

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

April 21, 2003

7:30 PM – MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING – HANOVER, NH

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:32 pm by the Vice-Chairman, Katherine Connolly. Present were: Katherine Connolly, Vice-Chairman; William "Bill" Baschnagel; Peter Christie; and Julia Griffin, Town Manager.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

2. PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO ELDERLY, DISABLED AND BLIND PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Selectman Connolly opened the public hearing.

Town Manager Griffin said this would be the second public hearing on the proposed exemptions. She said State statute enabled towns to enact these exemptions. Hanover's Town Meeting had done so in the past and had voted a number of times to adjust the values based on modifications of CPI over time. The current proposal was based on the Town Assessor's recommendations in anticipation of Hanover's revaluation update.

Selectman Connolly spoke about the Explanatory Information that was provided as part of the Town Report on this article. She noted its statement that this exemption had been on the books for a long time and had been elevated in 1989 and 1997. Ms. Connolly then read Article Fifteen: *"To see if the Town will vote to modify the elderly exemption from property tax in the Town of Hanover, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$65,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$95,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$130,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$27,190 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$37,850; and own net assets not in excess of \$65,000 excluding the value of the person's residence. This article represents a recommended modification of the current exemption for the elderly and would be effective April 1, 2003 for the 2003 tax year. A ballot vote is required."*

Ms. Connolly reported that the Selectmen voted unanimously (three to zero) in favor of this article at the first public hearing. Selectman Christie mentioned the public response the Board received to these proposals at that hearing, which were largely in support of

increasing the exemption amounts. He said he would expect the Town to be prepared to address that issue in the coming year.

Selectman Connolly read Article Sixteen: *“Shall we modify the exemption for the disabled? The exemption, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers shall be \$130,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years and own and occupy the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by a spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$19,600 or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$24,500; and own net assets not in excess of \$65,000 excluding the value of the person’s residence. This article represents a recommended modification of the current exemption for the disabled and would be effective April 1, 2003 for the 2003 tax year. A ballot vote is required.”*

Selectman Baschnagel asked if the question about the difference between a blind exemption and a disabled exemption, asked at the last Board meeting, was resolved. Town Manager Griffin said if an individual qualified with the State for the disabled exemption they could not also qualify for the blind exemption. Selectman Connolly added that the disabled status was determined by one’s social security status.

Selectman Connolly read Article Seventeen: *“Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 72:37 for the exemption for the blind from the assessed value of residential real estate for property tax purposes? This statute provides that every inhabitant who is legally blind shall be exempt each year, for property tax purposes, from the assessed value on a residence to the value of \$25,000. This article represents a recommended modification of the current exemption for the blind and would be effective April 1, 2003 for the 2003 tax year. A ballot vote is required.”*

Ms. Griffin explained that Articles Fifteen, Sixteen and Seventeen would all require ballot votes. She hoped to list them on one ballot. She said staff was also working with the Town Attorney to determine whether the WWTP bond vote could be included on the same ballot as the exemptions. Selectman Connolly noted that the exemptions would require a simple majority to pass and the bond vote would require a two-thirds vote to pass. Selectman Baschnagel suggested that might be reason enough to keep them separate.

Selectman Connolly stated for the record that no one from the public was in attendance at the meeting to further discuss the proposed exemptions. She closed the public hearing.

3. RECOMMENDATION TO AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL OF GRANT TO FUND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER PROGRAM

Town Manager Griffin advised of the large amounts of federal funding that was being made available relative to Homeland Security. She said Hanover had applied for three small sets of grant funding to help with various aspects of updating the Town’s

emergency plan. Ms. Griffin said the Town was also working to develop a regional small pox inoculation plan.

