



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

# Guide to Running for Office Hamilton & Wenham

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*January 2021*

*This guide is being distributed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please be mindful of all health and safety guidelines, which are not specifically set forth in this guide. Please confirm all deadlines on town websites as they may have changed due to the pandemic.*

## Why This Guide Was Written

The League of Women Voters of Hamilton-Wenham feels strongly that all residents are well served when elections for local office are contested. This leads to more debate and choices for voters. This guide has been written to help anyone who is interested in getting involved in the political process in Hamilton and Wenham. It gathers information from many available sources, as well as provides suggestions and tips for running for office not found anywhere else. Many League members and town residents have generously shared their time and expertise to provide a complete picture of what needs to be done to run for local office.

The Guide will be used for many years, so specific dates and times are not listed. However, the Guide will always reference the appropriate place on the town websites ([www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov) and [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov)) where current information can be found.

## About The League of Women Voters

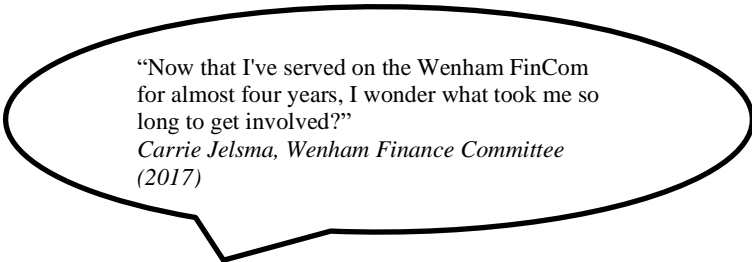
The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. It never supports or opposes political parties or candidates. The League takes action on selected matters of governmental concern that its members have studied. Membership in the League is open to all.

The League of Women Voters of Hamilton-Wenham interviewed former candidates and researched content for this Guide. The League would like to thank all those who have generously given their time, talents, and input to the making of this guide.

The following sources were also reviewed:

A Guide to Running for Local Office in Westford, League of Women Voters, 2014

Concord-Carlisle League of Women Voters, Getting Elected in Concord, 2012



“Now that I’ve served on the Wenham FinCom for almost four years, I wonder what took me so long to get involved?”

*Carrie Jelsma, Wenham Finance Committee  
(2017)*

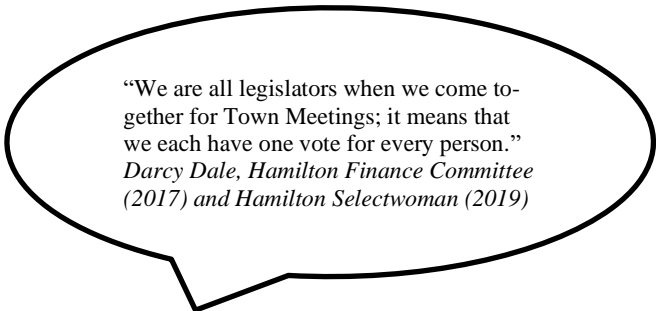
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# TOWN GOVERNMENT

Both Hamilton & Wenham are governed by an Open Town Meeting where all registered voters residing in the town vote on local bylaws, the town budget and other matters affecting local taxes and the quality of life within each community. Administrative policy is set by the elected Board of Selectmen (BOS), a five-member board in Hamilton and three in Wenham. The BOS hire a Town Manager in Hamilton and a Town Administrator in Wenham who each are responsible for the ongoing operations of their town. Some town officials are elected while others are appointed. This guide focuses on the elected positions. For more information on the appointed positions, there is a small section at the end of this guide; however, more information can be found at [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov) and [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov) and in the annual reports of each town.

## MAKING THE DECISION TO RUN



“We are all legislators when we come together for Town Meetings; it means that we each have one vote for every person.”  
*Darcy Dale, Hamilton Finance Committee (2017) and Hamilton Selectwoman (2019)*

Running for office can be a rewarding experience. Candidates gain tremendous knowledge not only about local government but also about themselves personally and professionally.

One of the first steps for successfully running for office is to think through your decision to run. Do you feel a civic responsibility to contribute and make your Town a better place to live? Do you feel that you could perhaps contribute more? Are you tenacious and thick-skinned enough to withstand criticism? Talk to people who are on boards to hear their experience. Be clear on your motives for running, as you certainly will be asked. If you are very focused on a single hot-button issue, be aware that if elected, you will be representing the town on many other issues that come before boards and committees, and you should be ready to exhibit that same level of passion and dedication for all matters.

Running for office involves hard work, time commitment, and good planning. The specific elected office and the number of candidates running will also factor in the amount of time required. A contested Board of Selectmen race, for example, will require more effort than an uncontested Library Trustee race. If elected, serving on a board will require time to prepare for and attend meetings. Time will also be required to respond to residents' requests that may come personally, by phone or email.

