

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

NOVEMBER 17, 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 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. DISCUSSION WITH THE PARKING & TRANSPORTATION BOARD REGARDING PARKING INVENTORY

Bill Barr, Director of Fiscal & Auxillary Services at Dartmouth's Facilities Operations & Management Office, Hanover resident, and Chair of the Parking & Transportation Board (PTB) provided handouts of the current parking statistics of the Thompson Arena lot and Town's parking facility. He introduced the PTB members that were in attendance including George Hathorn, Lieutenant Patrick O'Neill and Selectman Baschnagel. Other members include Steve Marion, Matt Marshall, and Clint Bean.

Mr. Barr stated that the biggest parking issue coming forward is the lease status of the Thompson Arena lot. He said it was currently the only lot that provided peripheral parking for downtown employees, Hanover High School students, and Hanover Consumer Coop personnel. Mr. Barr explained that the Town leased 160 parking spaces in the Thompson Arena lot from Dartmouth College at a cost of \$32,800 per year. The Town then subleased 50 spaces to the high school for \$10,250 and 40 spaces to the Consumer Coop for \$8,200. The remaining spaces were designated for use by downtown employees. Mr. Barr stated that the Town also contributed \$65,000 annually for shuttle service to the lot between the peak use hours of 7:00 am to 10:00 am and again from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm. He noted that 354 permits were issued for these 160 spaces. He advised of two surveys that were conducted by the Hanover Parking Division staff, which indicated that downtown employees utilized 39 and 41 spaces, and Coop personnel and high school students utilized 78 and 89 spaces, for day totals of 117 and 130. Additionally, Dartmouth College employees utilized 140 spaces daily at the Thompson Arena lot and athletic facility visitors made use of the remaining 60 unclaimed spaces. Selectman Baschnagel noted that when the surveys were done approximately 30 cars were parking in the former P&C parking lot as well. Mr. Barr recapped that the total net cost to the Town for providing this peripheral parking totaled \$79,350 per year. Selectman Walsh clarified that this cost was charged out of the Parking Fund and not to the general taxpayer.

Mr. Barr described the decline in shuttle services that has occurred since the hospital relocated to Lebanon. He said there were now only two separate shuttles running in Hanover, one for the College in the area of Dewey Field to north of Maynard Street, and one for the Town from the Thompson Arena lot to the downtown area. He added that the current cost to run the shuttle totaled \$215,000 annually. This was paid for by Dartmouth College, the Town, and a small portion by Dartmouth Medical School.

Mr. Barr explained that in the spring of 2004 the College would need to take back the Thompson Arena lot from the Town. He said to address short-term needs following that loss, the PTB would suggest that the Town provide more on-street parking by adding spaces on Crosby Street, Allen Street Extension, and Webster Avenue. Another option could be to provide additional rental spaces in the Town's parking garage. Mr. Barr walked the Board through the material provided on the parking garage's productivity. It indicated that the facility was being used and that there were instances when it was filled to capacity. Selectman Walsh pointed out that the periods of high tourism, occurring in October, appeared to account for one-half to two-thirds of the filled capacity incidences. Mr. Barr agreed and further pointed out that half of the garage spaces were currently rented. He said it would be hard to say if 40 or 50 people from the Thompson Arena lot could be relocated to the garage due to the parking fees assessed in the facility.

Mr. Barr explained that in the long-term, a peripheral parking alternative was needed. Possible locations included Norwich, Route 10 South and North, and Route 120. Mr. Barr said the College had also considered the old water tower site at one time. Selectman Walsh asked of the ratio of employee traffic traveling in from various directions. Mr. Barr said a survey done of Dartmouth employees indicated that 10% to 12% traveled to Hanover via Route 10 South, a similar number traveled in from Route 10 North, a small number of people used Wheelock Street traveling from Etna, 40% entered from Ledyard Bridge, and 30% arrived via Route 120. He noted that a second tier parking lot, owned by DHMC, and located near Jesse's Restaurant, was not currently being used. He said zoning changes would have to occur to allow for peripheral parking along the Route 120 corridor. Selectman Baschnagel stated that an amendment had been presented to the Planning Board on that matter.

