

FINAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

March 6, 2000

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 Chairman, Brian Walsh. Present were: Brian Walsh, Chairman; Marilyn Black, Vice Chairman; Katherine S. Connolly; John Manchester; John Colligan; Julia Griffin, Town Manager; Michael Gilbar, Finance Director, 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.

Steve Crory asked that as the Town looks this spring toward repainting of the crosswalks the possibility that the crosswalk size could be enhanced be discussed. He thinks that the main crosswalks around the Green are too narrow and that a little heavier or wider painting might encourage crosswalk use.

Mr. Walsh indicated that the order of the agenda would be changed to accommodate members of the audience.

6. 2ND BUDGET HEARING:

Town Manager

Ms. Griffin stated that neither the Town Manager's budget nor the Board of Selectmen's budget contained any significant changes for the coming fiscal year. She noted that no raise had been recommended for the Selectmen, but she suggested that other communities should be polled to find out what board members are earning so that the issue could be discussed next year.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that the Town Manager overtime account under Personnel Costs represents the amount of time that Penny Hoisington worked overtime. Her department has discussed ways to manage that overtime and has delegated some of Ms. Hoisington's duties to other employees in an effort to bring those overtime costs down.

Ms. Black asked if Advance Transit has done the ridership counts that were requested. Ms. Griffin answered that they had, and that she would provide that information to the Board when the Advance Transit budget is reviewed.

Mr. Manchester asked for a description of the free fare zone. Ms. Griffin answered that the free fare zone is the Upper Valley zone from downtown Lebanon to downtown Hanover. The Town of Hanover has its own mini-free fare zone from Thompson Arena to the downtown area. She noted that the funds reflected in the budget for this item are for the Upper Valley wide

system and constitute Hanover's contribution to the Upper Valley free fare zone. The amount of money for the Thompson Arena shuttle is contained in the Parking Fund budget. Ms. Griffin will provide statistics to the Board in their next Friday mailing. She will also provide an update from Advance Transit indicating how much other communities are contributing to the Upper Valley free fare zone.

Ms. Connolly indicated that she was under the impression the Town had contributed to the record preservation grant in the past, but found nothing in the record to reflect this. Ms. Griffin answered that the Town has supported the program which is now entering its fourth year. Mr. Gilbar explained that the cost for this is located in administrative services.

Mr. Manchester asked who conducts the audit for the Town and whether it is put out to bid. Ms. Griffin answered that Plausik and Sanderson are the Town's auditors and the audit goes out to bid every three years. Mr. Gilbar added that this year is the last year of the three-year cycle, which is the reason for the increase shown as the cost could possibly be higher when the audit is put out for bid.

Mr. Manchester asked if the firm provided a certified audit or just a compilation, and whether the Town is required to have a certified audit. Mr. Gilbar answered that they provide a certified audit. The Town is not required to have a certified audit each year, but one is required every few years. He added that if a review was done and the Town ended up having to have a full blown audit, it would cost significantly more and would take a lot longer.

Human Resources

Ms. Griffin indicated that the Human Resources budget showed a very small increase this year. The only significant change is that it has been decided to budget in one location for the retirement activities the Town is involved in, such as giving retiring employees chairs. The amount of \$2,000 has been included in this budget because that is typically the amount spent in any given year for retirement related activities.

The only other significant item is that for the first time the Human Resources Director's salary and Debbie Franklin's salary are included in this budget rather than the Town Manager's budget and Administrative Services.

Administrative Services

Mr. Gilbar explained that Sue Romano's salary is split between the Assessing Department at 60% and the Administrative Services Department at 40%.

Ms. Griffin indicated that one item in this budget which has continued to increase is motor vehicle permits. Proposed for next year in this account is the same amount as what was brought in for revenue in FY99, although if the trend of growth over the last three years were to continue, one could assume that this would grow. However, she noted that neither she

nor Mr. Gilbar were comfortable raising the projection any higher than what was actually brought in last year. Her biggest concern is that when this account contracts there will be a substantial amount of revenue that will not be realized.

Ms. Black questioned where the amount of revenue projected for vendor permits will be reached as there is only one vendor left. Ms. Griffin explained that the amount listed is the amount that the vendor will generate in a year.