When considering what town position to run for, understand the time commitment and the meeting schedule of the position as well as potential election costs.

According to former candidates, the estimated costs of running for elected office can vary from a negligible amount for less complicated or uncontested races, to a high of \$4000–\$5000 for a contested Selectman's race, where you may be doing a town-wide mailing.

As far as the meeting schedule commitment, most boards have regularly scheduled meetings. Be sure you are able to commit to the meeting schedule before running for a position.

Although not necessary, previous committee experience is always a plus for any position. You may want to first consider serving as an appointed member of a committee to gain experience and knowledge about the town's operations. For more information on the appointed positions, there is a small section at the end of this guide and more information can be found at [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov) and [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov) and in the annual reports of each town.

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

### Hamilton

<b>Elected Position</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>	<b>Term</b>
Board of Assessors	3	3 years
Board of Selectman	5	3 years
Housing Authority	5 (4 Elected & 1 State Appointed)	5 years
Moderator	1	1 year
Planning Board	5	3 years
Town Clerk	1	3 years

### Wenham

<b>Elected Position</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>	<b>Term</b>
Board of Assessors	3	3 years
Board of Health	3	3 years
Board of Selectmen	3	3 years
Housing Authority	5 (4 Elected, 1 State Appointed)	5 years
Moderator	1	1 year
Planning Board	5	5 years
Town Clerk	1	3 years
Water Commission	3	3 years

### Hamilton-Wenham REGIONAL

<b>Elected Position</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>	<b>Term</b>
Library Trustees	6 (2 Hamilton, 2 Wenham, 2 At-Large)	3 years
School Committee	7	3 years

## **POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Board of Assessors**

The Board of Assessors is a three-person board in each town that is responsible for carrying out the state's mandate to establish the fair market value of all property for tax purposes. The Board must follow state guidelines and must obtain state certification of the town-wide recertification process. The Board works with the appointed assessors to make full and fair valuation of all personal and real property in the Town which is subject to taxation. The result is a valuation list. The Assessors are also responsible for determining all initial requests for the abatement of taxes. The Board of Assessors in both Hamilton and Wenham meet twice a month. Within 3 years of first being elected, each member must take and pass a required Department of Revenue course. Anyone with an interest in the revenue process of the town would be an asset to this board.

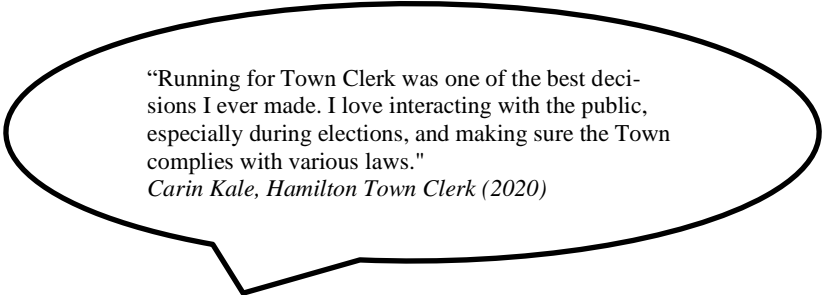
### **Board of Health**

The Board of Health makes regulations as it deems necessary for the public health and safety of the town. The Board of Health is responsible for the enforcement of State Sanitary Codes, State Environmental Codes, and each municipality's Board of Health Regulations. Areas of responsibility include: septic systems, housing and dwelling units, food service establishments, private wells, and recreational camps for children. There are three members of the Board of Health, appointed in Hamilton and elected in Wenham. The Board hires the health agents and the public health nurse. The Board of Health holds public meetings weekly, as needed. Residents with experience in the health field and an interest in their community's public health would be assets to the community serving on this board.

### **Board of Selectmen**

The Board of Selectmen consists of five members in Hamilton and three in Wenham. All are elected for a three-year term. The Selectmen act as the primary policy-making body of the Town. They provide oversight for matters in litigation, act as the licensing

authority for a wide variety of licenses, conduct site plan reviews, and enact rules and regulations for such matters as traffic control. The Selectmen are authorized to call a Town Meeting provided that they have posted a warrant properly.



"Running for Town Clerk was one of the best decisions I ever made. I love interacting with the public, especially during elections, and making sure the Town complies with various laws."

*Carin Kale, Hamilton Town Clerk (2020)*

## **Housing Authority**

The Housing Authority is responsible for the expenditure of state and federal housing grants. The Executive Directors are hired by the boards. The role of a board member is that of policymaking and not the day-to-day operations. The board meets monthly and requires a time commitment of about 2-4 hours a month. Please note that board certification will be required once regulations have been promulgated. Anyone interested in this board should have a deep concern for providing affordable, safe, and adequate housing for our elderly citizens. This person should also show an interest in the health and welfare of our tenants and tenant activities.

