

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

March 2, 2015

5:00 P.M. – MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING – HANOVER, NH

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Peter Christie. Present were: Peter Christie, Chairman; Athos Rassias, Vice Chairman; Bill Geraghty, Selectman; Nancy Carter, Selectman; Jay Buckey, Selectman; and Julia Griffin, Town Manager.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Chairman Christie asked for Public Comment. There were no comments from the public.

2. 3rd BUDGET HEARING AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY 2015-16.

Chairman Christie stated that this was the 3rd budget hearing and the Board hopes to adopt the budget at this meeting. Ms. Griffin noted that the only thing on the list was the potential to increase the social service agency funding levels. The proposal was to provide a 2.5% increase for the agencies that did not request an increase which would result in \$1,512.

Chairman Christie noted that improvements to Wilson's Landing was on the list. Ms. Griffin noted that the improvements to Wilson's Landing would cost \$27,500; Pine Park also requested \$10,000 for a reserve fund; the paving program would need another \$10,000 to fully fund the program; \$5,000 for the sidewalk maintenance program. They also need to adjust the budget by \$30,000 for projected revenue for the parking budget.

Chairman Christie also recommended increasing water rates due to the concerns over the distribution lines. Chairman Christie noted that when the Town took over the water company they knew that they were taking on the liability of the distribution lines. He noted that a 3% increase would result in \$50,000 in additional revenue.

Ms. Griffin noted that rates are adopted at a public hearing in June but it is generated from discussions at the budget hearings. The money being raised through increased water rates would be put into reserve for improvements to the secondary water distribution lines.

Selectman Geraghty asked if this would be part of any Town Meeting discussion or approval. Ms. Griffin stated that Town Meeting is to approve the operating budget. She noted that this could be part of the presentation.

Vice Chairman Rassias asked Mr. Kulbacki what it would mean to fully fund the sidewalk maintenance program. Mr. Kulbacki stated that this is separate from the paving budget. Chairman Christie noted that 3 years ago they were short in the paving budget and this additional amount is needed to reach the goal for the 3rd year. Selectman Carter clarified that this is just to keep the current sidewalks paved and not to add additional sidewalks.

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Ms. Griffin stated that there is an additional \$21,919.51 available in the Land and Capital Improvements fund after they remove the \$50,000 recommended for the 46 Lebanon Street property. She stated that this would go a long way toward the Wilson's Landing improvements.

Vice Chairman Rassias asked if this project had to be done all at once or whether it could be done over time.

Ms. Griffin stated that this could be stretched over time but she would prefer to have this done all at once because it is a fairly small project and it is mostly site work so it would likely cost less to do it over one summer rather than two. Ms. Griffin stated that if they choose to take money out of the Land and Capital Improvements fund there would need to be a warrant article.

Selectman Buckey asked if this withdrawal would leave the Town at an appropriate level. Ms. Griffin stated that this money is generated when people take their land out of current use and was last used for the Hayes Farm property in Etna Village. She noted that since that time it has accumulated to \$71,000. Selectman Buckey confirmed that this is an appropriate use of the funds.

Vice Chairman Rassias stated that with regard to the request from the Pine Park Association he feels that this is something that the Town should be doing but they need to see a long-term plan. He suggested that they could put less than the amount requested as well.

Ms. Griffin noted that Linda Fowler is a Trustee of the Pine Park Association and can speak to this item. Ms. Fowler stated that the Pine Park Association has been renegotiating its arrangements with the Town of Hanover and Dartmouth College. She stated that the Association owns the land but in 1913 it turned over management, possession and maintenance jointly to the Town of Hanover and Dartmouth College. She stated that over the years the Town has done some maintenance in the park and the College has also contributed. She stated that with the change in precipitation, erosion of soils, building of houses in the water shed and erosion in Girl Brook, this has become severe. Ms. Fowler stated that they have identified a number of "hot spots" over the last couple of years that have made the trails unsafe. She stated that they addressed the first one in the fall with a successful collaboration in which the Trustees raised \$25,000 to pay for materials and the Town provided the equipment, labor, and design and permitting.

Ms. Fowler stated that they are trying to regularize the relationship with the College and the Town by having a line-item in their budgets to reserve for issues as they arise. She stated that given the expense that the Town incurred to replace the bridge, it may not be the year for the Town to spend additional funds. She reported that they are in the process of developing a management plan. She stated that they have some money left over from their fundraising and there is a grant of \$500 coming in from the Hanover Conservancy. She stated that the College is doing a major overhaul to the suspension bridge on the Golf Course which should address their 2nd worst trouble spot. She noted that the College has been the primary source for erosion and they are taking some responsibility for it. Ms. Fowler stated that she doesn't anticipate any large expenses this year other than the management plan but they have set aside funds for that.