Ms. Griffin explained that very few communities in New Hampshire employed full-time public health officers. She said Bill Boyle, Hanover's part-time public health officer, received \$4,000 annually for his efforts in addressing failed septic system complaints, tenant property garbage issues, recalcitrant restaurants, etc. She said Mr. Boyle and Susie Linsey, from Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical School, were working to apply for federal grant funding to put one regional health officer in place and to develop a functional public health network to handle emergencies or assist with public health planning. She said Mr. Boyle and Ms. Linsey had asked if Hanover would chair a meeting to discuss this possibility with surrounding towns. If agreed upon, and funding provided, Hanover would host the regional public health officer and provide a very small amount of clerical support to that person for up to two years. Ms. Griffin said she hoped to locate the health officer in the Hanover Police Department. In exchange the Town would receive a little extra help drafting the public health chapters in the emergency plan. Ms. Griffin said this program would be developed with the understanding that it would be fully funded with federal dollars administered by the State. The individual towns would not be making any commitment to maintain funding for this program should the state/federal funding no longer exist. There was also no requirement for local match funding. Ms. Griffin said this would be similar to the regional prosecutorial organization Hanover initiated three or four years ago. She hoped the State would see that this new program will be a real benefit and will continue to provide additional funding.

Selectman Connolly said regional coordination was a good idea regardless of whether it would be applied to emergency situations or not.

Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to authorize Town Manager Griffin to apply for grant funding for a Regional Public Health Officer Program. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE TOWN MANAGER GRIFFIN TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING FOR A REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER PROGRAM.

4. RECOMMENDATION THAT THE HANOVER HOUSING AUTHORITY SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON MAY 5, 2003 TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE PROPOSED HOUSING FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2003-2004

Town Manager Griffin advised that the Housing Fund Budget for FY 2003-2004 had not yet been addressed due to scheduling issues. She recommended that the Selectboard review and adopt the proposed budget, acting as the Hanover Housing Authority, on May 5, 2003.

Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to hold the Housing Fund Budget review on May 5, 2003. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO HOLD THE HOUSING FUND BUDGET REVIEW ON MAY 5, 2003.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Town Manager Griffin reported that the Town Report would soon be printed and mailed to Hanover's residents.

Ms. Griffin asked to review and complete the Selectmen's Warrant Article assignments. They were assigned as follows:

	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNED TO:</u>
Article Thirteen:	WWTP bond	Christie
Article Fourteen:	WWTP bond	Christie
Article Fifteen:	Elderly Exemption	Connolly
Article Sixteen:	Disabled Exemption	Connolly
Article Seventeen:	Blind Exemption	Connolly
Article Eighteen:	Resolutions	
Article Nineteen:	Convey portion of Gile Tract	Walsh
Article Twenty:	Accept land from Howe Library	Walsh
Article Twenty-One:	Rental Housing Inspector	Connolly
Article Twenty-Two:	Transfer into Land & Capital Improvements Fund	Baschnagel
Article Twenty-Three:	Transfer into Conservation Commission Fund	Baschnagel
Article Twenty-Four:	Piper's Lane Conservation Easement	Baschnagel
Article Twenty-Five:	Grasse Road ball field	Pierson
Article Twenty-Six:	Dispatch Capital Reserve Fund	Christie
Article Twenty-Seven:	Parking Capital Reserve (\$50,000)	Baschnagel
Article Twenty-Eight:	Parking Capital Reserve (\$150,000)	Baschnagel
Article Twenty-Nine:	North College Street Reconstruction	Pierson
Article Thirty:	Municipal Transportation Improvement Fund	Pierson
Article Thirty-One:	Bike Improvement project	Walsh
Article Thirty-Two:	Transfer into Capital Reserves	Connolly
Article Thirty-Three:	Authorize funding from Capital Reserves	Connolly
Article Thirty-Four:	IAFF agreement	Pierson
Article Thirty-Five:	Annual Budget	Walsh
Article Thirty-Six:	West Central Funding request	Baschnagel
Article Thirty-Seven:	LCHIP	Connolly
Article Thirty-Eight:	Petitioned article on health care	Pierson
Article Thirty-Nine:	Petitioned article on war	Walsh

Poll Coverage

Ms. Griffin noted that Selectmen Connolly and Baschnagel were running for re-election and therefore could not provide poll coverage on Town Meeting day. Selectman Christie advised that he too had a conflict as he was scheduled to attend an all-day Chamber of Commerce Retreat in Lyme. He offered to cover the polls from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Ms. Griffin said she would coordinate the remaining coverage with Selectmen Walsh and Pierson via email.

