

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

November 21, 2011

7:30 P.M. – MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING – HANOVER, NH

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Peter Christie. Present were: Peter Christie, Chairman; Brian Walsh, Selectman; Katherine Connolly, Vice Chairman; Athos Rassias, Selectman; Judy Doherty, Selectman; Julia Griffin, Town Manager and Jessie Levine, Assistant Town Manager/Human Resources Director.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Mr. Christie opened the meeting by noting that this was his first meeting at Chairman. Chairman Christie then received a phone call from Senator Lloyd Bentsen who died about 10 years ago. From the gist of the conversation, Senator Bentsen told Mr. Christie: "Chairman Christie, I served with Brian Walsh. I knew Brian Walsh. Brian was a friend of mine. Chairman Christie, you are no Brian Walsh."

Senator Bentsen then offered some sage advice to Mr. Christie to the effect that he should carry on Brian's traditions of openness, balance, and transparency, but just to do it in his own way. Mr. Christie thanked the Senator and said that that is exactly what he would try to do.

Chairman Christie then asked for further Public Comment.

Rev. Guy Collins stated that he was here to speak to the Board because less than 2 weeks ago Doris Zappala was struck by a car near St. Thomas Episcopal Church in the crosswalk. He wanted to thank the Town, the police, the Town Manager and the Public Works Director for responding so quickly and considering the safety of the residents of Hanover. Rev. Collins stated that he is present to speak to the Board to make sure that they understand the severity of the situation. He stated that he represents about 550 people who will be crossing the street in darkness to attend Church services this holiday season. Rev. Collins stated that they also wanted to say that the community stands ready to help in any way that they can to change the crossing to make it safer. He noted that there have been 3 accidents in the past 10 years and he received two e-mails from other parishioners who have had close calls at that crossing. This crossing is unsafe.

Chairman Christie stated that they did receive some information in their Friday packet and it looks like there is some good planning in place.

Ms. Griffin stated that one thing that they are thinking about doing quickly is to install LED flashers in the area; they cost about \$11,000 and can go in quickly but they need to find the funding. Anything involving paving work is not going to be done this year. Ms. Griffin stated that they have also ordered an in-street pedestrian sign that stand in the middle of the crosswalk but historically in Hanover people tend to run them over.

Selectman Rassias stated that at the November 7th meeting the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee discussed locations where accidents tend to happen and Wheelock Street is an area that is dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists. Ms. Griffin stated that they have concerns about other areas on West Wheelock and one concern about installing new crosswalks is that it may invite more accidents as pedestrians exercise less care when crossing.

Selectman Walsh stated that his perception is that when a crosswalk comes out between two parked cars, if they can get rid of one of those spaces on each side, it may help with visibility for drivers. Ms. Griffin stated that this was a recommendation made by Chief Giaccone and Lt. Michael Evans but when you take spaces away in this community, it's always a hot topic.

Dick Lewin, Hovey Lane, commented that the traffic in front of St. Thomas seems to be very fast going in both directions. He would like to see some kind of slow road treatment in that area to get people to slow down. He agrees that they definitely need to upgrade the crosswalk.

Bill Baschnagel stated that he has a pet peeve about the blinking yellow lights coming up the hill. He stated that blinking yellow lights don't help him with anything but he needs to actually see people and recommended that they look at options that will illuminate the people in the crosswalk. The lights on Lebanon Street did not help him see the pedestrians. It also needs to be on a demand basis so that a person hits the button and the light goes on and not have the flashing lights on all the time.

2. JOIGNY COMMITTEE – UPDATE.

Lizann Peyton, President of the Hanover Joigny Exchange Committee and Pietie Birnie who has been on the Committee for a very long time were present to speak to the Board about what the program has done over the years.

Ms. Peyton stated that they wanted to give an update and thank the Select Board and Brian Walsh in particular who has been very helpful over the years. Ms. Peyton stated that Brian had an art exhibit in Joigny which was well received and the Upper Valley Community Band went over to Joigny and they are grateful for the Town's support. They have had over 270 kids at Hanover High go to Joigny in group exchanges. The two-week home exchange will happen again in 2012. Hanover has also been a wonderful host for the Joigny kids who come to the area. These kids go home and tell stories about America and Hanover. The Committee will take the kids to see New York City on a field trip and the French students are very excited to see everything the city has to offer but the friendships that they develop are truly amazing. They find that they can make friends really fast even if they are not fluent in the language and they realize that they are all the same.

Ms. Birnie stated that the kids make long time friends and stay in touch with their host families. She relayed a story of a young French girl who came to Hanover and then went to Hanover High for a while and then to Lebanon Community College and was later interviewed at Holyoke and they asked her to come back the following January; she is currently working and living in New York City and is fulfilling her dream. The Burlington trip is an easy day trip and Ms. Birnie has

become a point person for this field trip. The students get a chance to walk around, they go on a boat, they go to a baseball game, and there are some activities that they do year after year.