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Ms. Fowler stated that she was not familiar with the budgeting process but there are hotspots that need to be addressed in the future.

Ms. Griffin stated that the amount of money is less significant than the process. They can seek to appropriate a certain amount of money and if unspent, it would be transferred into a reserve fund. She stated that at this year's Town Meeting the Pine Park Reserve Fund could be created and there is \$500 left over from the money raised for the bridge construction, so if a repair needed to be made they could spend the money and not wait for a vote at Town Meeting.

Chairman Christie stated that if there is going to be a Master Plan and the College is going to participate in some way, they should look at doing some kind of joint effort to determine what the responsibilities are and put this in place sometime next year. Ms. Griffin stated that a management plan would assist in determining who is responsible for certain aspects of the projects and when it would be paid.

Ms. Fowler stated that they will have to take money out of their reserve to pay for the management plan estimated at about \$3,000. Ms. Griffin noted that if they have the management plan by early fall the Town could look at it in relation to the next budget process. Ms. Fowler felt that if the Town of Hanover made a commitment then this may encourage the College to step up for their portion of the agreement.

Ms. Fowler stated that they know that the trees need to be thinned and that there are concerning areas along the trail. Ms. Griffin stated that a lot of the tree work requires a sawyer to remove them. If the trees are being brought down they could be placed along the corridor to help reduce erosion.

Ms. Fowler stated that if they can get the management plan done before the early summer it would be a shame to wait until the next budget cycle. Ms. Griffin felt that it may make sense to wait for the results of the management plan so that they can determine how much the Town should set aside for their portion.

Ms. Griffin stated that they could ask Town Meeting to create the Pine Park Reserve on May 13th. Chairman Christie felt that it made sense to wait until the management plan was complete and not do something that they are not ready to do.

Ms. Fowler asked whether the Town would be willing to help fund the management plan. Ms. Griffin felt that there would be funds available to assist.

Ms. Fowler stated that she wanted to start the conversation with the Town and it appears that the Board is supportive. Chairman Christie stated that they do support the efforts but are jointly responsible with the College.

Mr. Kulbacki noted that it has been difficult to get the College involved in the conversation. Ms. Griffin stated that the College has been focusing on the improvements to the Golf Course.

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Selectman Carter asked if they can create an opportunity for citizens to contribute to the park as a 501 (c) 3 and take advantage of the tax benefit. Ms. Fowler reported that their 501 (c) 3 paperwork has been filed with the State and they haven't gone to the public at large.

Chairman Christie confirmed with the Board that they would postpone the discussions until the next budget session.

Chairman Christie asked if the Board was inclined to fund the improvements to Wilson's Landing. Selectman Carter would be in favor of using the entire \$27,000 using the \$21,000 out of the Land and Capital Improvements Fund and then the additional amount through the tax rate.

Selectman Carter MOVED to Fund the Improvements to Wilson's Landing using \$21,919.51 from the Land and Capital Improvements Fund and the Remaining Amount (\$5,580.49) through the Tax Rate. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO FUND THE IMPROVEMENTS TO WILSON'S LANDING USING \$21,919.51 FROM THE LAND AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND AND THE REMAINING AMOUNT (\$5,580.49) THROUGH THE TAX RATE.

Chairman Christie stated that he would be inclined to hold off for one more year for paving. Selectman Geraghty encouraged Julia Griffin and Peter Kulbacki to pursue opportunities to allocate more money toward paving. The Board agreed to pass on this until the next budget season. Chairman Christie stated that he was encouraged that they appear to be catching up on the paving budget.

Selectman Carter MOVED to add \$1,512 (or 2.5%) to the Budget in Support of the Social Service Agencies that asked for Level Funding. Selectman Buckey SECONDED the Motion.

Chairman Christie felt that this is the right thing to do and noted that he is very appreciative for the services that these agencies provide. He noted that their requests do not reflect the need and he wanted to make sure that they know the Town supports their agencies and appreciate their assistance. Selectman Geraghty noted that the reality is that these agencies continue to deal with budget cuts and he supports assisting them. Selectman Buckey noted that the Town has the criteria to select the agencies that they fund and the requirement is that the agencies are providing a service to the Town, to the residents of the Town and that these services would otherwise need to be provided by the Town. If they are not getting an increase each year, they are likely taking a cut. Chairman Christie stated that these agencies haven't asked for an increase in the past three years.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD \$1,512 (OR 2.5%) TO THE BUDGET IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES THAT ASKED FOR LEVEL FUNDING.

