

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

May 18, 2015

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; Athos Rassias, Vice Chairman; Bill Geraghty, Selectman; Joanna Whitcomb, Selectman; and Julia Griffin, Town Manager. Absent: Nancy Carter, Selectman.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Selectman Geraghty welcomed the newest member, Joanna Whitcomb, to the Board of Selectmen.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE 2015-16 BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Bill Geraghty MOVED that Peter Christie Serve as Chairman to the Board of Selectmen. Athos Rassias SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT PETER CHRISTIE AS CHAIRMAN TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Peter Christie MOVED that Athos Rassias Serve as Vice Chairman to the Board of Selectmen. Joanna Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT ATHOS RASSIAS AS VICE CHAIRMAN TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Peter Christie MOVED that Joanna Whitcomb Serve as Secretary to the Board of Selectmen. Athos Rassias SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT JOANNA WHITCOMB AS SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

The Board members assigned representatives for each of the committees below as follows:

Advisory Board of Assessors
Joanna Whitcomb
Peter Christie, Alternate

Bike/Pedestrian Committee
Athos Rassias
Joanna Whitcomb, Alternate

Chamber of Commerce
Joanna Whitcomb
Julia Griffin

Conservation Commission
Peter Christie

Hanover Finance Committee
Bill Geraghty
Peter Christie, Alternate

Friendship/Sister Cities Advisory Committee
Katherine Connolly (on behalf of the Select Board)

Hanover Improvement Society
Peter Christie

Howe Library Board of Trustees
Nancy Carter

Parking and Transportation Board
Bill Geraghty
Joanna Whitcomb, Alternate

Planning Board
Nancy Carter
Peter Christie, Alternate

Trescott Company
Athos Rassias
Peter Christie

Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
Katherine Connolly
Jonathan Edwards

Ms. Griffin will work to find one more person as a representative to the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission.

3. RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT ABATEMENTS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

Mike Ryan, Director of Assessing, was present to speak to the Board. He reported that the Advisory Board of Assessors met on April 23rd and heard six cases. Two cases remain to be scheduled. They are waiting for information on one, and there is a court case going on for the other that could provide guidance on potential abatement.

Chairman Christie asked Mike Ryan for clarification on the abatement request from Kendal and why the amount Kendal paid for the property would not be the market value. Mike Ryan replied that Kendal could have likely purchased the property as an abutter wanting to protect the property. Kendal's request is that the property be assessed at the same value as before it was purchased, which was \$645,800. The Board of Assessors recommends a revised assessment of \$1,819,000 based on the values of similar properties in the area of Kendal at approximately \$170,000 per acre.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Accept the Recommendations of the Advisory Board of Assessors. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

4. REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED FY 2015-16 GRAFTON COUNTY BUDGET.

Ms. Griffin noted that the proposed FY 2015-16 Grafton County budget would result in an increase of 3.47 percent in taxes.

The representatives and State senators from Grafton County vote to adopt the budget—we, as citizens, play no role in this approval, other than by our influence on the elected House members and Senators in their votes. The first public hearing on the Grafton County Budget was held today, and there will likely be a second hearing at the end of June. Ms. Griffin added that it is rare that the budget isn't approved because of the legislative sessions that are going on during the same time. These legislative sessions can become so time-consuming that the Grafton County budget becomes an afterthought.

Ms. Griffin stated that the bulk of the budget increase is related to the criminal justice side. This isn't surprising, given the increased expenses for the new jail facility and a doubling of jail staff in conjunction with the new facility.

Ms. Griffin noted that the Finance Committee was eager to know what the number was before they wrote their response to the Town budget, but the proposed budget was just received this past Friday. She has since forwarded the report to the members of the Finance Committee.

Selectman Geraghty asked Ms. Griffin if the proposed 3.47 percent tax increase in the Grafton County budget would result in an increase of around ten percent of the typical Hanover tax bill. Ms. Griffin replied that it was actually a little bit less than that. She also noted that the Grafton County tax rate has increased substantially over the last two years, largely related to the principal and interest on the bond for the new County jail, but because it is a fairly small percentage of the overall tax bill, it isn't as noticeable as a similar increase in the school or town tax rate would be. The school budget makes up about 70 percent, Town budget about 22 percent, and the Grafton County budget about 8 percent of the tax rate.

5. QUARTERLY UPDATE- 2015-16 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

Ms. Griffin stated that the Board should also start thinking about its goals and objectives for this year.