Selectman Baschnagel recapped that roughly 40 to 60 people have been parking at the Thompson Arena lot. He said he recalled a time when the Town lost 32 parking spaces on the Fleet deck, which had a noticeable impact to downtown parking. He said he sensed that losing the lease to the Thompson Arena lot would create a similar situation.

Selectman Connolly asked if Dartmouth could utilize parking in the expanded Dewey Field area, unimpeded by a court challenge, on a temporary basis rather than redirecting their people to Thompson Arena. Mr. Barr said he did not think so. He said between the Engineering Science project and the North of Maynard project the College would lose almost 400 spaces. Mr. Barr provided a data sheet and walked the Board through the proposed College projects and their parking impacts. He said the College's goal was to try to maintain 10% capacity. The data sheet indicated that by July 2005, the College

would have a real parking problem if a peripheral solution was not found. Mr. Barr said the PTB was willing to take on the project of finding sites and jumping through the necessary hoops to be able to use them. He said they were looking for the Selectmen to assist them in the effort, as it would be important for the Town and College to work together to identify a site since there was an obvious need for more parking.

Mr. Barr said another issue the PTB was discussing was the displacement of the Advanced Transit transfer points, which will occur when the Maynard Street parking is lost. Selectman Baschnagel explained that that the transfer area involved three intersecting bus routes. He said the AT tried to schedule so that three buses arrived at the same time to allow passengers to transfer to the next bus. Mr. Barr suggested locating the main transfer point on North College Street, in front of the library's east entrance, and another on the other side of the library. This too would result in a loss of six to nine spaces to the Town. Mr. Barr said this was a very important piece for the AT. This issue must be resolved by next fall.

Selectman Baschnagel said the Town would have to get really aggressive on a temporary basis to identify spaces in town for Thompson Arena lot people. Town Manager Griffin said she was confident that 10 to 20 spaces could be located to address the downtown employee demand. She said she did not know how the high school or Coop people could be accommodated but that she had heard that the Coop was looking to find peripheral solutions as well. Selectman Walsh said that this provided a challenge to the school too. He said it was not the Town's responsibility to provide parking to students who wanted to drive to school. Selectman Connolly asked if anyone had probed the availability of the second tier of the DHMC lot. Selectman Pierson asked if perhaps that lot could be used for a short-time basis. Mr. Baschnagel said the issue had been raised, but a response had not been given. He added that providing parking in that area would require an additional shuttle to maintain the 10-minute service to the downtown area the shuttle riders demand. Town Manager Griffin agreed and suggested that if people could not walk to their cars they would not utilize the peripheral parking. She cautioned against choosing lots too far from downtown. She further questioned whether the Town should proactively work to figure out this parking issue now or wait until the Thompson Arena parking is lost and see its impacts. Mr. Baschnagel said this issue should be addressed now. He suggested surveying the current shuttle users and tailoring a new program to fit their needs.

Selectman Walsh thanked Mr. Barr for the comprehensive presentation. He said the conversation between the Selectmen and PTB was good but there were other important players who should be involved including the schools and Planning Board. Mr. Walsh suggested that the same presentation should be given to those groups.

3. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED POLICY FOR ISSUING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION ON LOTS LOCATED ON SANDS O' TIME ROAD

Selectman Walsh asked Town Manager Griffin to walk the Board through the revisions made to the draft policy in response to input gained at the public hearing held a week prior. She advised of the following two changes:

1. Item 2(d):

“That the lot is used only for single-family seasonal residence in Hanover or a single-family residence (seasonal or year-round) in any other municipality, that the residence contains not more than four bedrooms, ~~or and~~ that the requested construction will not cause a building footprint, as defined in the Hanover Zoning Ordinance, exceeding 25 percent or a floor-area ratio, as defined in said Ordinance, exceeding 0.15; ~~or any combination of the above;~~

2. Item C:

“The Selectboard declares that the Town of Hanover neither assumes responsibility for maintenance of said private roads nor assumes liability for any damages resulting from the use thereof **and authorizes the Town to record in the county registry of deeds a notice to this effect.**”

Selectman Pierson asked why the requirement that the applicant, “demonstrate that the proposal will not unduly burden the capacity of the private road or roads to carry any additional traffic, and will not adversely impact the quality of surface waters or groundwater;” was not necessary for Categorical Authorization of Permit Issuance. Selectman Baschnagel explained that the Categorical Authorization pertained to smaller buildings that would not involve as much additional traffic.