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Ms. Griffin clarified that with the amount of \$5,580 net added for Wilson's Landing and the funding for the Social Service Agencies in the amount of \$1,512, this would result in a tax rate increase of just under 2.6%.

Water Fund

Chairman Christie stated that they know that they need to start reserving funds for distribution line replacement. He stated that if they added 3% it would equal \$50,000 which would be a start toward reserving for future replacement and they can be opportunistic when the time comes. Selectman Geraghty asked Mr. Kulbacki to give an overview of the issues surrounding the distribution lines.

Mr. Kulbacki stated that 70% of the distribution system is unlined cast iron and some areas are already failing. There are about 7 main breaks per year and those will continue and there will be more incidences. Mr. Kulbacki stated that they were having the same problem in 2000 and 2001 on East Wheelock and Park Street but since they replaced the lines, they have not had problems. Mr. Kulbacki stated that this is going to be a long-term issue. He noted that other communities are dealing with this problem as well.

Selectman Buckey stated that airplane parts are being replaced after a certain number of hours and wondered if there was a metric to predict problem areas with this system. Mr. Kulbacki stated that cast iron pipe had a 55 year life and iron has about 70 years but some areas are more problematic than others. Selectman Buckey asked if there were any measurements that can be made to determine possible failures. Mr. Kulbacki stated that when there are failures they try to determine the cause although generally it is related to the age of the pipe.

Ms. Griffin stated that one of the reasons that Mr. Kulbacki and staff have spent time looking at this is because the Town has not had maintenance control of this system over the course of the life of the pipes. They are trying to determine how much to reserve for future line replacements and upgrades. Ms. Griffin stated that while they are trying to determine what the water rate should be, they are also trying to wean themselves from the dependence of the Fire Fund.

Chairman Christie stated that the rates have not been raised in several years and he is concerned that the number could be far greater next year. He noted that the need is evident and a 3% rate increase would make a difference. Selectman Buckey noted that the rates were raised last year and he is hesitant because there has been a lot of water related costs recently including meter replacements as well as the rate increase.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Increase the Water Rate by 3%. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

Selectman Geraghty noted that the reality is that they need to do a little bit each year instead of facing a huge increase or bonding for repairs. He felt that adding \$50,000 was favorable.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 0 OPPOSED, 1 ABSTAINED TO INCREASE THE WATER RATE BY 3%. (Selectman Buckey Abstained from the Vote.)

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Adopt the Parking Fund Budget with an Increase of \$30,000 in Parking Fund Revenue. Selectman Buckey SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE PARKING FUND BUDGET WITH AN INCREASE OF \$30,000 IN PARKING FUND REVENUE.

The Board adopted the budget as amended.

Kristi Fenner, Finance Committee, noted that in the library presentation it appeared that the salary numbers weren't quite right. Ms. Griffin stated that one of the issues is that there are a number of part-timers in the library and they are still trying to determine the impact of the class and compensation study. She noted that there is money available in the General Fund to cover any potential increases as there are times when a position is not filled and there are some salary savings.

Ms. Fenner asked about the land at 46 Lebanon Street noting that she thought that the land had been donated. Ms. Griffin stated that the Town received a donation for the purchase of 44 Lebanon Street at Town Meeting two years ago. The property next door at 46 Lebanon Street became available when the owner left the property and offered to sell the property to the Town for \$494,000. Ms. Griffin stated that the Town signed a letter of intent and they found a way to fund the purchase without bonding for it by accessing undesignated fund balance, money from the Land and Capital Improvements Fund, as well as funds that were returned to the Town from HealthTrust based on a court decision two years ago. She stated that if Town Meeting approves this transaction the Town will own the two properties adjacent to the Black Center and potentially a new gymnasium.

Chairman Christie closed the budget hearing. Chairman Christie stated that the staff and Ms. Griffin did a good job providing a budget that met the tax rate target.

3. RECOMMENDATION TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015 TO CONSIDER UNION CONTRACT ADOPTION.

Ms. Griffin stated that this is a placeholder and although there is not a contract agreement yet, they need to have the public hearing set within a specific time before Town Meeting.

Selectman Buckey MOVED to Set a Public Hearing for Monday, March 23, 2015 to Consider Union Contract Adoption. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015 TO CONSIDER UNION CONTRACT ADOPTION.