Ms. Black noted that the elections line item under Personnel Costs provides for the part-time services of the Town Clerk, supervisors of the checklist and election workers for election coverage at a cost of \$7,450. She asked who was actually paid. Mr. Gilbar answered that the supervisors of the checklist, the town clerk and the assistant are paid. The checkers are volunteers.

Mr. Manchester recalled that last year there was discussion about the Town printing the tax bills. Mr. Gilbar explained that the vendor wanted laser printed barcoded bills done. He noted that the problem is that it takes a lot more time to print the bills in this manner. One year the mailers were printed by the Town and a lot of complaints were received. So much information was required on the tax bill that it was difficult to get the design correct so that it would print properly in the format needed to run on the printer. Mr. Gilbar added that he has been investigating various ways of doing this so that it would be cost effective.

Mr. Colligan welcomed Corey Stevens, the MIS Coordinator, adding that he understands he is doing excellent work for the Town. He noted that he had received a letter from Ms. McGonigle in support of Mr. Stevens' services at the library, and wondered if any of his salary should be allocated to the Howe. Ms. Griffin explained that if some of Mr. Stevens' salary were allocated to the library it would reflect the time that he spends there, but would not change the bottom line impact to the General Fund.

Mr. Colligan asked if it was Mr. Stevens' sense that start-up required a major focus on the library. Mr. Stevens answered that it was a major focus, and added that several departments in Town required more time than others. The Howe Library was one because they are one of the biggest computer users in Town and have several different operating systems. As they come closer to where they should be, the time required there should be reduced slightly.

Mr. Walsh requested that information be included in next year's budget as to where Mr. Stevens' time is spent by department.

Ms. Griffin noted that the amount of money spent last year for consulting services which resulted in approximately 15 hours a week of service is substantially the same as the amount spent for Mr. Stevens' full-time services.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that in the GIS line item on the wish list she has included a questionmark for the amount required. She explained that an internal committee has been discussing the direction the GIS project should take and talking with several consultants to come up with a plan and has not yet come up with a final number.

Mr. Gilbar discussed the breakdown of technology costs which he prepared. Allocation of Mr. Stevens' time is as follows: 43% for maintenance of software and hardware; 30% for user support and training; 15% for network management, and the remainder for all other areas which include centralized purchase of computer equipment, budgeting and planning.

Mr. Walsh suggested that the Board have a brief presentation on items such as backup, virus protection, etc. at some time in the future. He noted that the Town has a major asset in technology which is becoming more and more critical to the operation of the Town, and more and more threatened by the outside world.

Mr. Colligan stated that he feels it is important to know how much time in technology is being allocated to each area. This information may suggest that the Town is doing something wrong in terms of investment in hardware or software, or may indicate a change in how to account for it in terms of budgeting so that the true cost and true return can be known.

Ms. Griffin asked if Mr. Colligan's question was whether the Town's investment in technology is typical for a local government organization of Hanover's size. Mr. Colligan answered that his question is how can every one of the dollars invested be justified, and how they can be sure that all of the systems are all necessary, as well as whether the Town is going about it the optimal way in terms of budgeting for it and financing it. He sees the issue of technology as compromising other budgets. If it continues to grow at the rate it has been growing, he stated that he feels uncomfortable not having a better grip on the situation.

Ms. Griffin agreed that this is a valid question, but from her experience there is not any benchmark available that indicates the typical size of information technology services budgets for local governments or communities.

Mr. Colligan pointed out that the Town has survived without some of the technology before, and it is seductive to assume that in every case technology will result in more efficiency and a cost benefit that is compelling. Ms. Griffin explained that this is where Mr. Stevens' value comes in, allowing the Town the ability to take a more objective look at a particular piece of software or equipment and determine whether it is really value added to the Town or its constituents.

Mr. Gilbar suggested that some type of process be developed for requests for pieces of software or hardware. He indicated that there is a hardware replacement schedule, and he feels that the Town is in a good justifiable position for replacing the hardware.

Mr. Colligan indicated that he feels the Town does not have a handle on this situation and it is a runaway train. He feels that a better framework for substantiating every hardware investment which results in additional maintenance of software be developed, otherwise the costs will continue to grow as they have been growing.

Mr. Gilbar pointed out that in his department he would be unable to do the payroll without the computers. It would require doubling the staff and probably cutting by a fair percentage the amount of information people are requiring.

