

FINAL

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

**JUNE 16, 2003**

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

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:33 pm by the Chairman, Brian Walsh. Present were: Brian Walsh, Chairman; Katherine Connolly, Vice-Chairman; William "Bill" Baschnagel; Peter Christie; Judson "Jay" Pierson; Julia Griffin, Town Manager; and members of the public.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**2. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER ACCEPTING A DISCRETIONARY PRESERVATION EASEMENT LOCATED AT 1 MONTVIEW DRIVE THROUGH THE HISTORIC BARN TAX INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

Town Manager Griffin explained that the Historic Barn Tax Incentive Program was created by State Statute to provide incentive for property owners to do what they could to save barns of historic significance. She said to enter into the program a property owner would apply to the Board of Selectmen for an abatement of taxes to reduce the property tax placed on a qualifying barn. In exchange, the property owner would grant a preservation easement to the Town. This easement would be eligible for renewal every ten years.

Ms. Griffin advised that Nancy Hunt, of 1 Montview Drive, was the first and only property owner in Hanover who had applied for this program. She reminded the Selectmen of their discussion of this issue at their last meeting and of their request that staff develop a set of criteria that would be used to determine qualification for this program. Ms. Griffin suggested that the Selectmen accept testimony from the applicant on this request and revisit the application in thirty days. This would allow staff time to work with the Town Attorney and NHMA to develop a set of fairly consistent criteria and draft an easement document that could be used when considering all applications for this program.

Ms. Griffin noted that Ms. Hunt, the applicant, and Mike Ryan, the Town Assessor, were both present. Ms. Hunt opted not to address the Selectboard on the matter and deferred to her application. Ms. Griffin read from the application of the barn in question,

*"The farm stead is one of the oldest in Hanover. It ceased operation as a dairy farm circa 1959. The barn is a classic pre-bulk tank stanchion dairy barn. The names of the cows are penciled above the stanchions. It was built circa 1930 after lightning destroyed the previous structure. It has a concrete floor and cement block foundation.*

*Family members told me that the upper story was constructed, at least in part, from an old barn moved from the west side of Lyme Road. The timbers are large and some appear hand hewn.*

*The barn is used as a landmark for visors to the neighborhood. It is visible from Route 10 and also from I-91 and Route 5, Norwich. Until 2002 it housed horses, ducks, geese, hens, etc. and is still useful for these purposes, or for cows. One of the horses was featured on the front page of the Valley News standing in the pasture beside Route 10.*

*Since moving here in 1989, we have worked to preserve and maintain the building:*

*1990 – replace leaky roof; restore upper story entrance*

*1991 – install water line*

*1992 – grade to direct water away from south foundation*

*1993 – replace rotted doors*

*1995 – update lightning protection*

*1996 – rewire ground floor*

*1997 – grade to direct water away from north foundation*

*1998 – paint and repair/replace siding and windows; improve bat entries*

*Mosquito control, provided by the colony of bats that summers in the rafters, is probably a public benefit. According to member of his family, Hulk Hogan spent summers with his grandparents on the farm and helped out with chores.*

Ms. Griffin added that pictures of the barn were also submitted as part of the application. Selectman Walsh said the maintenance work outlined was exactly what these types of structures needed to remain intact. He asked if Mr. Ryan wanted to speak to the application or the program in general. Mr. Ryan said, no; he believed the program matter was covered extensively at the last Selectboard meeting.

Selectman Baschnagel spoke in support of the application stating that this was the kind of opportunity the program was designed for. Selectman Walsh agreed and added that he believed that the program was something the Town should do provided that the process can be made very simple. Ms. Griffin said she hoped that NHMA would work with the Town to create a draft easement. Selectman Pierson asked about the age criteria set in the State regulations. Ms. Griffin said the State Statute limited program eligibility to barns that are 75 years of age or older.

Ms. Griffin suggested that the Selectmen readdress this application and the Town's participation in this program at their August 4, 2003 meeting. She said it would be staff's preference that the Selectboard set a standard amount of reduction in assessed value that would be considered for each application submitted for this program. Selectman Walsh asked that staff also draft a policy statement that the Selectmen would adopt at the August meeting.

**Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to close the public hearing and table action to August 4, 2003. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED**

**UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND TABLE ACTION TO AUGUST 4, 2003.**

**3. RECOMMENDATION TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED RATES AND FEES FOR FY 2003-2004**

**Selectman Pierson MOVED to set a public hearing on July 7, 2003 to consider proposed Rates and Fees for FY 2003-2004. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED RATES AND FEES FOR FY 2003-2004.**

**4. RECOMMENDATION TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE PARKING ORDINANCE**

**Selectman Pierson MOVED to set a public hearing on July 7, 2003 to consider proposed modifications to the Parking Ordinance. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED.**

Town Manager Griffin advised that these would be housekeeping changes that would be outlined at the next Selectboard meeting.

**THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE PARKING ORDINANCE.**

**5. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS**

Selectman Walsh asked Betsy McClain, Director of Administrative Services, and Fire Chief Roger Bradley to walk the Board through the informational package they had submitted on this issue.

Ms. McClain outlined the Town's current fire districts as:

Fire District #1	Beyond 3 miles of the Village (i.e., Hanover) Fire Station; and beyond 2 miles of the Etna Fire Station
Fire District #2	Within 3 miles of the Village Fire Station; or within 2 miles of the Etna Fire Station
Fire District #3	Within 600 feet of a fire hydrant with reduced pressure
Fire District #4	Within 600 feet of a fire hydrant with normal pressure

She explained that the underlying premise of the current districts stemmed from a stipulation in the Town's Charter that states, "*The Selectmen shall divide the entire Town into two or more fire protection areas in proportion to the fire protection afforded to property owners within each area.*" The Charter also states that, "*The estimated net*

*expense for fire protection shall be allocated by the Selectmen in their budget among the various fire protection areas and raised by special taxes assessed against all real and personal property in each area on such basis as the Selectmen shall determine reasonably and equitably reflects the benefits for the varying levels of service received."*

Ms. McClain said the current practice in determining the amount to be raised by taxation within Hanover's fire districts has been to keep the pro-rata share of tax revues generated by each fire district consistent. To change this, it was staff's opinion that the Selectmen could:

- Leave the fire districts as they are and instruct staff on a fair allocation of the costs to operate a fire department,
- Redistrict the fire protection areas in a way that weaves itself more naturally into segregating the costs of the overall fire department operations, or
- Do away with the fire districts altogether and fold the costs of operating the Fire Fund into the General Fund making it an overall town expense funded by the General Fund tax rate.

Selectman Walsh asked if Town Meeting approval was needed to do away with the current fire districts. Ms. Griffin said yes, a Charter change would have to be approved by Town Meeting. Mr. Walsh asked what action would be needed to reduce the fire districts to two. Ms. Griffin said staff would have to notify all of the property owners in town. If an objection was raised the Selectmen would have to hold a public hearing. She said though not required by law, she would prefer that the Selectboard hold a public hearing to clearly explain any proposed changes to the public.

Chief Bradley explained that years ago fire insurance rates were calculated by the distance of a home to a fire station; the greater the distance between a home and fire station the higher the homeowner fire insurance rates were. Today insurance companies considered other factors such as construction type, age of construction, and condition of the building as well as physical location (using a five-mile radius) in determining premiums. In terms of hydrant locations, most insurance companies used 1,000 feet from a hydrant as a break out point. Ms. McClain added that the current districts were created based on the location of the Town's fire station in 1963, which at that time was located at the site of the current Municipal Building. New calculations should be done from the station's current Lyme Road location. Chief Bradley stated that the proximity to the Etna, Enfield and Lebanon Fire Stations should also be considered, as should the factor of the automatic aid Hanover receives from Lebanon in certain parts of town.

Selectman Walsh asked of the other Selectmen's opinions on the three choices provided by staff. The all agreed that something should be done. Selectman Baschnagel expressed concern for the financial ramifications many people in Hanover would experience due to a change in the fire districts. He favored considering many of the factors the insurance companies were utilizing in determining their rates such as the five-mile radius and the 1,000 feet distance to hydrants. He said the Board should consider phasing in any rate changes that might result. Mr. Baschnagel further suggested that Dartmouth's role in

redistricting should also be investigated. Chief Bradley explained that most of Dartmouth's buildings, constructed in the last ten years, were sprinklered. The College's existing residential buildings would be retrofitted with sprinklers within five years. He said on a national level 98% of all fires started were kept within the room of origin if it was sprinklered. He added that there had never been a documented multiple fatality fire in a sprinklered building. Selectman Walsh countered that the core of the fire department's expenses were related to staffing not hydrant costs.