She provided the Quarterly Update to the Board Members in a recent Memo dated May 15, 2015, as follows:

SELECTMEN:

- Request the Town Manager bring to the Board a base budget proposal which is consistent with the Budget Guidelines and which requires a town budget tax rate increase not to exceed a target to be established by the Board in November, which target is to be informed by the CIP and in conjunction with the Board's Review of the next set of rolling five year projections for the Town's various funds. Along with this base proposal, provide the Board with a "deficiency list" of items that cannot be funded within the target and that represent a hardship if postponed as well as a "trade-offs" list which highlights those functions that could be eliminated in order to fund additional items. Through the budget review process develop a budget to present to Town Meeting which will maintain the quality of Town services while restraining property tax rate increases to cover Town expenses and that tie to a realistic five year projection.

Proposed Budget adopted by Town Meeting on May 12th.

- Complete the water, wastewater, and sidewalk sections of the comprehensive Capital Improvement Program so that the entire document can be reviewed and adopted by the Planning Board.

DPW Director is currently working on these elements of the CIP. Fire has also done a very comprehensive review of their CIP and has provided a more detailed schedule.

- Adopt formal Board and Commission Code of Ethical Conduct to be developed by Town staff.

Draft currently underway.

- Continue to support the efforts of Dartmouth College to reduce excess alcohol consumption and sexual assault on campus.

Police Chief has been working very closely with Dartmouth staff on both of these issues since his arrival in June. Staff has pledged its willingness to support Dartmouth in any way we can relative to implementation of the new Moving Dartmouth Forward initiative.

- In September, begin meeting with each of the Board and Commission to discuss their needs and challenges.

Currently setting up meetings with Boards and Commissions for summer and fall round of meetings.

- Review the Town volunteer cultivation and engagement process to assure adequate volunteer recruitment and succession and to optimize volunteer participation on Town committees. Form a focus group to solicit input from a cross section of citizens and consider engaging a volunteer recognition committee to assist with this activity. Also identify better options for engaging citizens around Town Meeting attendance.

This is a priority for spring implementation, once Town Meeting is over. I would appreciate the assistance of one or two Board members in this effort.

- Continue to pursue opportunities for regionalization of municipal services in concert with neighboring communities in the Upper Valley.

Town Manager, DPW Director and Fire Chief continue to work closely with our counterparts in Lebanon, Hartford and Norwich on several regionalization efforts including household hazardous waste collection, food composting and regional fire and EMS services. Hartford has offered to host a regional HHW drop-off facility and Hanover staff is working with UVLSRPC and Hartford staff to finalize the building for use. Hanover staff also attended a regional composting training session in early May. Fire Chief continues to lead effort on the Fire regionalization initiative.

- Establish a working group to develop a municipal bonding policy, to include input from the Hanover Finance Committee.

Group conferred but no further action has been taken to date.

- Review adopted Goals and Objectives with the Board on a quarterly basis.

Given our late establishment of goals, we missed the first quarter update but this coincides with a third quarter update. In July we will begin working on the FY 15-16 Goals and Objectives.

ADMINISTRATION:

- Work with Town Attorney to update Town Ordinances to reflect recent changes in state legislation.

This continues to be a priority. Town staff is now working on several ordinances with revision as the goal.

- Update Personnel Rules and Regulations to reflect recent changes in state and federal regulations.

H.R. Director has completed the revision; internal review by the Town Manager is currently underway.

- Develop a comprehensive inventory of Town and School District recreation facilities to include information about ownership, current uses of the property and potential future uses, to be considered as a first step in discussing the need for a community-wide Recreation Master Plan.

Currently underway in the Recreation Department.

- Develop a five year plan for the expenditure of \$50,000 per year on energy efficiency improvements which demonstrates what we can accomplish around sustainability.

Currently underway in the Public Works Department.

Ms. Griffin wanted to point out in particular the fourth item for the Selectmen related to the College. She noted that the Police and Fire Departments are working very closely with the College with its new Moving Forward initiative. She stated that this past “Green Key” weekend was a challenge, particularly related to noise. The Town will need to meet with Dartmouth staff about toning down the volume next year, and that they also may need to consider limiting the number of amplified sound events allowed over this particular three-day weekend. She feels that the noise problem was more of an issue because of the number of nights it continued. She received several complaints today from residents about the noise and that their houses were vibrating.

Ms. Griffin stated that she, along with the Police and Fire Chiefs, would meet with Dartmouth staff upon the return of both Chiefs from other matters that currently have them out-of-town. She encouraged the Board members to let residents know that they will debriefing about the concerts shortly should they get any complaints.

Ms. Griffin noted that this was Chief Dennis’ first “Green Key” weekend, so he got a pretty good idea of what the weekend is all about. She also stated that Chief McMillan shut down some parties on both Friday and Saturday nights at overcrowded fraternities. This is the first time the Hanover Fire Department has done this.

Selectman Whitcomb pointed out that it was a good weekend considering the few arrests and hospitalization transports.