4. RECOMMENDATION TO SET PRE-TOWN MEETING PUBLIC HEARING FOR MONDAY, APRIL 6 AND MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015.

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Ms. Griffin stated that they may not need the public hearing on April 13th. The deadline for petitioned warrant articles is Tuesday, April 7th so she wanted to have an extra date available.

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to set the Pre-Town Meeting Public Hearing on Monday, April 6th and Monday, April 13, 2015. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET THE PRE-TOWN MEETING PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, APRIL 6 AND MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION.

Ms. Griffin reported that the Town received a donation in the amount of \$400 from the Byrne Foundation to the Department of Public Works for the great care that staff provided maintaining the roads in Etna.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Accept the Donation of \$400 from the Byrne Foundation for the Public Works Department. Selectman Buckey SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE DONATION OF \$400 FROM THE BYRNE FOUNDATION FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

Ms. Griffin reported that as a result of work done by Peter Kulbacki, Doug Hackett and Fire Chief McMillan, the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) rating was lowered from a rating of 6 to 3. This is the reflection of a lot of hard work that has been done over the past 8 years to respond to a number of issues that were outlined in the ISO review in the fall of 2007. ISO was impressed with the quality of the water system and hydrant performance, flow tests and maintenance records. This came as part of the acquisition of the water utility as crews spent a lot of time working on this. Ms. Griffin reported that when an ISO rating is applied, insurance agencies look at the ratings to determine premium rates which hopefully may help reduce homeowner insurance rates.

Ms. Griffin stated that to get their rating to a 1 or 2 they would have to double the size of their Fire Department. Chief McMillan is focusing on regionalizing toward this effort.

7. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS.

Jay Buckey

Selectman Buckey had no new business to report.

Nancy Carter

Selectman Carter reminded everyone that the Howel Classic is taking place on March 21st and 22nd. This is the major fundraiser for the Howe Library and there are still tickets available. The

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event on March 21st is \$50/per person and they will be serving hors d'oeuvres as well as wine so it is for adults. The Howel Open will take place on March 22nd from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. which is a family friendly event and tickets are \$5.00 per person at the door. They have 18 holes of golf with pizza and burritos. There will not be any library services during the hours of this event and computers will not be available.

Peter Christie

Chairman Christie had nothing new to report.

Athos Rassias

Vice Chairman Rassias had nothing new to report.

Bill Geraghty

Selectman Geraghty had nothing new to report.

8. OTHER BUSINESS.

Chairman Christie MOVED to Follow the Request for a Non-Public Session to Discuss Items Pursuant to RSA 91-a: 3, II (a), (d) & (e).

SELECTMAN BUCKEY VOTED YES; SELECTMAN CARTER VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; VICE CHAIRMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; AND SELECTMAN GERAGHTY VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 6:05 P.M.

Selectman Buckey MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 7:15 P.M.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

Selectman Buckey MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy A. Carter

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth S. Rathburn.

SUMMARY

1. **Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Increase the Water Rate by 3%. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 0 OPPOSED, 1 ABSTAINED TO INCREASE THE WATER RATE BY 3%. (Selectman Buckey Abstained from the Vote.)

2. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Adopt the Parking Fund Budget with an Increase of \$30,000 in Parking Fund Revenue. Selectman Buckey SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE PARKING FUND BUDGET WITH AN INCREASE OF \$30,000 IN PARKING FUND REVENUE.

3. **Selectman Buckey MOVED to Set a Public Hearing for Monday, March 23, 2015 to Consider Union Contract Adoption. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015 TO CONSIDER UNION CONTRACT ADOPTION.

4. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to set the Pre-Town Meeting Public Hearing on Monday, April 6th and Monday, April 13, 2015. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET THE PRE-TOWN MEETING PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, APRIL 6 AND MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015.

5. **Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Accept the Donation of \$400 from the Byrne Foundation for the Public Works Department. Selectman Buckey SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE DONATION OF \$400 FROM THE BYRNE FOUNDATION FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

6. **Chairman Christie MOVED to Follow the Request for a Non-Public Session to Discuss Items Pursuant to RSA 91-a: 3, II (a), (d) & (e).**

SELECTMAN BUCKEY VOTED YES; SELECTMAN CARTER VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; VICE CHAIRMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; AND SELECTMAN GERAGHTY VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 6:05 P.M.

- 7. Selectman Buckey MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 7:15 P.M.

- 8. Selectman Buckey MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:15 P.M.