Ms. McClain said her observation was that the rural districts have not been paying their share of being a beneficiary of a quick response. In changing the current system she suggested that most people could comprehend a rate system based on a proximity to hydrants and stations. Selectman Connolly added that the Master Plan recommends a 75/25 balance between the urban and rural parts of town. When doing the math that creates a hydrant district from which the expenses could be allocated. She agreed with Ms. McClain that the notion of hydrant services versus non-hydrant service was perhaps the best way to do this. Ms. McClain further suggested that Hanover's water source should also be considered.

Ms. Griffin spoke in favor of consolidating the current districts into one and folding the Fire Fund into the General Fund. She said the notion of having fire districts in a budget where the fire department is run by the town was very unusual in New Hampshire. She said Hanover provided police and ambulance services from the same location that they provided fire services and argued that the costs of all of these services should be assessed in the same manner. Selectman Christie said if that were to be done, the case would have to be made that the level of service was the same for everyone. Selectman Baschnagel said an argument could be made that response times should be a factor in the cost allocation.

Selectman Christie asked about the tax impact from reducing the fire districts from four to two. Ms. McClain offered to provide figures at a later date.

Selectman Walsh asked if the fire department's ability to fight fires in Fire District #3 was impaired by water pressure. Chief Bradley said yes, it was time consuming to get enough water to locations within that district. He suggested that the upgrades the Water Company was conducting could change this scenario.

The Selectmen reached consensus to review this matter further upon receipt of additional information including:

- New mapping showing driving times, the 1,000 ft. hydrant areas, and the five-mile radius from Hanover's Lyme Road station, the Etna station and any station that provides mutual aid to Hanover
- Rational of the cost differences between hydrant costs and service costs
- Figures on the number of towns in New Hampshire that run their own fire department utilizing fire districts

- A cost analysis between cost of existing districts versus total cost
- Information on what drives the level of service
- Figures on the tax impact if all existing districts dissolved into one
- Information on the possibility of building in an incentive for residential sprinkler systems
- Reviewing cost impacts of protecting College buildings

Selectman Walsh noted that over the last ten years the Ambulance Fund had gone from totaling 10% of the expenses to 35% of the Fire Department expenses. Ms. Griffin said the argument could be made that additional staffing costs should be allocated to the Ambulance Fund from the Fire Department then currently exists. Selectman Walsh asked Ms. Griffin to draft a budget of the Fire and Ambulance Funds combined.

**6. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2003-2004.**

Town Manager Griffin read an email from Selectman Christie suggesting that the Board consider categorizing their Goals and Objectives as either continuing tasks that they will conduct year-to-year or short-term tasks they hope to achieve in 2004. Selectman Walsh spoke in support of having two lists. Selectman Baschnagel expressed concern that the items on the continuing list would go un-reviewed, un-critiqued and untracked.

The Selectmen then reviewed the second draft of Goals and Objectives for FY 2003-2004 and incorporating the two-list process as follows:

**Selectmen:**

1. Request the Town Manager to bring to the Board a base budget proposal which would require a town budget tax rate increase **not to exceed** the inflation rate. Along with this base proposal, request detailed schedules of areas where increases should be considered (the "wish list") and where decreases are a possibility. 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. **This was placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**
2. Negotiate appropriate terms for transfer of Gile Tract property earmarked for development of affordable housing to Twin Pines Housing Trust, in cooperation with the Affordable Housing Commission. **This was placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**

**Selectman Walsh MOVED to nominate Peter Christie as the Selectmen's Representative to the Affordable Housing Commission. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT**



**PETER CHRISTIE AS THE SELECTMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION.**

**Selectman Walsh MOVED to appoint Jay Pierson as the Selectmen's Representative to the Chamber of Commerce. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT JAY PIERSON AS THE SELECTMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.**

3. Provide support to the Hanover Water Works Company in its efforts to implement water filtration. ~~and continue to explore a proposal for the municipalization of the Hanover Water Works Company.~~ **This was placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**
4. *Continue to explore a proposal for the municipalization of the Hanover Water Works Company.* **This was placed on a list of continuing tasks.**
5. Continue to work to develop long-term capital improvement program for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and to utilize estimated costs to inform future planning regarding the provision of services to both Hanover and Lebanon wastewater customers. **This was placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**

Language will be added to this relative to Hanover continuing its long-term service to Lebanon.

