

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

MARCH 11, 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: Brian Walsh, Vice Chairman; Katherine S. Connolly; John Manchester; John Colligan; 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.

2. REVIEW OF FY 1999-2000 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR:

HUMAN SERVICES

Dept. 220 - Community Counselor

Ms. Griffin indicated that this budget actually shows a decrease of approximately \$500, and includes no significant changes. The sum of \$10,000 will continue to be paid for the services of David Sanborn, who works part-time as a counselor on behalf of the Town and part-time on behalf of the high school. Dena Romero's salary, item 220-116, is also a salary which is split with the school district.

Mr. Colligan noted that a fourth guidance counselor was hired last year at the high school. He asked Ms. Romero what that additional guidance counselor has meant in terms of her work load. He noted that before the hiring of the additional counselor the three guidance counselors were spending 30 to 50 percent of their time on counseling issues, as opposed to traditional high school guidance, course selection and college placement.

Ms. Romero explained that she is very grateful for the fourth guidance counselor, and commented that the person chosen for that position is fitting in beautifully. As a result, she has increased access to a guidance counselor to collaborate with on issues related to students. She added that the department was quite overloaded based on the regular guidance needs, and pointed out that Hanover is a community with very high expectations of its students. Ms. Romero stated that the needs of the students have increased in terms of more mental health issues and needs.

Mr. Colligan suggested that next year a report in more detail of the types of counseling needs and interaction with the guidance department would be helpful. He would like to be sure that increased demands are met while at the same time being accountable to the taxpayers. He would like the report to include detail so that the specific areas of needs can be

understood and it can be determined whether the necessary resources are available to address those needs.

Ms. Romero explained that her position at the school is not purely one on one counseling. She has many interests including working on policies and procedures on alcohol and other drugs, has created a committee to work on safe schools policy, is a member of a committee looking at the issue of lunch, is on the comprehensive school health committee and is also spending a great deal of time on the Community Substance Abuse Advisory Committee's upcoming forum on March 29th.

Mr. Colligan asked if there has been progress on the alcohol and drug problem in the schools over the last year. Ms. Romero answered that the schools are getting better at responding to these problems. Mr. Walsh emphasized that this is an issue which students, parents, schools, police and town government all have an interest in.

Dept. 230 - Health and Welfare

Mr. Walsh asked for an explanation of Ms. Romero's responsibilities in the health and welfare area. Ms. Romero explained that legally any citizen in Hanover has the right to apply to the Town for assistance. Hanover has guidelines adopted by the Selectboard which she uses to look at a person's income and applicable expenses and make a determination as to whether they meet those guidelines. Assistance is in the form of a voucher or check to a landlord, and a very small maintenance allowance in cash. She indicated that on an average there are twelve to fifteen people applying for assistance yearly. There are sometimes opportunities to recoup some of the money paid out for assistance; for instance, if a person applies to Medicaid and needs prescriptions, the Town would pay for those prescriptions and then submit the paperwork to the State for reimbursement.

Ms. Griffin stated that New Hampshire is one of the few states in the country where the locality has the responsibility for providing welfare assistance; in most states, the county is responsible. She added that for the first time this year funds were budgeted in the same account for the payment of taxes for individuals which the Board deem to be unable to financially afford to pay their taxes. It was felt, and the auditors agreed, that it was much more appropriate for the Town to budget for the payment of those taxes rather than write the amounts off.

Ms. Griffin explained that item 230-851, Emergency Regional Medical Care, represents Hanover's share of the ambulance fund community fee, and is based on a per capita charge.

Ms. Connolly asked if backup had been received from Headrest as to usage and their financial statements. Ms. Griffin answered that a funding request had been received from Headrest, but financial statements have not yet been received. She believes this is because Headrest has recently undergone a fairly significant change in staffing with a new executive director and several new staff members. She noted that they are

requesting the same amount of funding as they have requested for the last several years.

Regarding Youth in Action, Ms. Griffin stated that they had requested an additional \$1,250 over and above the \$12,000 which she is recommending to the Board. This additional sum is reflected on the wish list.

Ms. Connolly asked if Youth in Action had furnished a budget. Ms. Griffin answered that they have not provided a budget, only a funding request. Ms. Connolly wished to put this item on the wish list for further discussion, and to request documentation from them.