## **Library Trustees (Regional)**

The Library Board of Trustees is empowered by Massachusetts law to establish policy and oversee the administration of the library. The Trustees hire the Library Director and work with the director to develop and enforce library policy. They also



administer the Library Trust funds. Trustees commit to 10 monthly meetings annually. Our library happens to be the only regional library in the State of Massachusetts, which provides some challenges that other towns do not have. Board members should have a strong appreciation and commitment to the role a public library plays in our democracy, as well as a belief in preserving and protecting the integrity of the director, staff and physical plant. The board should include a diverse representation of our two towns, people with different backgrounds and expertise make for a more vital and interesting board.

## **Moderator**

The Town Moderator is elected to a one-year term in Hamilton and in Wenham and is the presiding officer at respective town meetings. State law provides that the Moderator's primary responsibility is to "preside and regulate the proceedings, decide all questions of order, and make public declaration of all votes." In practice, that means making sure the meeting runs smoothly and that the residents understand the issues surrounding the motion they are voting on.

Although it may appear that a Moderator's only time commitment is preparing for and then overseeing the various town meetings, in fact, a Moderator does meet throughout the year with other Moderators on any number of issues. In preparation for Town Meeting, a moderator often advises both proponents and opponents on Town Meeting procedures.

A Moderator should have an earnest interest in and understanding of town government, Town Meeting, and the relevant local issues, so a determination can be made that proper and sufficient deliberation has occurred before a vote is called.

## **School Committee (Regional)**

The School Committee hires and works with the Superintendent of Schools to establish educational goals, prepare and approve budgets, and develop policies for the school. Under Massachusetts State Law, the School Committee has the authority to select and terminate the Superintendent. The Committee meets twice a

month. In addition, there are subcommittees that meet usually every other week. Meetings are often at night to accommodate peoples' work schedules. During budget season there may be extra night meetings to go over the budget. The most important criterion to being on the school committee is the commitment to the education of our kids. Past educators and members with law or accounting experience are beneficial to the committee proceedings.

## **Planning Board**

The Planning Boards of each town meet twice monthly. The Hamilton Planning Board is concerned with maintaining the quality of life, fostering responsible growth, promoting open space, and environmental quality. They provide the Zoning Board of Appeals with a recommendation on site plan review. The Wenham Planning Board oversees the rules and regulations governing the subdivision of land, site plan review, and special permits according to the municipality's Zoning By-Law and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, s81. Any resident with a good working knowledge of the town and its best interests with respect to growth would fit in with this board. Background in land use or construction is also helpful. The boards often deal with legal issues as part of their scope, crafting decisions, proposing new bylaws or changes thereto, as well as following the open meeting law and conduct of meetings so knowledge of law is also advantageous.

## **Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk is the chief election officer. Often considered the gateway to local government and the community, the Office of the Town Clerk serves as the central information point for residents and visitors alike. The Town Clerk is a reliable provider of information and quality services to the community and its residents, and works cooperatively and in concert with all departments, boards and committees while complying with state and local statutes. The Town Clerk role is a full time, paid position in both Hamilton and Wenham that requires organization, people skills, and the ability to prioritize and multitask.

## Water Commission

The Water Commission in Wenham aims to provide safe, clean drinking water to our residents, water for fire protection, and good customer service in a cost-effective manner. The Commission assists in the hiring of and oversees the Water Superintendent. The Wenham commission meets once a month and more if there is the need or an emergency. Anyone with the best interest in the town would be welcome to this committee; however, residents with an engineering background would be helpful.

In Hamilton, the Board of Selectmen is charged with these responsibilities.

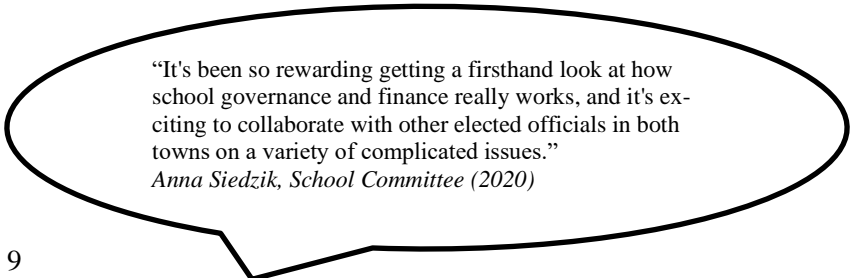
For more information on each elected position, see the towns' websites or refer to their Annual Town Reports. The Town Bylaws explain more fully how each Town is governed and they can be viewed online.

