

FINAL

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 24, 1999**

**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 the Vice-Chairman, Brian Walsh. Present were: Marilyn W. Black, Chairman; Brian Walsh, Vice Chairman; Katherine S. Connolly; John Manchester; Julia Griffin, Town Manager; and members of the public.

Mr. Walsh announced that this meeting was being taped by CATV 6 and that hearing enhancement equipment was available for anyone who wished to use it.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT.**

There was no public comment.

Mr. Walsh stated that before beginning discussion of the budget, the Board might want to discuss the Garden Club's request made at the last Selectmen's meeting regarding parking. The Garden Club had requested that parking restrictions be lifted for members of the Garden Club who wished to park on Currier Place for its three meetings in the spring.

Ms. Griffin indicated that she had talked with the police chief, and that they are both in agreement that the parking enforcement officers and patrol officers will be directed to allow parking by Garden Club members on the east side of Currier only. The meetings are scheduled for the first Tuesdays of March, April and May.

Ms. Black asked what happens if other groups also wish to be allowed to park on Currier Place. Ms. Griffin answered that the Garden Club is by far the largest group that meets at the Howe Library this time of year. If another organization came to the Town to make a similar request, it would have to be taken on a case by case basis.

Ms. Black is concerned that other groups will find out about this parking arrangement and schedule their meetings to take place at Howe Library. Ms. Connolly pointed out that the Garden Club had made an excellent case, and that the Town is greatly indebted to them for the way the Town looks.

Ms. Black suggested that it might be nice to send a note to residents on Currier Place indicating that parking will be allowed for these three occasions.

Mr. Walsh stated that if another group that has an interest wishes to make a similar request, they would need to make a case that they had contributed substantially and positively to the public good over a number of years.

**2. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENTS, FY 1999-2000 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Ms. Griffin summarized the upcoming calendar of Selectmen's meetings to clear up any confusion that might exist: The agenda for this meeting includes discussions of just the administration departments - Board of

Selectmen, Town Manager, Town Clerk, Finance Department and Legal Services. The March 1st meeting's agenda will deal with the Public Works Department, the Sewer Fund, Sidewalk Fund, Town Properties and Capital Program. The Ambulance Fund, Fire Fund and Fixed Charges will be discussed at the March 3rd meeting, and possibly the Parks and Recreation Department as well. Planning and Zoning and Safety Services are on the agenda for March 9th. On March 11th there will be discussion of the Human Services Department which includes all of the funding provided to social service agencies, the Community Counselor's budget, the Howe and Etna Library budgets and the Housing Fund. The evening of March 15th has been set aside for the Selectmen's discussion, with official adoption of the budget scheduled for March 22nd.

Ms. Griffin added that if it appears as if the Selectmen are ready to adopt the budget on March 15th, that evening can be noticed as the budget public hearing. If the Board is not able to adopt the budget at that meeting, it can be adjourned to March 22nd.

Ms. Griffin stated that she had asked Michael Gilbar to do a quick comparison for the Board of the old budget format and the new budget format which is being tried out in draft form this year.

Mr. Gilbar explained that the objective of the new format is to categorize everything by department and to compile all of the accounts that belong in a department into one entity, as opposed to having those accounts spread throughout the budget. The second objective of the new format is to associate the relevant revenues with the expenditures. This format would be in closer conformance with what the Department of Revenue Administration requires of communities, and also aids in the audit process.

#### **Dept. 110 - Board of Selectmen**

Ms. Griffin indicated that the Board of Selectmen budget actually went down by a small amount. One area where expenditures continue to be fine tuned is in 110-690, Miscellaneous. Ms. Black commented that she is against lowering this account because it is not known how many retirements will be coming up, and she wished to put 110-690, Miscellaneous, on the list for further discussion.

Ms. Black asked why an additional \$100 was spent on Advance Transit in 110-491, Public Transportation. Mr. Gilbar will check into this discrepancy, but indicated that the amount budgeted should be \$30,900.

