

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

December 21, 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; Nancy Carter, Selectman; Bill Geraghty, Selectman; and Julia Griffin, Town Manager. Absent: Joanna Whitcomb, Selectman.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING C-PACE PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDED TOWN MEETING ACTION.

Ms. Griffin stated that the C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) program allows businesses to repay financed energy efficiency projects as part of their property taxes. The Jordan Institute has been designated to oversee the program, and is looking for about a dozen communities that are forward-thinking when it comes to energy efficiency. Participating communities would adopt RSA 53-F to set up C-PACE Special Assessment Clean Energy Districts so that commercial building owners can tie energy project financing to their buildings through municipal tax assessments. If adopted by Hanover, our role would be to submit the related funds collected through our semi-annual tax collection to The Jordan Institute. We would have no liability if the property owner were to default on their financing. The Jordan Institute would be responsible for collecting on defaulted payments. It can be viewed as a way for energy efficiency improvements to be tagged to the property and is an additional tool to incentivize commercial property owners to make energy efficiency improvements. The Town would receive funds to offset the costs involved.

Chairman Christie asked what the incentive would be for a commercial property owner to participate. Ms. Griffin replied that the average ownership of a commercial property ranges from seven to ten years, and because of that relatively short span, it does not make sense for an owner to take out a twenty to thirty year loan for substantial energy efficiency improvements. The C-PACE program would allow for transfer of the payments from one owner to the next through property taxes.

Selectman Geraghty added that one incentive for commercial property owners is that, though they would see an increase in their property tax bills, they would also see decreases in energy costs. Ms. Griffin added that The Jordan Institute is looking for projects in which the savings will more than offset the semi-annual payments. She stated that there is a long list of options for which C-PACE financing could be used for. The Jordan Institute works directly with property owners to facilitate the work and administer loans, and does its own evaluation of the property

owner's ability to pay on the loan. They will be looking for businesses in good standing, which could involve some feedback from the Town on its history of paying property taxes.

Chairman Christie asked whether the financing rates through The Jordan Institute were lower than those from local banks. Ms. Griffin believes the rates are comparable, though she noted that the local banks do not offer the type of assistance related to projects that The Jordan Institute does. The Jordan Institute's goal is to bid the projects in bulk, similar to the Solarize Hanover program.

Selectman Carter asked if there would be someone designated at Town Hall to answer or route inquiries about the program. Ms. Griffin stated that Betsy McClain would likely be the initial contact, but would be referring people directly to The Jordan Institute with technical questions. Sustainable Hanover is very excited about this project, and would likely be stepping up as an interface between the community and The Jordan Institute.

Chairman Christie asked Ms. Griffin if she thought there could be people at Town Meeting that would object to implementation of the program. Ms. Griffin stated that she could see no downside, as there is no risk for the Town, and we are facilitating investments in energy improvements and receiving a fee to cover any administrative costs involved. It won't impact other taxpayers.

Vice Chairman Rassias asked what the required action would be at Town Meeting to implement the program, and how long the program would be available. Town Meeting action required to implement the program would involve approval of the Warrant Article to establish C-PACE Special Assessment Clean Energy Districts so that commercial building owners can tie energy-project financing to their buildings through municipal tax assessments.

Chairman Christie stated that we are in a sense endorsing The Jordan Institute by putting this on a warrant article. Ms. Griffin agreed, and said that they have a great reputation.

Ms. Griffin is unsure how long the program will last, but presumes that it will be in place as long as it is effective.

Selectman Geraghty disclosed that he was on the board of The Jordan Institute over five years ago, and it is a solid program with a long history.

Ms. Griffin said that this program is another tool to enable energy efficiency projects. She said that she could have Laura Richardson, Executive Director of The Jordan Institute, visit with the Board to provide more information.

3. REVIEW OF UPPER VALLEY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS.

Ms. Griffin distributed a brochure from the Public Health Council to each of the Board members. The Council was formed in response to the State of NH's request that each of the fourteen public

health regions in the state develop a public health response plan. The group works closely with DHMC (Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center) and APD (Alice Peck Day) hospitals to perform the Upper Valley Community Needs assessment. The assessment includes a lot of information, which Ms. Griffin feels will be taken to heart by DHMC, APD, and other health agencies in order to work on the issues that have the most impact on area residents. She noted that the concerns vary greatly between lower and upper age groups. She encouraged the Board to review the assessment in preparation for the social services budget hearings coming up in February. She added that it has been very gratifying to see how the Public Health Council has started to pull together a collaborative work team on public health issues.

Chairman Christie noted that the areas of concern in which the Town could have an impact on are recreation, housing, and social services.

Ms. Griffin stated that the assessment is the best she has seen in terms of capturing what peoples' major concerns are when it comes to health issues in the region. She noted that the concerns vary with different income levels as well.

Chairman Christie stated that the information provided in the assessment is helpful in supporting the efforts within the Town of increasing recreational opportunities.

4. OVERVIEW OF POTENTIAL FASTROADS BUILD-OUT OPTION FOR HANOVER.

Ms. Griffin stated that, in early July, Governor Hassan signed off on HB 486, which enables communities to create assessment districts for purposes of installing telecommunications improvements. We can now install fiber from the RWB Community Center to the currently unserved areas if at least sixty percent of the area residents agree to be assessed the cost of doing so.

Peter Kulbacki and Mike Chase of the Public Works Department are coming up with cost estimates of having a Town crew dig ditches to bury conduit versus installing fiber on telephone poles, which is expensive. Comcast and Fairpoint have their fiber underground, and it is about a third of the cost of installing overhead. If we were to install underground conduit, we would be able to allow other companies to install fibers in our conduit at a cost. This would also give us more control over the infrastructure.