Ms. Connolly stated that there are some areas where there is definitely no going back, such as Mr. Gilbar's department, as well as the Assessing Department and the Treatment Plant.

Mr. Walsh indicated that the costs should be broken up by department or activity to get a much better sense of the issue.

Mr. Gilbar suggested that some reasonable kind of cost benefit analysis be arrived at that everyone will be comfortable with, in a format that can be used to judge pieces of hardware or software against. However, going back and analyzing each department would take a significant amount of time, but the process could at least be used to continue from this point forward.

Mr. Manchester commented that quite a bit is being paid in maintenance leases and contracts; he asked if it would be possible to wean the Town off any of that cost now that the MIS Coordinator is in place. Mr. Gilbar answered that Mr. Stevens is involved in some problems that may be a link between the hardware and the software, but that for the most part vendor's software is specific to a particular department.

Ms. Black suggested that a list of items to cover in non-budget meetings be made, and that a discussion be had regarding what technology each department has and how it is used. Mr. Walsh recommended putting this discussion together with conversations about virus protection, etc.

Mr. Colligan asked if the amount of \$65,000 is to be added to the \$692,000 value of computer technology for a total value. Mr. Gilbar answered that the \$65,000 represents Mr. Stevens' salary and benefits and is already included in the \$692,000. The \$692,000 is the total value of computers and software that have been accrued; \$186,740 is the operating budget cost.

Ms. Black suggested that a line item might need to be included in next year's budget for technology costs.

Ms. Connolly asked if the assets indicated in the budget include software. Mr. Gilbar answered that software is included as his best estimate.

Assessing

Ms. Griffin stated that there is no significant change in the Assessing budget for the second year, and added that funds are requested for the

three-year valuation update. This program involves hiring on a part-time temporary basis individuals over the course of several months to help update all of the residential properties; Mr. Ryan will update the commercial properties. She noted that Mr. Ryan has had trouble finding individuals to staff this effort.

Mr. Walsh commented that everyone is aware that severe questions exist about assessing practices throughout the State of New Hampshire relative to the evaluation of property, and this valuation update is Hanover's way of assuring that there is a complete revaluation of the Town. His question is if the Town spends the funds over the three years to bring the Town's assessment data up to where it should be, what will happen when the State, the Supreme Court or DRA says that a statewide reassessment is required. He asked if Hanover will be required to do another revaluation again or whether it will be in a defensible position. Mr. Ryan answered that he believes Hanover will be in a defensible position, having taken the steps necessary to update the information, the values on the property, and believes that the Town will be a step ahead as opposed to being behind.

Mr. Walsh asked if the Town were instructed to revalue whether it would be in a position to say that it is an unfunded mandate and that a revaluation has already been performed. Mr. Ryan answered that he believes Hanover would be in a great position to prove statistically that their assessments are fair and equitable, not only within the community but as compared to other communities within the State.

Mr. Colligan asked if there would be a scenario where the State would be required to send money to those towns that needed to do this work, such that Hanover would be disadvantaged having already done it. Mr. Walsh answered that he believes having started on the program, rather than take two years off that the work should continue as it is unknown where the Legislature will go with this issue. Mr. Colligan agreed that it cannot be known where the Legislature will go, and wondered what the risks are to going ahead and doing the right thing now versus waiting until there is more information.

Ms. Griffin answered that ethically and in terms of sound assessing practices, the work should be done regularly. The approach being recommended is to do it in a more gradual fashion on a regular basis to avoid a large revaluation. She added that she would be very surprised if the State ordered a statewide revaluation and paid for it.

Ms. Black noted that if the Town does not keep updating, then it is not taxing equitably. Mr. Colligan indicated that he was only saying this was an unprecedented time and a highly unusual environment where there is a huge uncertainty about everything. He raised the question because the Town will be spending resources on something where the rules may change dramatically. Ms. Griffin explained that she believes it may be 10 years before the rules change much at all. She feels that the Town is better off staying with its commitment to valuation updates.

Ms. Connolly pointed out that if the State decides to fund the revaluation, as they should, they would have to fund Hanover as well as everyone else.

Mr. Walsh stated that he feels the Town is doing the revaluation well enough to put it in a position where it should be defensible and have defensible numbers. He thinks this is the standard that Hanover should be holding itself to, he feels that it is timely and that doing it over two years seems right.

