

## Notes from the February 2015 Hamilton Town Council Meeting

The February Hamilton Town Council meeting was held at the Village Court House. Doc. Hayes shared news of Earlville, telling us about the student art exhibit currently on view through March at the Earlville Opera House. The Earlville Village Board has passed a resolution joining the Town of Hamilton's Ambulance District. The Village of Hamilton has also resolved to join the district, subject to a mandatory referendum by all registered voters in the Village.

Discussion of the Ambulance District (tax district) continued later in the meeting. The Hamilton Town Council resolved to also hold a referendum on establishing the Ambulance District. A mid-April date, time, and location for the vote will be established at the March Town Council meeting. Voting in the Town referendum will be open to those people who own property in the Town of Hamilton. As both the Town and the Village of Hamilton are committed to holding referendums, by law they must hold two different votes. And, as Town law and Village law differ, so does who is allowed to vote - all Village residents can vote in the Village referendum, all Town property owners can vote in the Town referendum. Some people, those who are registered voters in the Village of Hamilton and are property owners in the Town of Hamilton, will be voting twice!

The Ambulance District would be used to collect tax monies to contract with an ambulance company, currently SOMAC, for service. The Town has been using tax money to contract with SOMAC as common practice for years. Over the last 5 years, due to changes in the cost of doing business, the expense of contracting with SOMAC has risen. The Town considers an Ambulance District the most efficient and transparent taxing method to meet the new expenses and to collect revenue needed to ensure 24/7 ambulance coverage for our community. To better educate our community about the Ambulance District, informational materials will be posted online, available in the Town office, and mailed directly to residents.

Supervisor Shwartz reported on the first meeting of the Ambulance Service Community Working Group (ASCWG). This group, composed of members of our fire departments, hospital, Colgate University, towns of Lebanon and Hamilton, villages, and knowledgeable community members, are exploring ways to make our local ambulance service more efficient, raise revenues, and bring down the costs of operating, and thereby the cost to our taxpayers. The ASCWG is examining questions and suggestions gathered from the public. If you have ideas for the group to consider please send them to the Town Office.

The Town Council resolved to participate in the Solarize Central New York project. Following on the heels of Solarize Madison, this effort would provide educational and purchasing opportunities for residential, business and municipal solar projects. Solarize Madison helped to turn our County from one with the highest cost for solar installations to one where cost of installation is among the lowest in the State.

Council member Darby reported on work by the Deer Management Task Force. Working with Colgate University, the group hopes to establish culling stations using nuisance permits issued by the DEC. This work needs to be carefully coordinated and timed to ensure safety and effectiveness. Culling would most likely not begin until next winter.

The Hamilton Town Council meets on the second Thursday of the month at the Town of Hamilton office at 16 Broad Street in the Village of Hamilton at 7 pm. Our next regular meeting is Thursday, March 12 at 7 pm. We invite and encourage you to join us. For more info visit [www.townofhamiltonny.org](http://www.townofhamiltonny.org).

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submitted by Chris Rossi for Hamilton Town Council