[www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov)

[www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov)

## DIAGRAMS OF TOWN GOVERNMENT

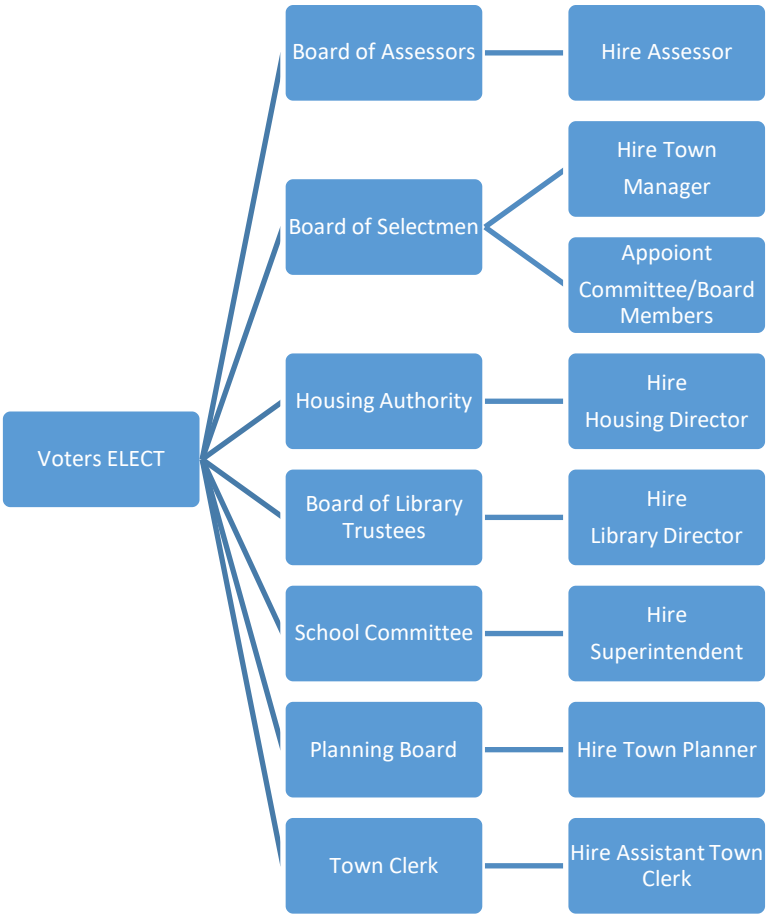
The following pages contain a diagram showing the relationship between elected officials, appointed officials, and town employees for each town.



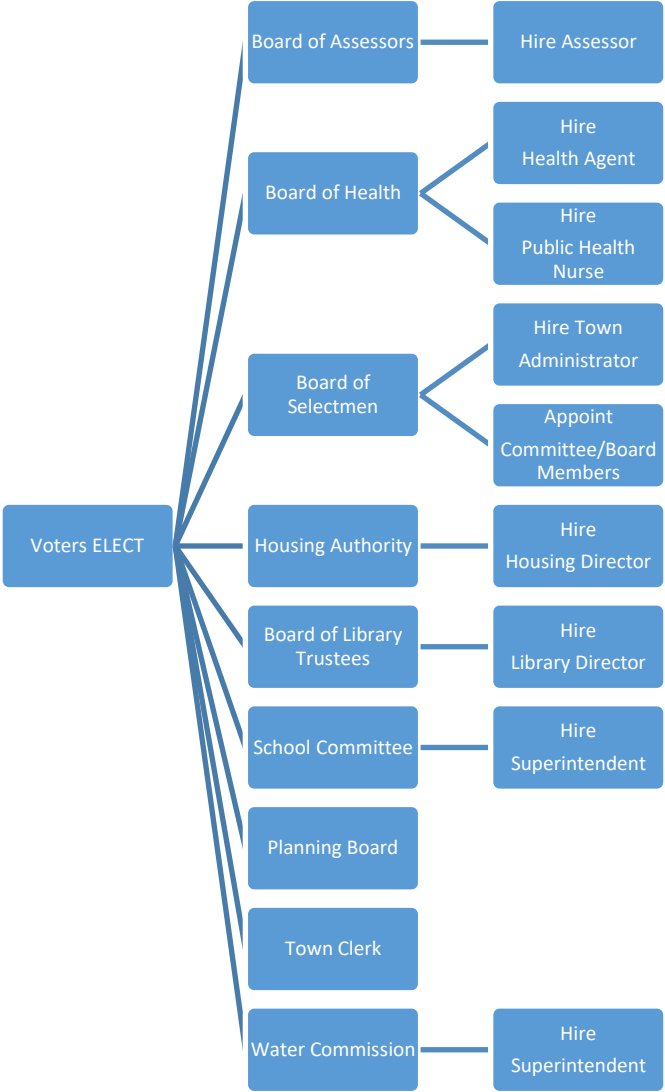
"It's been so rewarding getting a firsthand look at how school governance and finance really works, and it's exciting to collaborate with other elected officials in both towns on a variety of complicated issues."