Mr. Ryan stated that in last year's budget there was \$15,000 to get the GIS program off the ground. Over the last few months an internal committee has been going over various options and is now in the final stages of contracting with a vendor to set up a GIS system for the Town. As part of that, the committee was directed to look at what future costs would be to maintain and improve the system with the understanding that to start from scratch with a full-blown GIS program would be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Because of this, the committee has proposed using existing tax maps which were digitized and building the GIS system from that point forward. He pointed out that the Public Works Department has a pretty good data base on the downtown area. Mr. Ryan would recommend that part of the contract would be to get the downtown portion of the Town done as best possible, and over the next year or several years get all of the right-of-ways in and continue into the rural areas. He stated that the system will be compatible with the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee system as well as others.

Ms. Griffin indicated that Mr. Ryan has broken out the cost, and the committee has put together what their annual anticipated GIS expenditures would be over the next three years. The amount of \$6,868 can be plugged into the blank wish list item in this regard.

Fire and Ambulance

Ms. Griffin stated that the challenge for the Fire Fund this year in terms of tax rate setting strategy is the impact of water rates both already approved and water rate increases requested through hydrant rental charges from the Water Company. Her recommendation is that a modest increase be allowed in the Fire District tax rate in recognition that there is a legitimate significant increase in costs to the Fire Fund through water rate increases, and in recognition that the Water Company clearly needs those increases in order to initiate for the first time ever in its history the beginnings of a sufficient capital improvement program. Looking at the actual impact on the Fire District tax rates, combined with no tax rate increase in the General Fund, the budget varies from a .2% to a .8% increase. Ms. Griffin noted that some people have asked why there is a differential rate increase from Fire District to Fire District; she explained that it is because the assessed value of property in some Fire Districts has grown at a higher rate than in others.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that also significant in this budget is that for the first time 3/16 of firefighters' salaries and benefits are being allocated to the Ambulance Fund, resulting in a need to increase the fees to Norwich and Lyme by about 5%. This is reflective of a CPI increase and also the fact that this year the Ambulance Fund is absorbing some costs related to the benefits costs associated with 3 firefighters.

Mr. Walsh noted that data supports this trend, pointing out that ambulance calls went from 233 in 1997 to 190 in 1999. He feels that looking at next year's budget and making sure that the fee structure for private calls is reasonable as well would be a good thing to do.

Ms. Griffin stated that the only other significant issue is the recommendation, based on the capital improvement program, to replace the tanker in Etna. She noted that there is money in the capital equipment reserve to fund that replacement. Ms. Griffin added that they had tried to stay committed to maintaining a contribution to the Fire Equipment Reserve this year by maintaining that level by \$70,000 to the Fire Fund and \$24,500 to the Ambulance Fund.

Mr. Manchester asked if a tanker was really needed, or whether the one from the Hanover station could be driven up to Etna. Chief Bradley answered that the plan is to replace two 1975 pieces of apparatus in Etna which are a tanker and a small mini-pumper with one unit that has onboard water capability which is at least equivalent to the tanker. He explained that in a rural setting where there are no hydrants, it is necessary to carry water directly to the scene as quickly as possible.

Ms. Black asked what had happened to engine #2. Chief Bradley explained that #2 was refurbished last year and is now in reserve capacity, which means that it is not run generally on most alarms. It is perfectly functional and in good shape; if a unit goes out of service for repairs, etc. it is used. It is not a tanker, but it does have some water on board with a tank capacity of 700 gal.

Mr. Manchester asked whether engine #2 could be put out in Etna and go first to a fire, to be followed by one from Hanover as a backup. Chief Bradley answered that it does not carry the water capacity that they feel is required.

Mr. Walsh asked what kind of capacity a new tanker would have. Chief Bradley answered that it would have a minimum of 1,000 gal. capacity. The existing tanker in Etna now has a capacity of 1,000 gal. while the reserve engine in Hanover has a capacity of 700 gal.

Mr. Manchester asked how many gallons a tanker could pump. Chief Bradley answered that it would depend upon pump capacity, but the pump they would be looking for would be a minimum of 1,250 gal. a minute pumping capacity. An average residential fire would use only one hose line, so it would be 250 gal. a min.

Mr. Colligan noted that residential pumping at 250 gal. a minute would result in the water only lasting 4 minutes. He asked how many of the eight fires last year were in the rural part of town. Chief Bradley answered that he was not sure, but he would estimate that two of the fires were in a rural area of Town.