6. Investigate the merits and feasibility of establishing a comprehensive land use agreement between the Town of Hanover and Dartmouth College. ~~The goal of such an agreement would be to provide the basis for a joint and coordinated land use planning process that will allow Dartmouth to pursue its long term goals while mitigating impacts on the Hanover community and community services.~~ **This was placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**
7. Consider ways to enliven Town Meeting by exploring options including streamlining warrant and shifting some portions of the warrant to the Official Ballot.

Selectman Walsh will provide a re-draft of this Goal/Object to include mention of investigating the use of Australian ballot, the scheduling of Town Meetings, and defining the objective of Town Meeting in general. **The re-draft will be placed on a list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**

8. Develop an improved program to express appreciation and recognize *and thank* Town volunteers and contributors. **This was placed on the list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**

9. ~~Explore development of a citizen survey.~~
10. Support initiatives for the State of New Hampshire to create an equitable and sufficient financing mechanism to meet the State's constitutional responsibility to fund education. **This was placed on the continuing tasks list.**
11. Schedule annual meetings with the Norwich Selectboard. **This was placed on the continuing tasks list.**

The context and goals of said meetings will also be explored.

12. Support the Howe Corporation's initiatives to raise funds and expand and improve the Howe Library facilities. **This was placed on the list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**

**Administration:**

1. Work with the Board of Selectmen to implement the rental housing inspection and licensing program proposal, including adoption *presentation* of a supporting ordinance *to the Board for consideration.*
2. Finalize and adopt *present to the Board of Selectman for consideration* an Ethics Statement for all Town volunteers and employees.
3. Develop an orientation program and handbook for new town volunteers.

Staff will redraft this Goal/Objective to be simpler. **The redraft will be placed on a list of continuing tasks.**

- ~~4. Create a system to assure the preservation and availability of Hanover's historical records as well as the efficient organization of the modern ones.~~
5. Review the background, and boundary lines *and rational of expense allocation* of the current Fire districts. **This was placed on the list of tasks to be achieved in 2004.**
6. Prepare a report outlining the tax status of Dartmouth College owned properties in the context of New Hampshire State law.
7. ~~Finalize abatement information sheet to be made available to taxpayers in conjunction with the upcoming revaluation implementation.~~ *Carry out a revaluation which is perceived by 99% of the people in town to be fair and equitable.*



Selectman Walsh asked that the process of informing the public about the upcoming revaluation and its appeals process be added to the Selectmen's agendas for their next two meetings.

8. Hold annual meetings at Department venues to review facilities and department needs. Invite the chairperson and members of each board and commission to make an annual presentation to the Board of Selectmen. **This was placed on the continuing tasks list.**
9. Implement the Three-Party Agreement pertaining to the Town of Hanover, the Dresden School District and Dartmouth College.
10. Pursue options for effective recycling of brown and green glass.
11. Provide a zero base budget review of the Fire and Ambulance funds combined to the Selectboard.

Ms. Griffin advised that she would revise the Goals and Objectives lists for FY 2003–2004 for further Board review at a later date.

**7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 2, 2003**

**Selectman Connolly MOVED to approve the minutes of June 2, 2003 as amended. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2003 AS AMENDED.**

**8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Town Manager Griffin reported that the final walkthrough of the Community/Senior Center was scheduled for Wednesday. Staff would begin moving into the building the first week of July. A "Thank You" dinner for those involved with the building construction had been pushed back to mid-July at the request of the contractors.

Ms. Griffin also reported that staff was busy preparing end of year fiscal reports and evaluations. Selectman Walsh asked that the next Board meeting include a non-public session to discuss Ms. Griffin's prepared evaluations of town staff.

**9. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS**

**Peter Christie**

Mr. Christie reported on the Finance Committee's continued efforts addressing the sixth grade debt service. He advised that Dick Podolec had recently joined the committee and

that in anticipation of future vacancies the committee would hold a luncheon on June 24<sup>th</sup> to meet with interested candidates.