*Anna Siedzik, School Committee (2020)*

**Hamilton Town Government**



Wenham Town Government



## **HOW TO START**

Once you have made the decision to run for a specific position, talk to as many people as possible to understand the issues and topics that are important to them. Attend board meetings, talk to committee heads and board chairs to get their perspectives, and share your intention to run. Attending these sessions in person is also another opportunity to gain campaign visibility.

When meeting with committees, it is helpful to express your interest to the committee chair and to the appointing authority, usually the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager/Administrator. Call members of the board and tell them you are considering a run for the office and ask that they consider supporting you.

Attending or watching committee meetings on HWCAM are additional ways to become familiar with the issues and decisions being made. Meetings are archived and available for replay under the Government Access tab on HWCAM.org.

Review the town website to familiarize yourself with posted material on current town budgets, the Open Meeting Law, and other information that could help you.

## **THE PROCESS**

### **Nomination Papers**

In order to run for elected office in Hamilton or Wenham, or in any municipality in Massachusetts, you have to get your name on the ballot for the Annual Election. (It is not actually necessary to have your name on the ballot and that is explained later in this section, but it is highly recommended that you do.) To do so, you need to take out and return nomination papers for your intended position. This is accomplished by meeting with the Town Clerk who will confirm your voter registration, prepare your nomination papers, as well as go over other pertinent information that you as a candidate will need to know. The Clerk will explain how many signatures of registered voters you need (20 for a Wenham nomination and 40 for Hamilton). There are two exceptions: The Board of Library Trustees At-Large Positions, and the Regional School

Committee Positions. For the Library, the required number of signatures depends on your residency. You obtain signatures from residents in your town only. For the School Committee, papers are obtained from School Office and you are required to get 40 signatures from voters of either town. Except for the School Committee positions, all nomination papers are to be returned to the Town Clerk for certification by a specific date that will be posted on the town website. Make sure you sign indicating that you accept the nomination on your papers. It takes time to collect signatures. It is acceptable to have others help you circulate the papers. It is suggested that you obtain more than the required minimum to ensure you have at least the minimum, being aware that some signatures may not count because they may be unregistered or duplicates.

Town board and committee meetings are good locations for collecting signatures. Board members and those attending their meetings understand the process and are usually willing to help. However, collecting signatures in the community is an opportunity to meet the voters and to introduce yourself and your positions.

Nomination papers are available from the Town Clerk offices in January and must be returned to the Clerk for certification 49 days before the election. Exact dates will be published on the town website.

If you miss the nomination paper deadline, you may still run for office by running a write-in campaign. Let the Town Clerk know that you intend to run as a write-in candidate. As a write-in candidate, your name does not appear on the ballot. At the election, your supporters can bubble in WRITE-IN and write in your name and address. Be aware of campaign laws that limit where you can campaign on Election Day (150 feet from the polling location).

A specimen ballot is shown here. The spaces for a write-in candidate are listed below all registered candidates.

# SPECIMEN BALLOT

Penalty for willfully defacing, tearing down, removing or destroying a list of candidates or specimen ballot.

FINE NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS.



**OFFICIAL BALLOT  
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION  
WENHAM, MASSACHUSETTS  
THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015  
7AM - 8PM**

*Sharon Evans*  
TOWN CLERK

### INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice(s) like this: ☐
- B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
- C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

<b>BOARD OF ASSESSORS</b> Three Year Term      Vote for One <input type="radio"/> (Write-in)	<b>HAMILTON-WENHAM LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b> Three Year Term      Vote for One <input type="radio"/> (Write-in)	<b>MODERATOR</b> One Year Term      Vote for One <b>PAUL D. WEAVER</b> <input type="radio"/> 40 March Row      Candidate for Re-Election (Write-in)
<b>BOARD OF HEALTH</b> Three Year Term      Vote for One <b>GERALD T. DONNELLAN</b> <input type="radio"/> 127 Topfield Road      Candidate for Re-Election (Write-in)	<b>JUDITH H. BUBRISKI</b> <input type="radio"/> 702 Old Country Road (Write-in)	<b>PLANNING BOARD</b> Five Year Term      Vote for One <b>DONALD J. KILLAM, JR.</b> <input type="radio"/> 24 Perkins Street      Candidate for Re-Election (Write-in)
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMAN</b> Three Year Term      Vote for One <b>JOHN A. CLEMENZI</b> <input type="radio"/> 8 Stage Hill Road (Write-in)	<b>HAMILTON-WENHAM LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES AT LARGE</b> Three Year Term      Vote for Two <b>PATRICIA K. PURDY</b> <input type="radio"/> 9 March Row      Candidate for Re-Election <b>JULIE M. CLAY</b> <input type="radio"/> 14 Arbor Street (Write-in) (Write-in)	<b>TREE WARDEN</b> One Year Term      Vote for One <input type="radio"/> (Write-in)
<b>CEMETERY COMMISSION</b> Three Year Term with only 2 years remaining      Vote for One <input type="radio"/> (Write-in)	<b>HAMILTON-WENHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE</b> Three Year Term      Vote for Two <b>HANNAH H. FRALEY</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>DENNIS J. HURLEY</b> <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) (Write-in)	<b>WATER COMMISSION</b> Three Year Term      Vote for One <input type="radio"/> (Write-in)



## **Dates to Remember**

The Annual Town Elections are set by town bylaws with current elections being held the Thursday after the Annual Town Meeting which is the first Saturday of April.