Mr. Colligan asked if new hardware would have made a difference in the outcome of those fires versus what happened this past year. Chief Bradley answered that the outcome would probably be the same.

Ms. Griffin noted that she feels the issue is the age of the vehicle that the department is seeking to replace in Etna and the cost benefit of replacement versus keeping it running.

Mr. Colligan stated that another part of the consideration should be a determination of the differences in the outcomes, and to see if there is a way to reallocate the existing hardware in Town. Reallocation of hardware may put the Town in a position to invest in less expensive hardware somewhere else.

Ms. Griffin asked if Mr. Colligan was suggesting shifting the second line pumper from the main station out to Etna, and replacing that second line pumper with a less expensive new second line pumper, or perhaps not replacing it at all. Mr. Colligan answered that he was questioning how to justify the investment if the outcome would be the same.

Chief Bradley pointed out that it is not necessarily a matter of a minute and 15 seconds before the water runs out, or whether or not it would make a difference in the outcome on a structure fire in a rural area. The issue is whether or not the equipment is available that is dependable to get the equipment and water on the scene. Over time, he has come to realize that fire apparatus trucks in excess of 25 years old start at some point not to be dependable.

Frank Austin stated that another issue to discuss is the insurance rates which are dictated based upon the fire equipment, what is available and response time, and that insurance rate is affected by the ISO rating of the fire equipment. He noted that the work that was done on engine 2 was purely body work on the exterior part of the fire engine and had nothing to do with the drive train or the water components, which are the main items which operate the fire apparatus. He is not sure whether a long-term solution would be arrived at by utilizing #2 in Etna.

Mr. Manchester asked if someone would do an audit on the fire equipment with relation to the insurance rates. Chief Bradley answered that ISO would come to the community to survey the total community for all aspects of the fire rating, but would not audit the fire apparatus itself.

Ms. Griffin commented that this is really what Frank Austin is doing in looking at the apparatus in the department. For the first time last year fleet maintenance was used, and the age and condition of all of the apparatus was looked at.

Mr. Walsh asked whether engine #2 was needed at the main station or whether it could be in Etna and be as effective. Chief Bradley answered that engine #2 is not built or designed for rural application.

Assuming that a new piece of equipment is purchased for Etna because a 25 year old piece of equipment is too old to be effective and dependable, Mr. Walsh asked if engine #2 would still be needed in Hanover or whether it would be surplus. As an example, Chief Bradley noted that a few years ago before the new engine was purchased the department had a major piece of apparatus break down. Rather than rent another piece to replace

it, he called Hartford and borrowed a fire truck on good faith that it would be returned in the same condition as when it was borrowed. On the day that the other piece of equipment was back in service, they returned the fire engine to Hartford and blew the motor driving it from Hanover to Hartford. The cost to replace the motor was \$10,000.

Ms. Griffin explained that the reason the decision was made to invest in the refurbishing of the body of engine #2 is that it was felt for the minimal cost incurred it would be reasonable to keep it on hand. There is not much of a market for a used 20 year old fire engine, and it turns out to be a good piece of equipment to have around for situations where there is a major breakdown on the lead engine. The problem shifting engine #2 to Etna is that it is old and not in great condition, and is not really built for rural road use.

Mr. Colligan indicated that given the in-house maintenance capability and given that there is no bid in the used market, he feels the Town should be considering buying some used equipment instead of buying brand new. If there is an agreement that there is a need to buy some equipment to replace existing equipment in Etna and it is not possible to reallocate existing machinery, he would hope that it would be possible to start with investigating buying used machinery rather than new. If the outcome is the same, he asked how he could justify the investment of replacing today's 25 year old machine if it would not help the outcome.

Ms. Griffin agreed that both a 25 year old engine and a brand new one could get to the fire in the same amount of time. The issue is virtually the age of the apparatus and its reliability.

Mr. Walsh suggested that this item be put on the list for further discussion.

Mr. Colligan suggested that it is necessary to know how many calls from Etna the engine has made or is anticipated to make.

