

HAMILTON, MA

Town Accountant

Position Statement



Summary

Hamilton is seeking an experienced municipal finance leader to serve as its next Town Accountant. The Town Accountant, who works under the general direction of the Finance Director, is responsible for the administration and operation of the Accounting Division within the Town's Finance Department. The Town Accountant maintains and audits the Town's ledger through the municipal accounting system administers internal/external financial reporting, ensures compliance with annual state reporting and records' requirements, supervises the accounts payable functions, promotes technical expertise and technological advancements in fiscal operations, and assists in developing and implementing a comprehensive program of financial policies, procedures and internal controls which constitute an integral component of the total management of fiscal concepts and practices.

Annual Salary: An anticipated hiring salary of \$100K+/-, depending on qualifications. An attractive benefits package, including health and retirement plans, is part of the total compensation.

The Community

The Town of Hamilton is a quiet, principally residential community of approximately 7,600 residents located in Eastern Massachusetts, 23 miles northeast of Boston and eight miles north of Salem. Young families move to town for the schools and stay for the community they help develop. The Town has a tradition of professional and highly responsive government service, with strong citizen engagement, and is known for its rural-suburban character. [Hamilton](#) takes great pride in its regional school system, local history, and preservation of natural resources.

Hamilton was first settled in 1638, incorporated in 1793, and is part of Essex County. The Town is bordered by Wenham to the south, Ipswich to the north, Essex to the east, Manchester-by-



the-Sea to the southeast, and Topsfield to the west. Hamilton's 14.9 square miles is primarily land, with approximately 4.9 percent water. The Town is mainly a quiet bedroom community, with virtually no manufacturing industry and no industrially zoned land. It has a small and quaint downtown. Its location provides easy access to the Atlantic seashore with its reservations, beaches, and boating. The Town includes many historic houses, pastoral landscapes, conservation areas, and old stone walls that accompany winding tree-lined roads. It also has a rich equestrian heritage, which remains strong due to the influence of the many horse farms and of Myopia Hunt Club

which holds frequent equestrian events.

Hamilton is closely tied to neighboring Wenham, sharing a school system, library, recreation department, pool, inspectional services, commuter rail station, and newspaper. Regionalization is an important factor in Hamilton. In 2010, the community of Hamilton-Wenham was listed among the "Best Places to Live" by *Boston Magazine*. With its close proximity to Boston, desirable real estate and highly ranked school system, Hamilton is considered a very desirable community in Massachusetts. Hamilton has a median household income of approximately \$120,000. While the Town's population is largely financially prosperous, according to U.S. Census statistics, there is a small percentage of residents who fall below the poverty line and face economic challenges.

The Town's racial makeup is 90.2% white, 6.1% Asian, 2.6% two or more races, 1.6% Hispanic or Latino, and 1.0% Black or African American, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Town is demographically dissimilar to the state regarding resident age cohorts with differences in the under-18 years cohort with Hamilton at 24% in the U.S. Census versus 19.5% for the state. Currently, nearly 20% of Hamilton's residents are in the 65 years and over cohort, compared to the state's 17.4%. The median age of Hamilton's residents is 41 years.

Hamilton has a \$1.78 billion tax base, which is mostly residential, according to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services. The FY22 tax rate for all properties is \$17.88 per thousand of the property's assessed value.

Government

Hamilton's government includes a five-member [Select Board](#) with members elected to staggered three-year terms. The Hamilton Select Board functions as the Chief Executive body of the Town. The Town Manager is responsible for supervising the day-to-day operation of all town departments falling under the direct control of the Select Board. The Town Accountant works under the general direction of the Director of Finance, who reports to the Town Manager.

Hamilton has an Open Town Meeting form of government. [Town Meeting](#) is the legislative body of the Town. The April 2022 [Annual Town Meeting warrant](#) and October 2022 [Special Town Meeting warrant](#) provide detailed information on the most recent Town Meeting activity. The Select Board appoints the [Town Manager](#) who serves as the Chief Administrative and Operating Officer of the Town. The Town Manager position was established in 2009 via a [Special Act](#). The [2021 Annual Town Report](#) can be located on the Town's website.



Finance

The [Finance and Advisory Committee](#) is an essential part of the Town's government. The committee is charged with considering and making reports and recommendations to the Town on any or all municipal questions. The committee is part of the legislative branch of Town government and makes recommendations on all warrant articles presented to Town Meeting for consideration. Hamilton holds a Standard and Poor's [rating of AAA](#) with a stable outlook, as affirmed in a credit opinion of April 2017.