Ms. Peyton stated that 2013 & 2014 is the 20th anniversary of the “twinning” of the Cities. Joigny might send visitors in 2013 and in 2014 it might be nice to send a delegation over there. There is a new system requiring a federally approved foreign exchange organizations to sponsor anyone who comes for more than a two week stay. The Volunteer Committee continues to work so that the kids can continue to come over. Selectman Christie stated that his daughter took advantage of this opportunity several years ago.

3. FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED SCOPE FOR DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY.

Ms. Griffin stated that she made an attempt to make some changes after the last discussion regarding the Downtown Parking Study.

Chairman Christie asked about the “deliverables” and specifically which ones would address the downtown employee parking issue. He doesn’t want that part of the study to get lost. Ms. Griffin suggested adding another section that focuses specifically on that particular issue in the deliverables.

Bill Baschnagel shared Chairman Christie’s concerns about the deliverables and he still feels that there is a lot in this report and he suspects that they will need to have some negotiations to stay within the dollar amount.

Ms. Griffin stated that this is most likely going to remain a work in progress document moving forward. Mr. Baschnagel asked about implementation and timing. Ms. Griffin stated that they would need to get the approvals from the Parking & Transportation Board (PTB) and others so it would probably go out to bid after Thanksgiving and they would most likely receive responses after the first of the year.

4. BANNER REQUESTS:
- Friends of Norris Cotton Cancer Center
- Howe Library

Ms. Griffin stated that a late banner request came in from the Howe Library for their event which is an indoor golf event.

Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to approve the Banner Requests for the Friends of Norris Cotton Cancer Center and the Howe Library. Selectman Walsh SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE BANNER REQUESTS FOR THE FRIENDS OF NORRIS COTTON CANCER CENTER AND THE HOWE LIBRARY.

5. BOARD & COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

- Board of Selectmen
- Conservation Commission
- Zoning Board of Adjustment

Chairman Christie noted that this is Brian Walsh's last meeting and with his retirement the Board has the responsibility to fill his seat for the remainder of the first year of his three year term.

Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to appoint Bill Geraghty to the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Doherty SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT BILL GERAGHTY TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Chairman Christie introduced Bill Geraghty and stated that he is well known in Hanover and has lived in the area since 1986. Mr. Geraghty's career has ranged from Director of Personnel at Middlesex County College, Assistant Director of Personnel at Princeton University and then Director of Human Resources at Dartmouth College and most recently as Human Resources Director at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. He has held Board positions with United Way, Howe Library, Hanover Chamber of Commerce, Transportation Management Association of the Upper Valley, the Jordan Institute, Twin Pines Housing Trust, Leadership Upper Valley and is currently the Chair of Vital Communities. Chairman Christie stated that his best claim to fame is being married to Kathy who was involved in the leadership of Youth In Action and he was also a key driver for the successful 250th celebration.

Selectman Walsh stated that he was pleased that Mr. Geraghty put his name in for Selectman. Selectman Walsh stated that he has observed Mr. Geraghty defend difficult positions and he doesn't lose his cool and he did this with grace. There are a lot of qualities that Mr. Geraghty brings to the Select Board and he appreciates him taking his seat.

Chairman Christie stated that there are some appointments to make to the Conservation Commission. Selectman Walsh stated that Al Flory lives on Greensboro Road and is a hiker, a teacher in Hartford and connected to much of the youth in town through his service as a coach in recreation programs. Alan Saucier moved to Hanover 4 years ago and one of the premier landscape architects in the Upper Valley. Jim Kennedy has been on the Conservation Commission previously and is a retired landscape architect. Shelly Gilbert is a realtor with Coldwell Banker Redpath and is enthusiastic about this opportunity to serve the town.

Selectman Walsh MOVED to appoint Shelly Gilbert and Al Saucier as full members of the Conservation Commission and Al Flory and Jim Kennedy as alternate members. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT SHELLY GILBERT AND AL SAUCIER AS FULL MEMBERS OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND AL FLORY AND JIM KENNEDY AS ALTERNATE MEMBERS.

Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to appoint Ethan Frechette to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Selectman Walsh SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT ETHAN FRECHETTE TO THE ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
- November 7, 2011

Selectman Doherty MOVED to accept the Minutes of November 7, 2011. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2011.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

Ms. Griffin noted that the Select Board received information about the State Retirement System in their Friday packets. She attended a meeting about the Retirement System at the Annual Conference last Thursday. Every other year the Retirement System raises employer contribution rates. At the same time that they administer an update, they conduct an actuarial assessment of the Retirement System. The Board of Trustees use this assessment to project rates two years from now (which will be July 1, 2013). It appears that the Town will be looking at a 21% to 27% increase in employer contributions to the NH Retirement System police, fire and Group 1 employees. The School District will be looking at a projected 24% increase. The Trustees are not required to adopt the recommendations from the actuaries. Ms. Griffin just wanted the Board to have the heads up that they are looking at significant increases. It is going to take years for the Retirement System to make up for the poor returns on their investments.