**Kate Connolly**

Ms. Connolly reported on the Planning Board's preparation for their Master Plan Public Hearings, which will be held June 17, 2003 at 7:30 at the Ray School and June 24, 2003 at 7:30 at Trumbull Hall. The Planning Board also approved a sorority Site Plan Waiver application relative to Code compliance.

Ms. Connolly also reported on the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commissions' chapter review of their Regional Master Plan.

Ms. Connolly advised that people from Hanover's sister city of Nihomatsu, Japan would be visiting Hanover from August 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. A Town/Dartmouth sponsored party would be held the evening of August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the boathouse.

**Bill Baschnagel**

Mr. Baschnagel reported on the Planning Board's approval of a three-year extension of the College's maintenance portion of their golf course renovations. The Planning Board also received a preliminary presentation on the College's future plans for the Sudikoff Building.

Mr. Baschnagel also reported on the Conveyance Committee's (subcommittee of the Affordable Housing Commission) discussion of what needs to be addressed in the conveyance agreement between the Town and development partnership. He advised that the Affordable Housing Commission would meet on Thursday to discuss possible land swaps in the area of the Municipal Lot, relative to the existing Community Center and future use of the Municipal parking lot.

Mr. Baschnagel also reported on the Conservation Commission's review of Dartmouth's Dewey Field parking lot expansion that was now approved by the State. The Commission also reviewed the Hanover Woods' high-end condominium project planned for Buck Road.

**Jay Pierson**

Mr. Pierson reported on the Advisory Board of Assessors' review of two abatement requests and of the Recreation Board's subsequent review and revisions of the proposed fee schedule for the new Community/Senior Center.

**Brian Walsh**

Mr. Walsh reported on the Howe Library Board of Trustees' adoption of the Howe Corporation budget.

Mr. Walsh advised of the passing of Rad Tanzer. He asked that staff contact Willy Black in search of Hanover's oldest citizen.

Mr. Walsh again asked the Selectmen to forward comments for Ms. Griffin's annual review.

## 10. OTHER BUSINESS

### May 29, 2003 Letter from Adelpia

Selectman Walsh spoke of a letter the Town had received from Sam Phillips, Adelpia General Manager, that purported that Adelpia had upgraded its product offerings including high-speed Internet access. Betsy McClain, Director of Administrative Services, explained that Adelpia was using standard boilerplate language and applying it to major regional areas. Mr. Walsh said he believed the letter was false and misleading and asked if it put the Town in a position to amend its contract with Adelpia or question whether their franchise agreement should be extended.

Selectman Baschnagel suggested that staff draft a letter to Mr. Phillips stating that the Town expects the services now promised in this May 29, 2003 letter to begin in 30, 60 or 90 days and prior to the imposition of the relative rate increases that will be used to support these product offerings. Further, if Adelpia does not deliver on these expanded offerings the Town will consider Adelpia in violation of their contract.

Selectman Pierson asked about the Town's status with their franchise agreement. Ms. Griffin said it was extended to the end of July 2003. Mr. Walsh suggested this letter provided the Town the opportunity to question Adelpia's rates increases.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

**Selectman Pierson MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:08 PM.**

### SUMMARY

1. **Selectman Baschnagel MOVED to close the public hearing and table action to August 4, 2003. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND TABLE ACTION TO AUGUST 4, 2003.**

2. **Selectman Pierson MOVED to set a public hearing on July 7, 2003 to consider proposed Rates and Fees for FY 2003-2004. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED RATES AND FEES FOR FY 2003-2004.**
3. **Selectman Pierson MOVED to set a public hearing on July 7, 2003 to consider proposed modifications to the Parking Ordinance. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON JULY 7, 2003 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE PARKING ORDINANCE.**
4. **Selectman Walsh MOVED to nominate Peter Christie as the Selectmen's Representative to the Affordable Housing Commission. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT PETER CHRISTIE AS THE SELECTMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION.**
5. **Selectman Walsh MOVED to appoint Jay Pierson as the Selectmen's Representative to the Chamber of Commerce. Selectman Baschnagel SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT JAY PIERSON AS THE SELECTMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.**
6. **Selectman Pierson MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Connolly SECONDED. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:08 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P Christie".

Peter Christie, Secretary

These minutes were transcribed by Beth Rivard.