In FY2022, Hamilton has a general fund budget of approximately \$35.83 million, including \$21.1 million for schools. Hamilton's goal is to continue to manage its finances in a manner that maintains its high rating and stable outlook. Maintaining Hamilton's financial strength and excellent credit rating while keeping tax increases to a minimum are priorities. The Town has total assessed values of \$1.78 billion for FY22. Free cash was certified at nearly \$4.18 million for FY22 and overlay reserves are \$300,000. The FY21 stabilization fund is approximately \$3.45 million. The links below provide additional insight into Hamilton's finances.

Important Links:

- [Budget information](#)
- [Financial Statements](#)
- [OPEB Actuarial Reports](#)
- [Quarterly Reports](#)
- [Adopted Financial Policies](#)
- [Financial Policy Manual](#)
- [Town of Hamilton](#)
- [Finance Department](#)
- [Finance and Advisory Committee](#)
- [Assessors Department](#)
- [Treasurer/Tax Collector](#)
- [S&P Ratings Report 2017](#)

Position Responsibilities

The Town Accountant, who works under the general direction of the Finance Director, is responsible for the administration and operation of the Accounting Division within the Town's Finance Department.

Some of the position's specific functions include:

- Maintain, develop, and implements the Town's accounting system and procedures; provides timely and accurate financial information, and ensures the integrity of the financial data by instituting proper internal controls.
- Ensure that no claim or payable against the Town is fraudulent, unlawful, or excessive, as prescribed by Mass. General Laws.
- Develop and prepare monthly reports to track all financial activity within the Town's many funds, to include special revenue funds, state and federal grants, capital projects, enterprise funds, trust funds, and the general appropriations of the Town.
- Ensure that funds are reconciled on a regular periodic basis with the various departments and that the Town's receivable accounts, to include property taxes, motor vehicle excise, tax title accounts, tax deferrals, taxes in litigation, tax foreclosures, water user charges, as well as cash accounts, are reconciled on a regular basis with the department responsible.
- Maintain files of all original contracts entered into by the Town and submit accounting reports for Annual Town Report.
- Develop and prepare year-end financial reports to include the balance sheet and revenue and expense statements for the Town, the State Department of Revenue, and for the certification of free cash; prepares and submits annually to the Department of Revenue Schedule A detailing financial activity for fiscal year, assist in preparation of the Tax Recap.
- Serves as a resource of financial information to the Finance Director, as well as to other Town departments, committees, and boards, as required.
- Supervises and maintains central accounting and bookkeeping records, controlling, and summarizing financial transactions of all municipal departments and perform internal audits.
- Assist the Finance Director and Town department heads in the development and maintenance of the operating, capital, and enterprise fund budgets for the Town, and serves as liaison with independent auditors. Coordinates the annual municipal audit.
- Answer questions and provide information to the public; receive resident and vendor complaints and questions and refer to appropriate division staff member for resolution, various departments regarding account balances, payment of invoices and any other queries. Process accounts payable, verify purchasing process compliance, assist in the reconciliation of accounts, assist in maintaining the associated chart of accounts, maintain detailed financial records.
- Audit and maintain a variety of files and filing systems; prepare, maintain, and update various records; verify and distribute information.
- Review bi-weekly payroll warrants; review Treasurer's receipts and Collector's turnovers for proper accounting; process year-end Form 1099s for vendors and submit information to Federal and State agencies.

Education and Experience

Candidates must have a bachelor's degree in accounting or related field. Candidates must have 5-7 years of progressively responsible experience in accounting, of which at least 3 years are in municipal accounting; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Required Qualifications

- Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of municipal accounting and of applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.
- Comprehensive knowledge of GAAP and the UMAS.
- Complete working knowledge of the principles and practices of financial management and specific knowledge of the legal controls, methods, and procedures of municipal finance.
- Working knowledge of computer applications for accounting and financial management, Munis experience preferred.
- Thorough knowledge of office procedures, practice, and terminology.
- Working knowledge of Town operations.
- Ability to analyze and interpret financial data and to present findings.
- Ability to lead and supervise departmental staff and to develop policies and procedures for the department's operations.
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with Town officials and governmental representatives.
- Excellent customer service and interpersonal skills.
- Must have Massachusetts Certified Governmental Accounting certification and Certified Public Accountant certification preferred (may be acquired within the first three years.)
- Must have ability to be bonded.

How To Apply

Position is open until filled. For a guaranteed review of materials, send cover letter and résumé, in confidence, by January 18, 2023, 3:00 p.m., via email to:

Apply@CommunityParadigm.com

Subject: Hamilton Town Accountant

Submit a single PDF containing both cover letter and résumé.

Following the initial closing date, application materials will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. A selection of finalists will be chosen for further evaluation, reference checks, and background reviews before being advanced to the Town Manager.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal
Community Paradigm Associates
Blynch@communityparadigm.com
978-621-6733

The Town of Hamilton, Mass. is a Pay Equity/Equal Opportunity/Americans with Disabilities Act Employer.