Ms. Griffin also wanted to bring attention to another of the Goals and Objectives related to Town volunteer cultivation and engagement. She would like some support from one of the Board members to get this goal moving along.

Ms. Griffin reported that the regionalization goal is going well and that Hanover is working with the Town of Hartford on the logistics of opening their household hazardous waste facility for at least two days a month, hopefully one day a week. Hanover staff has been involved in evaluating the structural integrity of the building, which was built twenty years ago with State of VT grant funds. The funds were never used to implement a HHW drop-off facility at the Hartford transfer station.

Ms. Griffin pointed out to Chairman Christie and Selectman Geraghty that there hasn't been much progress with the municipal bonding policy with the Hanover Finance Committee.

Selectman Geraghty suggested that a short educational piece be put together related to how the Capital Improvement Plan works and distribute it prior to next Town Meeting. We could also put this information on the website.

Selectman Rassias added that we usually get very few questions about the Capital Improvement Plan but there seemed to be an unusual amount of questions this year. He suggested that we could also do a brief educational session before articles are presented at Town Meeting.

Ms. Griffin agreed that we could certainly provide more descriptive information for the public on our Capital Improvement Plan.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
APRIL 27TH, 2015**

Chairman Christie MOVED to Approve the Minutes of April 27th, 2015. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD 1 IN FAVOR, 3 ABSTAINED, 1 ABSENT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 27TH, 2015.

**7. APPOINTMENT:
-Advisory Board of Assessors**

Ms. Griffin stated that Town Meeting voted to reappoint Joe Roberto to the Board of Assessors, but it should have been Kate Connolly reappointed, as it is her term expiring at the end of May.

Vice Chairman Rassais MOVED to Reappoint Kate Connolly to the Advisory Board of Assessors. Chairman Christie SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO REAPPOINT KATE CONNOLLY TO THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

Ms. Griffin stated that the Green Power Challenge launched last Thursday with about 50 people in attendance. The Town has secured a competitive energy supplier through ENH Power with a very competitive energy rate that is good for twenty months. The rate could be lower than the typical Hanover residential property owner's annual blended rate between the low summer rate and the higher winter rate from Liberty Utilities. The power is completely Green-e.

Most of Hanover's electricity is provided by Liberty Utilities. Liberty's current electricity is "brown power" which consists primarily of natural gas, coal, and nuclear power, none of which are particularly healthy for the environment.

The Town wanted to pursue purchasing Green-e certified power, which is generated primarily by solar, small hydro, wind, and biomass. ENH Power priced us a completely Green-e certified mix of electricity, which they can buy in the open market from electricity producers that are considered "green" from the EPA's perspective. They came up with a "New England" green mix at a blended twenty-month fixed rate that will likely be cheaper than what the blended cost would be through Liberty Utilities.

In New Hampshire, customers can choose their supplier. Bills would still be due to Liberty Utilities, because they bill on behalf of the competitive energy supplier.

As of this morning, 41 households had signed up to join the Hanover Green Power Challenge. The program is open to any New Hampshire customer of Unittel, Liberty, EverSource, or New Hampshire Electric Coop. By signing up, you are supporting the production of green electricity. In addition, ENH makes a \$5.00 donation to CHaD for each new account. They have 55,000 customers in New Hampshire, and as of last week, only twenty-eight customers were buying green electricity. Hanover has already almost doubled this number with the specific rate supplied by ENH Power.

The deadline to sign up for the Green Power Challenge is next Thursday, May 28th. The reason for the short two-week window is that the electricity markets change drastically from day-to-day, so they can only hold the rate of ~11.29 cents per kW hour for about two weeks. The day after the Hanover Green Power Challenge closes, ENH Power will buy the electricity in a futures market. We may launch another sign-up round later this summer if we receive a lot of response. The key is to price the electricity in the spring or summer, because that is when rates are lower. The Sustainable Hanover Committee has been putting in a lot of work to bring this offer to Hanover residents. This is a great option particularly for households that are unable to install solar electricity for various reasons.

Selectman Geraghty said that he encourages the Sustainable Hanover Committee to keep repeating its efforts to educate residents about Green power. He feels that confusion and the fear of change are two driving negatives keeping residents from looking into green power. Even if people don't sign up this round, continued efforts to educate residents about green power could result in residents signing up in potential later rounds. Ms. Griffin encouraged the Selectmen to send anyone with questions or confusion to her or direct them to the Town website for more information. The Town will also be running four more transaction ads in *The Valley News*, notes are going out in the school e-newsletters, and information is being posted in the Recreation e-news and the Hanover ListServe.