Dept. 235 - Health Officer

Ms. Griffin explained that the money in this budget is for Dr. Boyle's services as the health officer. Dr. Boyle has suggested that the Town employ the services of an individual on a part-time, hourly basis, to do restaurant inspections. She added that before the State downsized the Health and Human Services Department a resident of Hanover had been assigned to this region and was regularly conducting restaurant inspections in Town. When the health inspection section of the Health and Human Services Department was radically downsized, there were very few health inspectors for the entire state of New Hampshire. Ms. Griffin stated that a very good inspector from Concord comes to the area to do restaurant inspections, but not with the frequency and vigor that is desired. She added that there have been complaints received from restaurant patrons about some of the restaurants' practices. This item appears on the wish list.

Mr. Walsh asked if there were fines levied if a restaurant is found in violation. Ms. Griffin explained that there are no fines, but a report card is prepared and the restaurant is given a certain number of days to come into compliance. The risk is that if they fail to do so they will lose their license and be shut down. The issue is the length of time between inspections, with the idea that if there is an ongoing problem with a restaurant it would be best to discover it quickly rather than waiting for the health inspector from Concord.

HOWE LIBRARY

Dept. 252 - Howe Library - Administration

Ms. Griffin explained that there are shifts in salary categories in this budget this year, not reflecting an increase in staff but simply to reflect a reallocation in staff from one operational area to another.

Dept. 253 - Howe Library - Technical Services

Ms. Griffin pointed out a shift between line items 253-110 and 253-115, reflecting a commitment the library is recommending that would allow additional hours to be shifted into technical services to convert a part-time position to a full-time equivalent number of hours position in technical

services. Likewise, there is a reduction of some of those hours in the public services division of the library, but the net impact is essentially the same. This request is in response to increasing demands faced by the technical services division.

Item 253-612, Computer Supplies, has been placed on the wish list. The request was for \$3,000, but Howe staff has indicated that this amount is never enough. Ms. Griffin noted that the microfilm reader is also a wish list item.

Dept 254 - Howe Library - Public Services

Ms. Griffin stated that the Public Services budget reflects a slight shift in full-time services and part-time services.

Dept. 257 - Etna Library

Ms. Griffin pointed out an oversight in failing to accurately budget for additional hours for the substitute circulation assistant at the Etna Library, so that the total in 257-115, Part-time Services, should be \$20,391, an increase of \$1,145.

Ms. Connolly asked if there was enough money in the budget to keep the building in repair. Patty Hardenberg answered that there is a cracked foundation wall; Ms. Griffin indicated that \$2,500 has been budgeted for additional repair to the building.

Ms. Griffin indicated that some people in Etna have asked that the Etna Library have a copier available to the public. The Town would lease the copier and charge for the copies that people make, similar to the arrangement that exists at the Howe Library.

Nancy Collier stated that the Library trustees have spoken about this issue recently and decided that placing a photocopier in the Library really does not fit in with the mission statement. It would result in another piece of technology in a very small space.

During discussions it was discovered that the store in Etna has a photocopier available for public use, and it was suggested that the owner be contacted to make it more visible to the public.

Mr. Walsh suggested that the matter be placed on the wish list for further discussion. Mr. Colligan brought up the idea that the patrons of the Library be polled as to whether a photocopier is something that is critical, or whether they could get by with the Etna Store providing that function.

Ms. Griffin indicated that a modest increase is being requested in the circulating materials account for the Etna Library, account 257-680. It is the Library's wish to be able to have a slightly more versatile collection.

HOUSING FUND

Ms. Griffin stated that Ms. Black had requested that the Board defer discussion of the Housing Fund until she could be present at the March 17, 1999 meeting. Ms. Black is the Board's representative to the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, and did not wish to miss this discussion.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

Ms. Griffin pointed out that most of the items in the Capital Improvement budget have already been discussed by the Board because they are also reflected as capital accounts at the back of each relevant operating budget.

In reviewing the Capital Improvement budget, Ms. Griffin pointed out certain sections for the Board's discussion. Town Assessor, Mike Ryan, has recommended that the Town undertake remeasuring and remapping projects, which would be budgeted in essentially three components: \$30,000, \$20,000 and \$10,000 over a period of three years. She indicated that one area where expenses could be reduced would be to shift \$10,000 out of this year's budget and into next year's budget to take some pressure off the bottom line. This item is on the wish list for further discussion.