Mr. Walsh noted that he has always wondered why the Selectmen's budget carried one-half of the Town's contribution to Advance Transit. Ms. Griffin explained that this represents the General Fund contribution to Advance Transit, the other half is budgeted in the Parking Fund. Mr. Walsh indicated that he would prefer next year's budget to reflect this charge where it should be appropriately placed. Mr. Gilbar agreed that it should probably show up in the Parking Fund budget.

Ms. Black questioned item 110-550, Advertising, and whether an adequate amount has been budgeted. Ms. Griffin answered that she has looked at

this item carefully, and last year charges were made to the account that probably should not have been. She feels that the amount budgeted is sufficient partly because of a continuing effort to reduce the number of copies made.

**Dept 120 - Town Manager**

Ms. Griffin explained that significant changes in the Town Manager's budget this year relate to shifting the expenses associated with Barry Cox's position out of the Town Manager budget and into the Human Resources budget. Also 120-140, Part Time Services, is reflecting recognition that the Town Manager's secretary works a fair amount of overtime. She has been compensated for this overtime, but it has never been budgeted for. Ms. Griffin added that she is trying to decrease the amount of overtime incurred as responsibilities are divided up and allocated to other people.

Ms. Connolly suggested that the Town Manager's office may need an additional person devoted entirely to secretarial matters. Ms. Griffin referred to the full-time person who will be split 50/50 between the Planning and Zoning Department and Fleet Maintenance. She pointed out that Planning and Zoning will need that half-time person at least for the next year, but may not need the additional help going into year two. At that point it may be possible to justify shifting that part-time person to help with clerical responsibilities in the Town Manager's department. In reviewing staffing needs this year, it was felt that the very first need was that of the MIS coordinator.

Ms. Connolly indicated that she would like to put 120-140, Part-time Services, on the list for further discussion.

Ms. Griffin commented that Debbi Franklin's position and salary has been shifted out of the Town Clerk's budget and into the Human Resources budget.

Ms. Griffin stated that the only thing in this budget that is significantly different is, for example, the higher compensation level for the new Town Assessor compared to the previous Assessor, and the funding request for the MIS coordinator.

Ms. Black asked if the salaries included in the budget were at this year's level. Ms. Griffin answered that they are at this year's level.

If the Classification and Compensation Study is approved, Ms. Black wondered if those numbers would be included in the salary lines. Ms. Griffin answered that in the past the only thing that has been budgeted for in the line item request for salaries has been step increases. Cost of living adjustments have always been included in the compensation adjustment account and allocated to expenditure accounts during the year.

**Dept. 125 - Human Resources**

Ms. Griffin explained that Debbi Franklin's position which was previously

budgeted in the Town Clerk's budget was shifted to the Human Resources budget. She added that Gail Schaal also technically reports to Barry, but needs no supervision.

Ms. Black suggested that it would be helpful to see a breakout of technical supplies as it is difficult to tell what is going into the Senior program and what is going into the Human Resources program. Ms. Griffin answered that all of Gail Schaal's line item detail is budgeted in the Housing Fund; half of the Senior Center building maintenance and half of the Senior Center activities, including Ms. Schaal's salary, are charged to the General Fund via the Parks and Recreation Department.

Ms. Griffin noted that while the full-time salaries number is increased, most of the other accounts have gone down because Mr. Cox is fine tuning the budget as he has had a chance to work with it over the year.

**Dept. 131 = Administrative Services = Administration**

Ms. Griffin pointed out that the only difference in this department is that 60% of Sue Romano's salary, who also works for the Town Assessor, is included. Ms. Griffin also explained that purchased professional services, 131-390, relates basically to customizing of the accounting program.

**Dept. 132 = Revenue Collections = Tax**

Ms. Griffin explained that Sallie Johnson is basically the only salary in this budget. This covers all of her expenses including paying for tax bills and postage for sending them out. The decrease shown in full-time services is due to taking 100% of Sue Romano's salary out of this department and allocating 60% to the Assessor's budget and 40% to Mike Gilbar's budget.