The assessment to residents could be one-time, or we could extend the assessment over a period of time, but this will largely depend on the cost.

Chairman Christie asked for clarification on whether a property owner would have to pay the supplemental assessment if they were in the affected district but were not part of the sixty percent that agreed to it. Ms. Griffin stated that only those that agreed to it would pay for and have access to it. If a property owner was against it but later decided they wanted access, they would have to pay.

Selectman Carter asked Ms. Griffin to clarify that the supplemental assessment would be transferred from one property owner to the next. If the property were to sell, the assessment would continue for the new owner.

Ms. Griffin stated that the Board can establish such an assessment district by holding a public hearing. It would not require a vote at Town Meeting.

5. REVIEW OF TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST.

Mr. Knights, the property owner of 15 Meadow Lane, has requested that the Board waive accrued interest of \$45.82 on his 2015 first half property tax bill.

In a memo from Betsy McClain, she states that our policy is to waive up to \$25 in accrued interest on property tax bills. This demarcation was created in order to define what amounts can be forgiven (where the cost of tracking the interest down outweighs the benefits) and what amounts should be pursued. Because the accrued interest on Mr. Knight's property taxes is over \$25, she recommends that the Board deny his request.

Selectman Geraghty asked how often there are accounts that accrue such interest on tax bills. Ms. Griffin believes that there may be three or four each tax period.

Chairman Christie reminded the audience about the online payment option.

Selectman Carter noted that there is no fee for paying through a bank draft, but there is a fee to pay with a credit card.

Chairman Christie MOVED to Deny the Tax Abatement Request. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO DENY THE TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST.

6. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION: a. Donation to Police/Fire Department

Ms. Griffin stated that the Paydarfar family makes a donation to the Police and Fire Department each year. They also provide a homemade meal for the employees. Acceptance of the \$100 donation requires approval by the Board.

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Accept the \$100.00 Donation from a Resident in Appreciation of the Police and Fire Department. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT THE \$100.00 DONATION FROM A RESIDENT IN APPRECIATION OF THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT.

7. APPOINTMENTS: PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Eric Baughman has expressed an interest in serving on the Parks and Recreation Board. The term will expire in September 2018.

Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Appoint Eric Baughman to the Parks & Recreation Board. Chairman Christie SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO APPOINT ERIC BAUGHMAN TO THE PARKS & RECREATION BOARD.

8. BANNER REQUESTS:

- a. Dartmouth College—Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration**
- b. Norris Cotton Cancer Center—The Prouty**
- c. Howe Library—Expand Your World**

Ms. Griffin stated that the Town can accommodate these requests.

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Approve the Banner Requests of Dartmouth College—Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration; Norris Cotton Cancer Center—The Prouty; and Howe Library—Expand Your World. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO APPROVE THE BANNER REQUESTS OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION; NORRIS COTTON CANCER CENTER—THE PROUTY; AND HOWE LIBRARY—EXPAND YOUR WORLD.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Griffin stated that budget meetings are now complete, and Betsy McClain is working to plug in all of the numbers. Work on making cuts should occur in early January.

Ms. Griffin stated that there was much success in collecting food for the Haven during our Staff Holiday party. The success stemmed from a challenge she gave to each department to bring in the most number of items per employee. Over 1,700 pounds of food was collected, which our Buildings division delivered after the party.

We have been saving funds on road maintenance due to the lack of winter weather this year, but this has allowed the highway crews to do other maintenance that normally waits.

10. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS.

Selectman Bill Geraghty

Selectman Geraghty had nothing to report.

Vice Chairman Athos Rassias

Vice Chairman Rassias had nothing to report.

Selectman Nancy Carter

Selectman Carter stated that the next meeting of the Planning Board is January 5th. Several cases will be reviewed. She urged the audience to visit the Planning Board's page to view the agenda for the meeting.

Chairman Peter Christie

Chairman Christie stated that Ms. Griffin will soon be busy making a lasagna lunch for all Town employees as a reward for the significant amount of food collected for the Haven during the Holiday Staff party.

11. 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 CHAIRMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; SELECTMAN CARTER VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 8:15 P.M.

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session at 9:15 p.m. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.

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

12. ADJOURNMENT.

Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting at 9:15 p.m. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Athos Rassias, Secretary

Minutes prepared by Adriane Coutermarsh.

SUMMARY

1. **Chairman Christie MOVED to Deny the Tax Abatement Request. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO DENY THE TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST.

2. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Accept the \$100.00 Donation from a Resident in Appreciation of the Police and Fire Department. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO ACCEPT THE \$100.00 DONATION FROM A RESIDENT IN APPRECIATION OF THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT.

3. **Selectman Geraghty MOVED to Appoint Eric Baughman to the Parks & Recreation Board. Chairman Christie SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO APPOINT ERIC BAUGHMAN TO THE PARKS & RECREATION BOARD.

4. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Approve the Banner Requests of Dartmouth College—Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration; Norris Cotton Cancer Center—The Prouty; and Howe Library—Expand Your World. Selectman Carter SECONDED the Motion.**

THE BOARD VOTED 4 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSENT TO APPROVE THE BANNER REQUESTS OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION; NORRIS COTTON CANCER CENTER—THE PROUTY; AND HOWE LIBRARY—EXPAND YOUR WORLD.

5. **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 CHAIRMAN RASSIAS VOTED YES; CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE VOTED YES; SELECTMAN CARTER VOTED YES. THE BOARD WENT INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION AT 8:15 P.M.

6. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Exit the Non-Public Session at 9:15 p.m. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.**

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

7. **Vice Chairman Rassias MOVED to Adjourn the Meeting at 9:15 p.m. Selectman Geraghty SECONDED the Motion.**

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