Ms. Griffin explained that computer replacement in the MIS budget is a line item essentially for the purchase of new computers or upgraded computers during the year. The amount of \$20,000 was budgeted this year, and next year \$22,500 is proposed. Mr. Gilbar explained that these figures reflect increases due to Y2K, although the majority of expenditures in this regard will probably come out of this year's budget. Ms. Griffin added that there are four or five computers that are going to need replacing as they are definitely not Y2K compatible. Mr. Gilbar stated that a report regarding Y2K will be available for the Board in the near future.

Ms. Griffin noted that the microfilm reader for the Howe Library is on the wish list. The Howe Library has an old 1984 microfilm reader, and staff has concerns about whether it will make it through next year.

Mr. Walsh asked what is on file now that would not be readily available in terms of a reference collection or via the Internet. Marlene McGonigle answered that items currently on microfilm would include the New York Times dating back to 1980, the Valley News from 1981, and the Granite State Gazette. She added that people frequently come in while doing genealogy searches and wish to use the Library's microfilm reader.

Ms. Connolly pointed out that State records personnel have indicated that the only safe way to keep historical data is on film, and that electronic record keeping is a very risky proposition.

Ms. Griffin identified four intersections in Town with regard to traffic signal upgrades. A crucial intersection, particularly if the Town is looking to improve shuttle service, is Park and Summer Streets at Thompson Arena. Another issue is a substantial upgrade to the Wheelock and Park signal

which has no pedestrian crossing signal. An additional signal request from the Police Department is at Lyme and Reservoir so that they do not have to direct traffic at that intersection. The proposal at that location would be a blinking yellow to Lyme Road travellers unless a cue of traffic triggered it coming off Reservoir Road during heavy school traffic time. Another item of concern is whether a signal will be required at Schoolhouse Lane in Etna. She added that there is only \$40,000 budgeted in this year's budget to address these concerns, with the average cost per signal at \$40,000 to \$45,000.

Ms. Griffin indicated that her recommendation would be to hold on to the first \$40,000 in case it is needed for the Schoolhouse Lane intersection signal, and spend the next \$40,000 on Summer and Park Streets. If the money is not needed for Schoolhouse Lane in Etna, she would recommend a signal at Lyme and Reservoir next, and look to try to do Park and Wheelock with a combination of encumbered money next year.

Regarding College Street reconstruction, Ms. Griffin explained that the Town is setting aside money each year for the proposed reconstruction of North College Street from the Library north to the Lyme Road in the summer of 2000, in conjunction with the water line project that will be executed on North College Street. She stated that she had tried to set aside in this year's budget toward North College Street the sum of \$35,000 rather than \$20,000, because this would take some pressure off what is needed to be set aside next year to fully fund the project.

Ms. Griffin and the Board briefly discussed other items in the Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Walsh recalled that in the past the Board has taken requests from various agencies; these requests have been put in front of the voters at Town Meeting to be voted on individually as special warrant articles. If they pass three years in a row, the presumption is that the Town is behind them and they are budgeted on a regular basis.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that a new request has been received from ACORN, the Aids Community Resource Network. They have requested \$2,000 in funding from the Town. Another request received is from CATV, for the second year. Town Meeting voters approved the request in the amount of \$5,000 last year in a special warrant article.

Ms. Griffin stated that a request has been made to provide \$1,000 for the Hanover Joigny Exchange Committee. This would be a request for a second year; last year they were funded as a petition warrant article in the amount of \$1,000. Ms. Black has suggested that the Board also consider requesting a similar amount for the Nihonmatsu sister city program with Hanover, if the Town should decide to become a sister city.

Also, for the second year the Hanover Historical Society has requested funding in the amount of \$1,250.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that the question remains as to what the Board would do with the additional amount of funding being requested by Youth

in Action in the amount of \$1,250. The Youth in Action request has been included in the budget for a number of years; for this reason the request does not need to go on a special warrant article, but the additional amount of funding is simply on the wish list for further discussion.