You can pick up nomination papers from the Town Clerk starting in January. From January 1 through the town elections, there are some specific deadlines that candidates should know. Although the exact dates of these deadlines vary from year to year, they follow the State mandated schedule (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 51-53).

Last day to submit nomination papers to Town Clerk/Registrar of Voters for certification is 49 days prior to the election.

Last day to object to or withdraw nomination papers is 33 days prior to the election.

Last day to register to vote or change party for Annual Town Meeting/Election is 20 days prior to the election.

Last day to register to vote in a special town meeting is 10 days prior to the special town meeting.

Campaign finance reports are due 8 days prior to the election (for those who are on the ballot).

Once the elections are over, there are a few more dates to keep in mind.

Elected officers need to take an oath of office before their first meeting of the board. They are required to read and sign off on the Open Meeting Law as well as complete the Conflict of Interest/Ethics paperwork. The Town Clerk is responsible for swearing in all officials and explaining all this required information.

Campaign finance reports are due 30 days after the election. The Town Clerk sends out a reminder about campaign finance reports, including the year-end report which is due in January of the following year and every year that the candidate holds a position.

## **Campaign Activities**

Based on the competition in your race, a team can be helpful in sharing the burden of organizing and implementing your election activities. Try to gain the support of the town's influential people so they can announce their support for you and not your opponents.

As early as possible in your campaign, generate a list of potential financial and political supporters to contact personally. Add names to this list as the campaign progresses and the word of your candidacy spreads. Know that a good portion of campaign expenses may come out of your own pocket. Consider organizing a kick-off event to generate support and to raise money. Invite absolutely everyone, particularly those who may be wavering in their support for you. Please be sure to understand the Campaign Finance Laws which will be explained later in this guide.

Below is a suggested list of campaign activities. Not all campaigns will warrant this depth and breadth. Running in a contested race with contentious issues can require much time, money, and hard work. On the other hand, running in an uncontested race can require little effort and no money at all.

There are many ways to hit the campaign trail. Choose those activities that are most comfortable to you. Whatever your style, build relationships and make connections. Look for opportunities to seek common ground and value all ideas brought to the table.

Going door to door is one traditional way to hit the campaign trail. Canvass the neighborhoods, listen to the issues that are important to people, be sincere, and ask for their support.

Make the phone your friend. Obtain a list of potential supporters and call them. Introduce your candidacy, your position, and ask for their vote on Election Day.

Have friends and supporters organize small house parties for a more personal meet-and-greet.

Schedule campaign events such as announcements in the local media, supporters' letters to the editor (one a week would be ideal),

town-wide mailings, posting the first campaign signs, sending “Dear Friend” cards, a kick-off party, and an election celebration.

Take every opportunity to build your brand and make yourself visible and your positions known. The type of position and campaign you are running will determine to what degree you pursue these activities, but when in doubt, more publicity is better than less.

Generate a timeline to organize your events, those that you control, such as letters to the editor, and those you cannot, such as Candidates’ Night (more information on this is following).

Attend events in town that provide an opportunity to speak to the voters.

Send a press release to all media including the Chronicle and Transcript and The Salem News announcing your candidacy. Learn the news media deadlines and plan accordingly. Keep press releases short and simple. Include most essential information up front, to plan for the potential of the article being cut back. Include a photo.

Contact HWCAM about taping a campaign announcement to be shown on their cable channels.

Solicit the support of friends and neighbors to place lawn signs on high-visibility, private properties in high-traffic areas in town. Be aware of all activities associated with posting of lawn signs: maintaining a list of those who agree to have lawn signs, those who have them for distribution, and those who will plant the signs on your supporters’ lawns. Signs may not be placed on public property, including along roads. Expect to need 150–300 lawn signs. Design your sign so that it can be reused at your next election. (For example, do not add dates to your signs, or use the slogan “It’s time for a change!” so you can reuse the same signs in a re-election bid.) And don’t forget to pick up your signs immediately after the election.

Create a broad distribution list if you choose to mail campaign flyers or cards. Include hand-written notes if possible.