Chairman Christie asked about House Bill 2 and whether it was adopted with the changes to the Retirement System. Ms. Griffin stated that it was adopted and there were sweeping changes in the way the retirement compensation is calculated but it applies to newly hired employees and those who were not vested. Ms. Griffin noted that there was less support in the House for the changes but the Senate really wanted the changes. The legislation knew that changes needed to be made because they could fund less than 65% of their obligation.

Vice Chairman Connolly asked if the vested employees saw any changes. Ms. Griffin stated that there weren't any sweeping changes for them. Ms. Levine stated that for Group II employees there was change regarding the calculations.

8. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS.

Athos Rassias

Selectman Rassias had nothing new to report.

Judy Doherty

Selectman Doherty had nothing new to report.

Peter Christie

Chairman Christie reported that the Finance Committee met with a focus on the School Budget. He did walk the committee through the material that was provided by Betsy McClain regarding the Town Budget and the Select Board's tax rate target of 3.5%. He sensed that they supported the Select Board's position but they did not take a formal vote. They had a discussion about funding levels for the reserve and the Committee was divided on that. There will be more discussions but there was great support for not using reserves to manage tax rates. The Committee supported the policy but there may be some re-thinking about how much to reserve.

Kate Connolly

Vice Chairman Connolly stated that the Planning Board did not meet since the last Select Board's meeting. The Residential Committee continues to go strong.

Vice Chairman Connolly reported that the Hanover/Lebanon Bicycle Committee completed a report after looking over routes to determine possibilities that may exist for the future along the Route 120 corridor. The report will be provided to the Hanover Bike & Pedestrian Committee. She noted that she and Nicole Cormen from the Lebanon City Council are the only elected officials that have done work on the Committee.

Brian Walsh

Selectman Walsh stated that he received an invitation as "Chairman" to see the President at an economic speech in Manchester, NH tomorrow and instead of pointing out that he is no longer Chairman, he plans to attend.

9. OTHER BUSINESS.

The Board discussed their schedule for the upcoming year. Chairman Christie reviewed the budget meeting schedule and recommended having the Department Heads be more involved in the budget presentation instead of having Betsy McClain provide the details of the budget. The Board decided to consider having the social service agencies make presentations on February 13th prior to the 4 nights of budget hearings.

Board of Selectmen
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Chairman Christie reported that there is a show at the Howe featuring artwork by Brian Walsh. This is Brian's last meeting but there is going to be a celebration on December 1st from 5p-7p at the Webster Room at the Hanover Inn.

Ms. Griffin noted that next Wednesday, November 30th is Penny Hoisington's last day after 15 ½ years with the Town. Ms. Levine has organized "Pennies for Haven" and there is a large jar that is already half full. The Haven is an organization that is important to Penny and all donations will go to that agency.

Chairman Christie MOVED to follow the request for a non-public session to discuss items pursuant to RSA 91-a: 3, II, (a), (c), (e). Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.

RASSIAS, YES. DOHERTY, YES. CHRISTIE, YES. CONNOLLY, YES. WALSH, YES.

The Select Board went into non-public session at 8:25 p.m.

Selectman Doherty MOVED to exit the non-public session. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 9:25 P.M.

10. ADJOURNMENT.

Selectman Doherty MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. Doherty, Secretary

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth S. Rathburn.

SUMMARY

1. **Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to approve the Banner Requests for the Friends of Norris Cotton Cancer Center and the Howe Library. Selectman Walsh SECONDED the motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE BANNER REQUESTS FOR THE FRIENDS OF NORRIS COTTON CANCER CENTER AND THE HOWE LIBRARY.

2. **Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to appoint Bill Geraghty to the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Doherty SECONDED the motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT BILL GERAGHTY TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

3. **Selectman Walsh MOVED to appoint Shelly Gilbert and Al Saucier as full members of the Conservation Commission and Al Flory and Jim Kennedy as alternate members. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.**

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4. **Vice Chairman Connolly MOVED to appoint Ethan Frechette to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Selectman Walsh SECONDED the motion.**

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5. **Selectman Doherty MOVED to accept the Minutes of November 7, 2011. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.**

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6. **Chairman Christie MOVED to follow the request for a non-public session to discuss items pursuant to RSA 91-a: 3, II, (a), (c), (e). Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.**

RASSIAS, YES. DOHERTY, YES. CHRISTIE, YES. CONNOLLY, YES. WALSH, YES.

- 7. Selectman Doherty MOVED to exit the non-public session. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 9:25 P.M.

- 8. Selectman Doherty MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chairman Connolly SECONDED the motion.**

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