**Dept. 113 = Revenue Collections = Town Clerk and Elections**

Ms. Griffin explained that this budget includes a decrease in Debbi Franklin's salary which was moved over to the Human Resources budget.

Ms. Black wondered whether it would be possible for the municipal offices to stay open when people are not in work, possibly until 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. She does not feel that the Town is serving the public by opening the municipal offices after people have gone to work and closing before they are out of work.

Ms. Griffin indicated that what could be done would be to shift people's office hours to provide leaner coverage early in the morning.

Mr. Walsh pointed out that with the lack of parking especially over the next 18 months, it might be helpful to be open later especially on the nights when local businesses are open.

Ms. Griffin explained that the only reason this suggestion would cost more money would be if employees were working overtime. She also noted that sometimes people asked to work later in the evening are not comfortable being the only person in the building for security reasons. Ms. Black

suggested that the offices stay open until 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights when some of the stores are open.

Mr. Walsh wished to put this suggestion on the list for further discussion.

Ms. Connolly indicated that if opening for later hours required more money, she would still be more than willing to consider it. Ms. Black agreed, saying she would not be opposed to adding a couple of thousand dollars to keep the municipal offices open until 6:00 p.m. two nights a week.

#### **Dept 141 - Administrative Services - Management Information Systems**

Ms. Black questioned the amount budgeted in item 141-110, Full Time Services. Mr. Gilbar explained that he put this figure in after discussions with the NHMA and with consultants in the area. The general consensus was that \$50,000 was the range of salary needed to attract a qualified person for the MIS position. He added that there is a consultant presently doing this type of work for the Town, but it is very expensive.

Mr. Walsh pointed out that in round numbers this added position results in an approximate increase of 1% on the tax rate. He wondered what the impact would be of continuing to operate with the consultant. Mr. Gilbar answered that the Town has been slipping in this area and also has been struggling with the Y2K problem. Maintenance of the computer systems is too much for the current staff to handle, with new programs and hardware becoming more and more complicated. He added that if the Town is going to consider a wide area network, it will need someone to lead it in that direction.

Ms. Griffin stated that the difficulty in this area is that information systems are designed to make people more efficient, but the downside of spending money on new hardware and software is that you end up with technology that increasingly requires professionals to deal with routine and major problems with the network. She added that there is more frustration among departments with the lack of availability of a full-time computer person than any other administrative issue she deals with, and that this request has been put off for the last two years.

Mr. Manchester expressed concern that the individual hired for this position would need further educational training. Ms. Griffin assured the Board that the person hired will come trained, and that funds are budgeted to find someone with experience. The other option is that the MIS coordinator may not necessarily be a paid employee of the Town of Hanover. The Town is currently using contracted services, and there is a possibility of working out a deal with that provider to have a full-time person.

Mr. Walsh wished to put this item on the list for further discussion.

#### **Dept. 144 - Tax Assessing**

Mike Ryan, the Tax Assessor, discussed various items in his budget. He explained that the reason for the increase in Purchased Professional

Services is the purchase of new appraisal software with a yearly maintenance charge of \$2,800. He indicated that the current package is 12 years old and not under a maintenance contract, nor can it be serviced by the vendor any longer.

Regarding the category of Annual Tax Map Updates, Mr. Ryan indicated that this is his estimate of what it would take to update the maps and to have new maps created. In the past, this account was in existence as well as another account called the GIS account. He explained that it was very difficult to distinguish exactly what was being devoted to just tax maps. Dues and Memberships have decreased, and Supplies and Materials include the purchase of a new duplex printer. Books and Subscriptions includes the addition of a residential book and an investment bulletin which is a publication put out by the 100 largest insurance companies giving cap rates and yields for mortgages.

Ms. Griffin noted that the State Representatives were present at a meeting recently to talk to the Board about what was happening in Concord with various education funding plans, but she pointed out that the implementation of a statewide property tax involves more than just an additional line on the tax bill. Mr. Ryan agreed, indicating that any change involving a statewide property tax is going to not only affect the Assessing Department but the Collections Department as well.