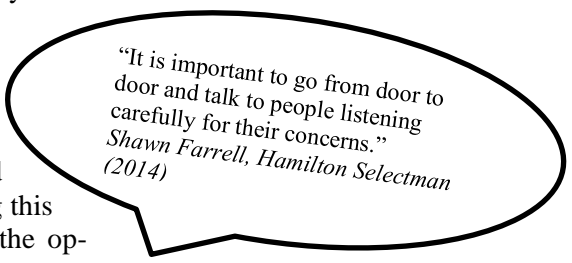
Put together a broad contact list for communicating via electronic media and use it to get out your message. On Election Day, email, text, or tweet your supporters to remind them to vote!

Use social media. Create a Facebook page, and get your friends and supporters to “Like” it. Twitter and other modes of social media will attract the different age groups in the community.

On Election Day, enlist sign holders throughout the day to greet voters at the polling locations. By state law these signs cannot be held closer than 150 feet from the entrance to any polling location and they cannot be left unattended. Try to get your sign holders lined up early before they are committed to other candidates.

## **LWV Candidates’ Night**

Whether or not you’re running in a contested race, consider attending this event. Voters deserve the opportunity to get to know you better and hear what you want to accomplish once you take office. The League will send you an invitation to participate which includes details about the event. Come prepared and understand that the event is recorded and will be repeatedly played on HWCAM, allowing for much broader audience viewing.



“It is important to go from door to door and talk to people listening carefully for their concerns.”  
*Shawn Farrell, Hamilton Selectman (2014)*

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising can be one of the most awkward activities for most candidates. Although your budget may not be high, you will most likely need some amount of funds for day-to-day campaign activities. For example, you may need postage for campaign cards as well as thank you notes to those who made contributions to your campaign. Keep a record of all expenditures and donations of all kinds. There are limits for donations. For more information on individual limits for donations refer to the town and state guides, as explained in the next section.

## **Campaign Finance**

Campaign finance regulations at the state level specify how your municipal campaign needs to handle and report any finances raised as part of your campaign. There are three campaign finance reports that must be filed with the Town Clerk's office even if you do not raise or spend any money. You should be familiar with the state law governing this area. The state has put together guides that can help you through this process, and you can find them at [www.mass.gov/ocpf](http://www.mass.gov/ocpf).

If you decide to raise and spend money as part of your campaign, there are procedures you need to follow for managing, spending, and reporting money in your campaign.

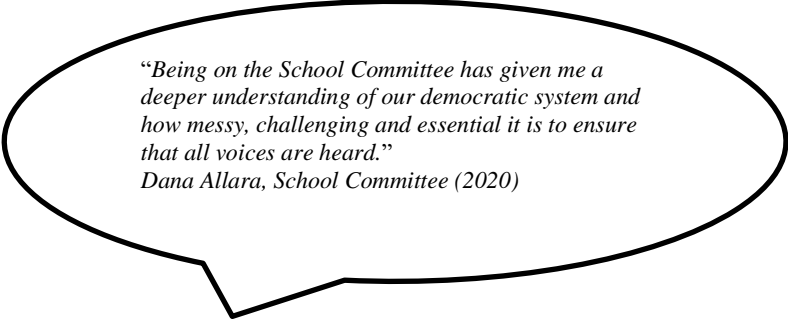
You may want to recruit someone to help manage the overall progress of the campaign, freeing you up for other candidate activities. That person would be your campaign manager. If you collect or expend money on your campaign, you are required by law to have a treasurer. The treasurer will control and record the flow of campaign contributions and expenses, and take on the responsibility of maintaining financial records and filling out the required campaign finance reports. Campaign expenses may include lawn signs, "Dear Friend" cards, and position mailings. The treasurer will help you set up a campaign account at a local bank. It is a good idea to find a bank manager who has done this before.

The state requires the filing of campaign finance reports. The forms will be mailed to you by the Town Clerk three times during the election season; prior to your election, after your election and then at the end of each year. There is a short form to file if you have no campaign organization and have not collected or spent any money on your election. Every elected office holder must file an end-of-the-year report throughout their term.

## **APPOINTED POSITIONS**

The Board of Selectmen of both towns make several appointments each year. Appointments are generally made for one to three years in length with a few exceptions. Appointments are generally made effective July 1 and expire on the June 30 of the expiration year. The Board of

Selectmen announce the vacancies and accept letters of interest prior to making their appointments. To learn more about each committee, please see below or check the town websites, [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov) and [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov).