Paul Pilcher, Co-Chair of the Board of ACORN, stated that the agency is asking for money for the first time this year from towns. Part of the reason for their request is that newspaper headlines have announced that the AIDS epidemic is over, but he assured the Board that this is not true. He explained that more people living longer means that a small service organization like ACORN that serves two counties in Vermont and two counties in New Hampshire has found its client load doubled and resources being stretched thinner, while funding from outside sources is diminishing. The agency has requested funds from Norwich, Enfield, Lebanon and Hanover.

Mr. Colligan asked for an explanation of the mix of funding. Mr. Pilcher answered that the agency receives significant amounts of funding from State health departments in New Hampshire and Vermont, while half of the money is raised independently. The agency spends a lot of time doing fundraising activities and goes to outside foundations. Mr. Pilcher explained that the agency's entire budget is only \$120,000; ACORN is basically a volunteer organization with a very small paid staff. He pointed out that 35 to 40 Hanover residents are in active volunteer programs, and noted that the agency does programs in schools, produces a calendar marketed and distributed around the Upper Valley area, and is available to go to schools and community groups.

Mr. Colligan asked what the size of the patient load is. Mr. Pilcher answered that the agency serves people who are both infected and affected, which includes families of people who have HIV. As a matter of policy, they do not disclose individual numbers or names, but he stated that there are about 200 to 300 people served. About 50 of these people are direct ACORN clients signed up with the agency and receiving their case management program; there are at least two or three times this number who are infected with the virus but who are not actually clients but receive some type of services.

Mr. Colligan commended Mr. Pilcher for the impressive work of the agency.

Mr. Walsh asked what decisions other towns have made in response to the funding request. Mr. Pilcher answered that Norwich and Enfield both voted to appropriate \$2,000; Lebanon has not yet made a decision as it requires a City Council public hearing in their case.

Mr. Colligan suggested that some of the money requested for CATV go toward improving the quality of the audio as well as a wide angle lens.

REVENUE

Ms. Griffin explained the various items included in Revenue.

Mr. Walsh indicated that he would like to put item 091-125, Interest on Delinquent Taxes, on the list for further discussion, and would also like to have a reasonable projection of where the Town will end up this year.

The Board discussed the idea of a \$5 surcharge on motor vehicle registrations. Ms. Griffin explained that this surcharge is now allowed by an RSA, with the funds to be used for any number of transportation related activities such as helping to pay for the increased shuttle from Thompson Arena to downtown. She estimates that the surcharge would generate about \$25,000 a year in additional revenue. A Town Meeting vote is required to enable the initiation of the fee. Mr. Walsh suggested that if the proposition is made to initiate the surcharge, the Board should be very clear on what the money would be used for.

Regarding building permits, Ms. Griffin explained that this number has not been increased to reflect the recommendations that Jonathan Edwards made. A sum of \$115,000 would be added to this number if the Board wished to implement those recommendations based on the fee study that was completed.

Regarding Howe Library fines, Ms. Connolly asked why the Library was giving people a break on late return of videos. Ms. McGonigle explained that because the collection is now substantial enough, it does not really warrant a \$1 fine per day. She added that the Library has received a number of complaints about the fine, and the recommendation from patrons and staff is that the video fine be reduced and be the same as other fines.

Ms. Connolly expressed the opinion on behalf of herself and Ms. Black that the proposed fine is too low. She feels that it costs a good deal more to maintain a video collection, and suggested that a compromise be made between the \$1 fine and the fine charged for books.

Mr. Walsh wished to put item 093-331, Howe Fines, on the list for further discussion.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Griffin had no administrative report. However, she recommended to the Board that Anne Morris be appointed to the Bio Diversity Committee.

Mr. Colligan MADE THE MOTION to appoint Anne Morris to the Bio Diversity Committee. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT ANNE MORRIS TO THE BIO DIVERSITY COMMITTEE.

Ms. Griffin reminded the public that the League of Women Voters and New Hampshire Public Radio would be sponsoring a forum on Monday evening, March 15th at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Auditorium D-F, to inform voters regarding the state education funding issue.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to come before the Board.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr. Colligan 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.

SUMMARY

1. Mr. Colligan MADE THE MOTION to appoint Anne Morris to the Bio Diversity Committee. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPOINT ANNE MORRIS TO THE BIO DIVERSITY COMMITTEE.
2. Ms. Connolly MADE THE MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
3. Mr. Colligan 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 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


John Colligan, Secretary

These minutes were taken and transcribed by Nancy Richards.