It was MOVED by Selectman Baschnagel and SECONDED by Selectman Connolly to approve the Policy for Issuing Permits for Construction on Lots Located on Sands O’ Time Road as amended. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE POLICY FOR ISSUING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION ON LOTS LOCATED ON SANDS O’ TIME ROAD AS AMENDED.

4. RECOMMENDATION TO SET A TAX RATE TARGET FOR THE FY 2004-2005 PROPOSED BUDGET

Selectman Walsh explained that the first piece to developing an annual Town Budget is the Selectboard’s action to give the Town Manager a targeted tax rate increase to work against. He asked the Town Manager about current inflation rates. Town Manager Griffin said the Town keyed off the CPI for the Northeast Urban Area size B/C, which included regions of 50,000 to 1.5 million in population. She said the assumption is that CPI tends to be lower in the somewhat less urban areas. She reported that the CPI US city average as of September was 2.3%, for the Northeast Urban area it was 2.9%, and for the B/C size regions it was 2.1%. Ms. Griffin said in terms of the Town’s bargaining agreements, the Town was committed to a 2.5% cost of living adjustment. The Town would also need to budget for the first of twenty \$100,000 annual payments to the Dresden School District per the Tri-Party Agreement. This represented a 2.2% tax rate increase standing alone. Additionally, Ms. Griffin said the HealthTrust had not yet set the guaranteed maximum rates for the coming year. She said the projected increase was

estimated at 25%. Ms. Griffin said updated figures would be provided when the Board reviews the staff's proposed budget in February. Selectman Pierson asked how the Bureau of Labor statistics tied into CPI. Town Manager Griffin said she could not comment on the actual calculation but said Betsy McClain, Director of Administrative Services, argued a year prior that Hanover's CPI should be taken to be slightly higher than the region due to the pressure on the housing crisis. Selectman Baschnagel said an argument could also be made in the budgeting effort to keep the CPI down in light of some of the increases.

Selectman Walsh asked if all of the bridge repair work had been completed on Ruddsboro Road. Ms. Griffin said no, only three of the four had been repaired. Mr. Walsh asked about the North College Street reconstruction project. Ms. Griffin said that project was complete; the Town would no longer need to set aside \$20,000 annually for that work.

Selectman Christie asked of the estimated increased in assessed valuation. Tax Assessor Mike Ryan reported 1.5% to 2.5%. Mr. Christie said when the Tri-Party Agreement was developed the Board discussed not wanting any piece of the Town budget to have to pay the price for the agreement. He suggested exempting the \$100,000 annual Dresden payment from the CPI target. Town Manager Griffin said an employee committee had been looking at this issue over the last few months. She said if this payment were absorbed there would not be funding for many of the proposed capital improvement projects.

Kari Asmus, of 2 Sausville Road in Etna, asked of the status of the Undesignated Fund Balance. Town Manager Griffin said it totaled \$805,065, which was just below 10% of the General Fund Budget. Ms. Asmus said she had asked Ms. McClain if the Town of Hanover should get credit because it has so many other healthy capital reserve funds. Ms. Asmus said Ms. McClain's response was positive although she had not read anything on that issue.

Selectman Walsh proposed a target of 1.7% plus the \$100,000 (2.2%) payment to Dresden, recognizing that there will be a Wish List. Selectman Connolly suggested that was excessively low. She asked to raise the target to 2.2% plus the \$100,000 payment to Dresden. Mr. Baschnagel expressed concern for estimating inflation rates over the coming year. Selectman Christie suggested following the most recent CPI data of 2.1%.

The Board reached consensus on a 2.1% increase plus the \$100,000 payment to Dresden.

5. RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT PROPOSED HISTORIC BARN EXEMPTION PROCEDURE AND TO GRANT REQUESTED EXEMPTION

Selectman Walsh explained that this program was created by the State to ease the preservation of historic barns by giving tax abatements. He said that the Board reviewed a proposed policy and checklist in September at which time they decided this was something they wanted to participate in if it could be done as simply as possible.

Tax Assessor Mike Ryan explained that the first application was received in the spring of 2003. It was brought before the Board in August. There was a lot of discussion on the merits of the program of which the Board agreed. Investigations were done on a methodology that would be consistent and fair throughout the town. A checklist was developed. In September the Board asked that the Planning Board and Conservation Commission be informed of the program. Presentations were made and both Boards declined participation based on their determination that this was an assessing function. Mr. Ryan stated that a checklist, copy of the easement, and original application were submitted to the Board on the first application presented. Town Manager Griffin said the discretionary easement presented was drafted by Town Counsel Walter Mitchell to reflect the statute. Ms. Griffin said each applicant would be required to agree to this same easement.

It was MOVED by Selectman Connolly and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the Historic Barn Exemption Policy. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE HISTORIC BARN EXEMPTION POLICY.

It was MOVED by Selectman Pierson and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the boilerplate easement. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE BOILERPLATE EASEMENT.

Mr. Ryan suggested the Board review the checklist for the application. Selectman Walsh asked about Section 2 of the abatement evaluation and how the cultural significance was determined. Town Manager Griffin said it was linked to the history of the barn itself and its physical location. She said the notion is that there must be some history to these barns. Mr. Walsh asked to change the checklist by striking "in the opinion of the Board of Selectmen."

Selectman Baschnagel question number two on the qualification checklist relative to the agricultural structure determination. Mr. Ryan acknowledged the error listed. He said the answer to number two should be "Yes."

Selectman Pierson asked why the term of the easement began April 1st. Mr. Ryan said that was the tax date. He said that he had already adjusted the tax bill for this property with the understanding that the Board had already approved this abatement. If a reversal occurred, an amended assessment would be mailed.

It was MOVED by Selectman Pierson and SECONDED by Selectman Connolly to approve the granting of this easement. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE GRANTING OF THIS EASEMENT.

Mr. Ryan advised that another application had been received and that he expected more to apply in 2004.

6. CONTINUED DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL TO PROCEED WITH OBJECTIVE TO EXPLORE TOWN MEETING FORMAT

Selectman Walsh advised that a revised statement was provided to the Board in their weekly mailing.

It was MOVED by Selectman Christie and SECONDED by Selectman Pierson to adopt the objective and charge of the committee as outlined. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE OBJECTIVE AND CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE AS OUTLINED.

Selectman Walsh noted that only five or six volunteers had come forward. He asked that the committee be formed at the Board's December 1, 2003 meeting. Town Manager Griffin suggested running another ad listing a submission deadline of Friday, November 28, 2003.

7. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REQUEST FOR FREE SATURDAY CHRISTMAS PARKING

Selectman Walsh advised that the Chamber of Commerce had submitted a letter requesting free Saturday parking during the Christmas Season, specifically November 29, December 6, 13, and 20. He said he sensed that the free parking appeared to work well in the past.

It was MOVED by Selectman Walsh and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to allow for free Saturday parking during the Christmas season as proposed.

Selectman Pierson asked if statistics were available on the impact of this service to the local businesses. Town Manager Griffin suggested the Chamber might have information. She said she assumed since they continued to request the free parking they must be getting some sort of positive feedback from their members. Selectman Baschnagel mentioned the success of the parking validation program, which had been fairly consistent. He reported that roughly 25 validations were being retrieved at the parking facility each Saturday. Selectman Walsh asked that the Chamber look into providing data to the Board in the future.

THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ALLOW FOR FREE SATURDAY PARKING DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AS PROPOSED.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: NOVEMBER 3, 2003

It was MOVED by Selectman Pierson and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the minutes of November 3, 2003 as corrected. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 3, 2003 AS CORRECTED.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Griffin reported on a meeting she attended with The Merton Group and the status of the \$4 million loan application. Ms. Griffin said staff was also working to finish the legal documents associated with the Tri-Party Agreement. Staff would soon begin the departmental budgetary review process and take a look at the potential Warrant articles for Town Meeting.

10. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

Peter Christie

Mr. Christie reported on the Recycling Committee's continued work on their recommendations for the recycling program for the coming year.

Katherine Connolly

Ms. Connolly reported on the Planning Board's preliminary review of possible zoning amendments, discussion of the character of open space in relation to Planned Residential Developments, and completed review of the preliminary phase of Simpson's River Road subdivision project. Ms. Connolly stated that the Planning Board's next meeting would include a Site Plan Review of the patio area for "The Wrap" and a Site Plan Review of the proposed Richmond Middle School. Ms. Connolly also reported on her attendance at a Municipal Association luncheon where Willy Black was presented the "Volunteer of the Year" award from the NHMA. Mr. Walsh asked that the press release of the event be added to the Town Report.

Bill Baschnagel

Mr. Baschnagel advised of the Planning Board's approval of Dartmouth's extension request for the Tree Houses project. He also acknowledged Judy Reeve's efforts to put together a Site Plan Review handbook that will be issued to all Conservation Commission members. Mr. Baschnagel reported that the waterbar issue on Wolfeboro Road was settled. He also stated that the Girl Brook Grant for Phase II of study had been submitted.

Jay Pierson

Mr. Pierson reported on the Recreation Board's continued efforts to complete their study of the skateboard park issue and to develop the program brochure for the Recreation Department. Mr. Pierson reported that the Richard W. Black Community & Senior Center had received 132 applications for use of space since its opening. He said the Recreation Board was working to get the key structure right for that building to provide access or restriction to certain rooms when necessary. They were also working to

provide a public phone in the building as well. Mr. Pierson said the Recreation Board was concerned for the building signage as seen from Route 120 northbound.

Mr. Pierson reported that the Chamber of Commerce would hold its annual meeting on December 1, 2003.

Brian Walsh

Mr. Walsh reported on a Water Company brochure that was sent out to all of its customers. He said that the Howe Library Trustees were working hard to raise funding for the expansion project. He advised of a challenge grant that was presented to the Howe Trustees by the Howe Corporation. He said if the Trustees can raise commitments for \$250,000 between now and the end of December 2003 the Corporation will match the funding.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

12. ADJOURNMENT

It was MOVED by Selectman Baschnagel and SECONDED by Selectman Pierson to adjourn the meeting. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:09 PM.

SUMMARY

- 1. It was MOVED by Selectman Baschnagel and SECONDED by Selectman Connolly to approve the Policy for Issuing Permits for Construction on Lots Located on Sands O' Time Road as amended. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE POLICY FOR ISSUING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION ON LOTS LOCATED ON SANDS O' TIME ROAD AS AMENDED.**
- 2. It was MOVED by Selectman Connolly and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the Historic Barn Exemption Policy. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE HISTORIC BARN EXEMPTION POLICY.**
- 3. It was MOVED by Selectman Pierson and SECONDED by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the boilerplate easement. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE BOILERPLATE EASEMENT.**
- 4. It was MOVED by Selectman Pierson and SECONDED by Selectman Connolly to approve the granting of this easement. THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE GRANTING OF THIS EASEMENT.**

5. It was **MOVED** by Selectman Christie and **SECONDED** by Selectman Pierson to adopt the objective and charge of the committee as outlined. **THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT THE OBJECTIVE AND CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE AS OUTLINED.**

6. It was **MOVED** by Selectman Walsh and **SECONDED** by Selectman Baschnagel to allow for free Saturday parking during the Christmas season as proposed. **THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ALLOW FOR FREE SATURDAY PARKING DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AS PROPOSED.**

7. It was **MOVED** by Selectman Pierson and **SECONDED** by Selectman Baschnagel to approve the minutes of November 3, 2003 as corrected. **THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 3, 2003 AS CORRECTED.**

8. It was **MOVED** by Selectman Baschnagel and **SECONDED** by Selectman Pierson to adjourn the meeting. **THE SELECTMEN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:09 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Christie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a stylized "Christie".

Peter Christie, Secretary

These minutes were transcribed by Beth Rivard.