*“Being on the School Committee has given me a deeper understanding of our democratic system and how messy, challenging and essential it is to ensure that all voices are heard.”*

*Dana Allara, School Committee (2020)*

## Committees & Boards with Appointed Members:

### Hamilton

Name	Members	Term
Board of Health	3	3 years
Capital Planning Commission	5	3 years
Chebacco Woods Mgmt. Committee	3 Hamilton, 1 Manchester	3 years Hamilton, 1 year Manchester
Community Preservation Committee	11	3 years
Conservation Committee	7	3 years
Council On Aging	7	3 years
Finance and Advisory Committee	5	3 years
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust	5	3 years
Hamilton Development Corp	5	3-2-1 years
Hamilton Foundation	5	1 year
Historic District Commission	8	3 years
Hamilton Human Rights Commission	9	3-2-1 years
Metro Area Planning Council	1	
MBTA	1	3 years
Open Space Commission	7	3 years
Office of Disability	2	1 year
Registrars	3	3 years
Town Hall Building Commission	7	Until done
Waste Reduction Commission	6	1 year
Zoning Board of Appeals	3	3 years
ZBA Alternate	2	3 years

## Committees & Boards with Appointed Members:

### Wenham

Name	Members	Term
Audit Committee	3	1 year
Board of Election Registrars	3 + Town Clerk	3 years
Cemetery Commission	3	3 years
Community Preservation Committee	9 (4 appointed, 5 from other committees)	2 years
Conservation Committee	10	3 years
Council on Aging	10	3 years
Election Officers	Variable	1 year
Finance and Advisory Committee	5	3 years
Historic Commission / Historic District Commission	7	3 years
Iron Rail Commission	5	3 years
Open Space and Recreation Committee	8	1 year
Representative to the Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School	1	3 years
Representative to the Logan Airport Community Advisory Committee	1	1 year
Representative to the MBTA	1	1 year
Representative to the Metro Area Planning Council	1	1 year
Town Government Study Committee	3	Through 12/31/21
Town Administrator Screening Committee	7	Until hired
Veterans Committee	9	3 years
Wenham Affordable Housing Trust	7	5 years
Wenham Connects Committee	9	1 year
Wenham Human Rights Committee	9	3 years
Wenham Issues of Social Service Help	7	3 years
Zoning Board of Appeals	3 plus associate member	3 years

### Regional

Name	Members	Term
Cultural Council	10 (5 from each town)	3 years
Recreation Department	6 (3 from each town)	3 years
Community Access & Media	6 (3 from each town)	3 years
HW Cam	3 Hamilton 3 Wenham	3 years



## LWV OF HAMILTON-WENHAM

Since 1959, the League of Women Voters of Hamilton-Wenham has been a respected and trusted voice for citizen participation in our democracy. Our motto, “Making Democracy Work,” guides our work. The League is a non-partisan 501(c)(4) organization and does not endorse political parties or candidates.

What we do:

**Voter Service:** We register voters, hold “Candidates’ Night” forums prior to elections, publicize election guides, place banners and sandwich boards with key dates in our towns to remind residents to VOTE, and distribute information to encourage residents to run for public office.

**Advocacy:** We advocate for issues that our members have chosen for study and action, and we advocate at Hamilton and Wenham town halls for improved ways to keep residents informed of issues in their town.

**Citizen Education and Civic Engagement:** We publish an online “Know Your Towns” document on our website, invite speakers and organize forums on local, state, and national public issues, distribute pocket size copies of the US Constitution and support programs in the school district to raise the civic awareness of young people, and write informative articles and letters for the local papers.

Membership in the League brings many benefits including opportunities to learn and lead, shape issues important to you and your family, and become part of a larger network across the state and country. Joining the League automatically confers membership at every level: Hamilton-Wenham, Massachusetts, and US. Please visit our website [LWVHW.org](http://LWVHW.org) and click on “Join LWV.” Find us on Facebook: [LWVofHamiltonWenham](https://www.facebook.com/LWVofHamiltonWenham).

**Hamilton and Wenham are very fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers, both elected and appointed. Whether you want to run to address a concern you have or just to become more involved in the town, running for local office is a way to learn more about yourself and your town. The League hopes that this guide starts you on the path to a successful run for local office.**

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Town of Hamilton: [www.hamiltonma.gov](http://www.hamiltonma.gov)
- Town of Wenham: [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov)
- HWCAM: [www.hwcam.org](http://www.hwcam.org)
- The Office of Campaign and Political Finance  
One Ashburton Place, Room 411, Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 979-8300, [www.mass.gov/ocpf](http://www.mass.gov/ocpf)
- Massachusetts General Law Chapters 50-56: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws>
- Elections Division at the Secretary of State:  
[www.sec.state.ma.us](http://www.sec.state.ma.us)



#### **Join the League of Women Voters to Make a Difference!**

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Since 1959, the League of Women Voters of Hamilton-Wenham, a group of committed women and men, has shared a common interest in “making democracy work.” Our involvement in the community has been far-reaching.

Visit **LWVHW.org** or find us on Facebook: **[www.facebook.com/LWVofHamiltonWenham](http://www.facebook.com/LWVofHamiltonWenham)**.