Mr. Walsh indicated that there is nothing that the Town can do between now and April 1st with regard to the budget to intelligently anticipate what the State might do. Before anything comes out of Concord, the Selectmen and Town will have put together a budget that will be proposed to Town Meeting. The Town will have to live within whatever budget structure is approved, and make administrative cuts or reallocations to live with any mandates from the State.

#### **Dept 150 - Administrative Charges to Others**

Ms. Griffin explained that this department contains all of the charges that go out of the General Fund to the Fire Fund, Ambulance Fund, Waste Water Treatment Plant Fund, Parking Fund and Housing Funds for all of the administrative services provided by the General Fund funded departments to those Special Revenue Funds.

Ms. Connolly would like to put this on the list because she would like to see the charges broken down.

#### **Dept. 160 - Legal Services**

Ms. Griffin indicated that this account was decreased somewhat partly to balance the budget, but also because year to date this area is in fairly good shape. There is a fair amount of litigation, however, in the pipeline particularly in the Planning and Zoning area that should hit the Town next year. She mentioned Chase Field and the Rugby House as cases that the Town would be involved in. The State Supreme Court has not yet decided whether they will hear the Rugby House case, but if they do and remand it to Superior Court the Town will be back in court again. If the Chase

Field case goes forward, Superior Court will be involved in that case as well. In addition, with regard to the Hanover Investment Corp. case the State Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case with oral arguments and it will be dealt with in the next fiscal year.

Ms. Black asked why this department was cut back. Ms. Griffin answered that what she is seeing in this year's tax bill is the benefit of the strategy the Town has employed of using essentially three specialty law firms to deal with specialty cases. It is her hope that over time the Town will get better at the way it manages these cases which will not lead to lawsuits.

Ms. Black wished to put this item on the list for further discussion.

Mr. Walsh pointed out that there have been previous discussions of having the Town Report contain a table of where the Town's legal funds have gone. His recollection is that legal expenses five years ago were in the vicinity of \$45,000 or \$50,000 whereas the amount budgeted last year was \$120,000. He would like it to become more visible to the public the amount the Town is spending to defend the actions of its public boards and commissions. Ms. Griffin indicated that tracking of litigation expenses is on her list of things to prepare for the Town Report.

### 3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

There were no administrative reports.

### 4. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

#### Ms. Connolly

Ms. Connolly reported that she attended a recent Transportation Committee meeting at which she became aware of a list of possible projects including approximately four for Hanover: Schoolhouse Lane bridge, changes to the signals for bicycles, and possible bike lanes on Park Street and Greensboro Road. She stated that there is much more money coming through from the Federal government for these projects, and suggested that if the Town wished to make a formal application for any of the projects that the application should be in by September 1st, and that hearings should be held to decide whether or not an application should be made.

Mr. Walsh suggested that if the Bicycle Path Committee wants to move forward on either the South Park Street or Greensboro Road projects there is substantial public input needed.

Ms. Connolly also reported on an upcoming Board of Tax Assessors meeting.

### 6. ADJOURNMENT

**Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Connolly SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

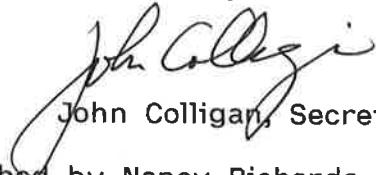
Ms. Connolly MADE THE MOTION to go to non-public session to discuss a matter which may affect the reputation of an individual. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO TO NON-PUBLIC SESSION TO DISCUSS A MATTER WHICH MAY AFFECT THE REPUTATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

#### SUMMARY

1. Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Connolly SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
2. Ms. Connolly MADE THE MOTION to go to non-public session to discuss a matter which may affect the reputation of an individual. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO TO NON-PUBLIC SESSION TO DISCUSS A MATTER WHICH MAY AFFECT THE REPUTATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

Respectfully submitted,



John Colligan, Secretary

These minutes were taken and transcribed by Nancy Richards.