Waterbars on Wolfeboro Road

Ms. Griffin reported on a letter she received from Helen Lacoss asking that the Selectmen delay their discussion of the waterbar project on Wolfeboro Road. In the letter Ms. Lacoss stated that water had not yet run down the road. Ms. Griffin suggested discussing this issue at the Selectmen's May 19, 2003 meeting and asked the Selectmen to visit the area prior to that date.

Dresden School Board Meeting Schedule

Ms. Griffin advised of a clip-out schedule that was published in the Valley News that outlined all of the upcoming school meetings. She encouraged the Selectmen to become familiar with the schedule to address public inquiries they might receive. She said the School Board would present their building plans to the Selectmen on May 5, 2003.

6. **SELECTMEN'S REPORTS**

Peter Christie

Mr. Christie did not have anything to report.

Bill Baschnagel

Mr. Baschnagel reported that New Hampshire towns passed bond votes for funding of \$35 million to purchase conservation easements in the last year. This was a significant increase from years prior.

Mr. Baschnagel reported on the Planning Board's action to approve Site Plan Waivers to Dartmouth College for maintenance projects on the river cluster dorms. Ms. Connolly added that another Waiver was granted for a bike rack installation proposal.

Mr. Baschnagel reported on the Affordable Housing Commission's actions to make a pitch to the Lions Club on their Gile Tract project that was well received. He said concerns were raised about the possibility of Dartmouth College students taking over these affordable units. Mr. Baschnagel said federal requirements associated with employment and student status would restrict this from happening.

Katherine Connolly

Ms. Connolly reported on the Planning Board's review of the Master Plan Concept Map. She said the Planning Board would continue their review of the Master Plan Chapters and prepare for public presentations and finally adoption in July or August. Following adoption, the Planning Board would work to overhaul the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Christie spoke in support of the draft chapters that he had reviewed.

Ms. Connolly reported on the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission's review of their Regional Transportation Plan that was also considered as the Draft Transportation Master Plan.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

Community/Senior Center

Town Manager Griffin announced that the Community/Senior Center was nearly completed. Site work had begun. A list of unfunded items was being sorted through. A proposal to redesign the front porch and locate a flagpole at the site would be presented to the Planning Board in the near future. She said the Recreation Board would present a series of recommendations to the Selectboard with respect to operating rules, fees and weekend staffing in near future. Ms. Griffin asked the Selectmen to consider dates to hold a community supper at Center as an open house event. Selectman Connolly complimented everyone involved in the building's construction. Ms. Griffin asked to give credit to the interior designers as well.

Selectman Baschnagel asked if any applications had been received with respect to relocating the existing Senior Center. Ms. Griffin advised that the Town would be accepting applications for that work through May 5, 2003. She said one individual had expressed interest in salvaging it. Ms. Griffin said the issue of what is to become of the existing Community Center on School Street would also have to be addressed in the near future. Mr. Baschnagel said he had made the Affordable Housing Commission aware of that situation. Selectman Connolly said she had always encouraged Dartmouth College to build on their lot across the street from that site. She suggested perhaps this would provide an opportunity to have two forces come together. Ms. Griffin said similarly the Ufford house would be moved from its current site to one on Currier Place in the near future.

Correspondence from John Montgomery

Selectman Baschnagel asked of the status of John Montgomery's most recent correspondence to the Town. Ms. Griffin said Jonathan Edwards was working to develop a memorandum for the Planning Board with respect to recent changes in State Law that enables the Planning Board to provide recommendations to the Selectboard on how to handle these issues. She said ultimately the Selectboard would be in the position to hear the cases involving Sands-O-Time Road.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:21 PM.

SUMMARY

- 1. Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to authorize Town Manager Griffin to apply for grant funding for a Regional Public Health Officer Program. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE TOWN MANAGER GRIFFIN TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING FOR A REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER PROGRAM.**
- 2. Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to hold the Housing Fund Budget review on May 5, 2003. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO HOLD THE HOUSING FUND BUDGET REVIEW ON MAY 5, 2003.**
- 3. Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Christie SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:21 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Christie", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Christie, Secretary

These minutes were transcribed by Beth Rivard.