Ms. Griffin reported that she met with four members of NH Fish and Game today to talk about the possibility of enabling an enhanced doe hunt this fall in Hanover. Also attending the meeting were members of the Hanover Conservancy, Conservation Commission, Town staff, and a couple of residents from Balch Hill neighborhood. No commitments were made, but NH Fish and Game will be putting together some ideas on enabling a targeted approach in Hanover that won't require going through a lengthy rulemaking process with the Legislature. Ultimately, the goal would be to enable more doe tags to be issued in Hanover this fall. We have doubled the number of deer taken in Hanover over the last four years including 152 last fall and 156 the fall before, but the population remains a challenge, especially in the downtown area. NH Fish and Game representatives want to be sure to be consistent and not give Hanover special treatment.

Ms. Griffin noted that Hanover's new police Captain starts June 1st, and our former Sargeant Brad Sargent has started his position as Lieutenant. We will be appointing Sargeants soon. We also have two new police officers.

Ms. Griffin reminded the Board that Muster Day is this coming Monday, May 25th at 4:00 PM at the Hanover Center Church. This will be Hank Tenney's last Muster Day with the Town.

Ms. Griffin also reported that the students from Nihonmatsu, Japan will be visiting Hanover again this year along with the Mayor. They will be arriving the evening of July 31st and leaving August 3rd. They will be bringing five additional adults with them this year, for a total of ten adults and ten students. Ms. Griffin would appreciate any of the Board members participation over that weekend in visiting and interacting with the students.

Ms. Griffin brought greetings from the Deputy Ambassador Philipp Ackermann of Germany, who is here visiting Hanover and Norwich. He is visiting as part of Hanover High School's German exchange program. Ackermann is based in D.C., but came to Hanover to spend a couple of days. He will be visiting with the German department at Dartmouth and will be making a presentation at Hanover High School at 10:45 AM Tuesday morning.

9. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS.

Selectman Bill Geraghty

Selectman Geraghty had nothing to report.

Vice Chairman Athos Rassias

Vice Chairman Rassias had nothing to report.

Chairman Peter Christie

Chairman Christie reported that the Hanover Conservation Commission met this past week. They would like to address Ordinance Number Twenty, Management of Public Lands, with Ms. Griffin. There are questions with this ordinance related to jurisdiction over certain properties around Town that are currently being jointly managed. Ms. Griffin replied that this ordinance is in need of a complete overhaul, and she would be happy to discuss this further with him.

Chairman Christie also reported that there was a lot of discussion about deer management at the meeting.

Selectman Joanna Whitcomb

Selectman Whitcomb reported that the Bike and Pedestrian Committee did an educational outreach with Dartmouth students on Saturday night during Green Key weekend. Bill Young and Dave Dostal were able to receive grant money for the Committee from the Hanover Improvement Society, as well as funds from Dartmouth Wellness Program and Campus Planning and Transportation group to promote visibility for bikers and walkers. The hope is that the Bike and Pedestrian Committee can continue to do these outreach events.

10. OTHER BUSINESS.

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

SELECTMAN GERAGHTY VOTED YES; VICE CHARIMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; SELECTMAN WHITCOMB VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 8:25 P.M.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session at 10:00 p.m. Selectman Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION.

11. ADJOURNMENT.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting at 10:00 p.m. Selectman Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanna Whitcomb, Secretary

Minutes prepared by Adriane Coutermarsh.

SUMMARY

- 1. Bill Geraghty MOVED that Peter Christie Serve as Chairman to the Board of Selectmen. Athos Rassias SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT PETER CHRISTIE AS CHAIRMAN TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

- 2. Peter Christie MOVED that Athos Rassias Serve as Vice Chairman to the Board of Selectmen. Joanna Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT ATHOS RASSIAS AS VICE CHAIRMAN TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

- 3. Peter Christie MOVED that Joanna Whitcomb Serve as Secretary to the Board of Selectmen. Athos Rassias SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT JOANNA WHITCOMB AS SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

- 4. Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Accept the Recommendations of the Advisory Board of Assessors. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

- 5. Chairman Christie MOVED to Approve the Minutes of April 27th, 2015. Vice Chairman Rassias SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD 1 IN FAVOR, 3 ABSTAINED, 1 ABSENT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 27TH, 2015.

- 6. Vice Chairman Rassais MOVED to Reappoint Kate Connolly to the Advisory Board of Assessors. Chairman Christie SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO REAPPOINT KATE CONNOLLY TO THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

- 7. Chairman Christie MOVED to Follow the Request for a Non-Public Session to Discuss Items Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) and (e).**

SELECTMAN GERAGHTY VOTED YES; VICE CHARIMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; SELECTMAN WHITCOMB VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 8:25 P.M.

- 8. Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session at 10:00 p.m. Selectman Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO EXIT THE NON-PUBLIC SESSION.

- 9. Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting at 10:00 p.m. Selectman Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.