Committee member John McWane; Wenham Finance & Advisory Committee members John Clemenzi, Hilliard Ebling, Catherine Harrison and Anne O'Connor; Hamilton Town Manager Michael Lombardo, Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena, and Superintendent of Public Works John Tomasz; Wenham Town Administrator Jeff Chelgren, Finance Director Paula Bartlett, and Highway Superintendent Bill Tyack

ABSENT:

Roger Kuebel.

PRESENTATIONS

Discussion of Capital Facility
Projects

J. Chelgren made a presentation about the Capital Management Committee (CMC) draft agreement for a joint "Virtual Public Works Department (VDPW), which the CMC recommends launching by July 1, 2012. He reviewed building maintenance needs, the proposed three-year project timeline for backlogged work, and financial data including costs by project, cost summaries for each town and each school, year-by-year costs, and projected costs to the town and to individual taxpayers. (The draft agreement and capital project cost overview are appended to these minutes.) The CMC estimates the work would cost a total of \$4.7 million. It projects that government grants, a utility rebate, and \$899,000 now in district accounts (and included in the FY2013 school budget) would offset more than half of that sum, so the Towns would have to raise an additional \$2.6 million to pay for the proposed work. M. Lombardo bonding would be recommended. J. Chelgren said the tax impact on a median valued home in Hamilton would be \$53.18 a year, and in Wenham, \$40.33 a year. J. McWane noted that the regional agreement splits costs differently between the towns for capital spending and the school operating budget; he said that for capital spending, it is a 50-50 split.

J. Chelgren described the proposed VDPW administrative structure and staffing, and the proposed process for long term and annual planning. He said the next steps would be approval of an agreement by the Committee and boards of selectmen; drafting and approval of warrant articles; and application for a Green Communities grant to offset costs of utility-related work at the elementary schools.

J. O'Keefe said a one-year trial run was discussed earlier, but the draft agreement is a five-year contract. M. Lombardo said one year would be insufficient to gauge the effectiveness of the VDPW.

A. McCloughan said the draft agreement would affect daily operation of schools, so compromises might be required on both sides. She and D. Rubel noted the proposal would shift supervision of custodians after two years; D. Rubel pointed out they have a contract with the district.

Committee and board members discussed the timeline for approval and launch, cost apportionment, the nature and size of work projects the VDPW might be able to handle, what savings the CMC projects the entities would realize, how the VDPW would be involved in jobs too large for its own staff to complete, and the idea of the CMC servings as a standing building committee. They asked for more cost information and examples of the administrative process and expense that a particular work request might involve. P. Gray requested specifics about what the VDPW would and would not do, and noted the need to consider state regulations regarding RFPs.

P. Gray, J. O'Keefe, J. Chelgren and M. Lombardo scheduled a meeting for March 27 to continue refining the agreement.

Hamilton-Wenham Sustainability Coordinator Sue Patroia briefly explained the Green Communities grant for which the towns and district can apply, and asked that they sign paperwork by March 30. She said each town could obtain \$250,000 and they have committed to apply those funds to HWRSD projects including a new boiler at Buker, motors and VFDs at three schools, and work in school kitchens.

B. Dery updated the cost estimate for handicap accessibility upgrades at Cutler Elementary, which was funded at \$300,000 in the FY13 budget as a placeholder; the estimate is now \$120,000 and might cost as little as \$80,000. He said about \$40,000 of the reduction is due to custodians restoring a chairlift to working order; the original cost estimate assumed that unit would have to be replaced.

Richard Boroff of Moynihan Rd., Hamilton wished to comment but A. McCloughan did not recognize him; she said the intent of this special meeting was for boards to discuss issues together.

Green Community Grant

Then Wenham Board of Selectmen voted to authorize M. Martins to sign documents to authorize Wenham's participation in the Green Communities grant.

JACK O'KEEFE MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO

ACCOMMODATE TOPICS THAT THE CHAIR DID NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATE 48 HOURS BEFORE THE MEETING, SPECIFICALLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA A VOTE TO PARTICIPATE OR AUTHORIZE THE GREEN COMMUNITIES GRANT. THE MOTION PASSED 8-0-0.

JACK O'KEEFE MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO EXECUTE ANY DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GREEN COMMUNITIES GRANT. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

ADJOURNMENT:

JACK O'KEEFE MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

The other boards and committee also officially adjourned.

DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS

USED AT THIS MEETING: All-Board Meeting Agenda March 22, 2012 for CMC presentation and discussion (1 page)
HW CMC Proposed Building Maintenance Approach (1 page)
Undated Draft Agreement Among the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District: Building Maintenance (5 pages)
H-W CMC Capital Project Cost Overview (2 pages)
E-mail dated March 22, 2012 from Lyons & Rogers, Attorneys at Law to Kathy Harris, Director of Student Services, HWRSD, re Cutler Elementary School and Accessibility

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Sierks Smith, School Committee recording secretary