Regarding e-mail, Ms. Black asked if every employee in Town would get a mailbox with the new internet proposal. Mr. Stevens answered that everyone who sits at a computer will definitely have e-mail, and there will be more mailboxes in addition. There are now about 20 e-mail accounts for everyone in the Town, most of which are shared e-mail accounts. This results in e-mail occasionally never getting to its intended recipient, or being read by someone else and deleted.

Mr. Gilbar informed the Board that he is working on a policy with regard to computer, internet and e-mail use which would make it clear that e-mail addresses are Town property and that there is a clear distinction between personal use and Town use.

Ms. Black asked how many new call firefighters were hired last year. Chief Bradley answered that there were two new call firefighters last year. He added that a problem that they are starting to encounter is replacement of the existing turnout gear. Several years ago the whole department's gear was replaced and that gear is now starting to wear out. A

notification was received from the manufacturer that the thermal barriers should be checked, and in doing so it was found that one did not pass the test.

Ms. Connolly asked if the gear was under warranty or guaranteed. Chief Bradley answered that it was not. They are now finding out that the gear that was purchased is three generations old. The manufacturers are not making replacement liners for anything older than one generation.

Ms. Black noted that there is an item for purchase of miscellaneous equipment for the new engine at a cost of \$2,400. She would think that if \$240,000 was being paid for a new truck, that it would not be necessary to pay \$2,400 for new equipment for it. Chief Bradley explained that the requested funds would be for hardware, valves, etc. that do not come with the engine. Ms. Black suggested that these items should be included as part of the purchase price, and wished to put this item on the list for further discussion.

Regarding the proposed Water Company rate increase, Mr. Walsh's opinion is that the best approach would be to implement the rate change this year. Ms. Black agreed and asked if all of the water rates in other Town properties would be increasing. Ms. Griffin answered that they would be increasing. She pointed out that the Water Company has used an equation for the hydrant rental fee for years on which the rate increases are based. As part of a rate study, the Water Company would be asked to have an analysis done of the hydrant rental charge. She explained that typically hydrant rental is assessed to the water customers who benefit from the proximity of a fire hydrant, not the Fire Department. Ms. Griffin explained that the Water Company has wisely asked for three rate increases, one which would begin with the next water bill, one that would begin when the water project is substantially complete which is likely to be in November of 2000, and the third because the rate increase approved by the PUC that will be effective in November is not enough to pay the principal and interest on a low rate interest loan that the Water Company has been awarded by the Department of Environmental Services.

Ms. Black questioned the need for cell phone installation in Car 1 and Engine 1 in the Fire Department at a cost of \$600. She asked what a cell phone would do that a radio would not. Chief Bradley answered that on several occasions they could use a cell phone from the scene of an emergency to call the Fire Marshall's office or for other uses. It could also be used when someone is out-of-town and on the road, or in the event that it is an occasion when it makes sense to communicate by phone rather than radio so that not every scanner in Town can pick up the conversation.

Ms. Black asked if the \$600 requested would cover the cost of the phone, monthly rental and the cost of calls, and whether the calls would be limited. Chief Bradley answered that the \$600 would cover the phone, rental and cost of calls which would be limited to 30 minutes a month for emergency use only.

Regarding education conferences, Ms. Connolly noted that it turns out that the Police Association will be paying for Chief Bradley's trip to Kansas City, but he wishes to send a Captain instead. She feels that if a captain is going to be sent to the conference, the cost should be in the suppression budget. The suppression budget is down \$1,000 whereas the administration budget is quite high. She feels the education conference budget in administration should go down to about \$700 and \$1,000 should be added back into the suppression budget for that specific conference. Mr. Walsh suggested that this item be put on the list for further discussion.

Ms. Black questioned the need for the department to purchase \$200 worth of slides and videos each year. She wants to be sure that the department is using them and that they are different. Chief Bradley explained that they do not specifically buy \$200 worth of slides or videos; it is a combination of audio visual training aids.

Ms. Black noted that the training supplies and materials line item is up almost \$1,000, and asked for an explanation of the increase. Chief Bradley answered that the major increase is due to the increase in the uniform allowance which was part of contract negotiations.

Ms. Black asked if the uniform allowance goes to each man at a certain amount per man so they can purchase what they want. Chief Bradley answered that currently they get an allowance per person to purchase summer and winter uniforms. Ms. Black asked if they receive the cash if they do not purchase anything, and Chief Bradley answered that they do.

Barry Cox explained that the issue is somewhat more complex; he does not anticipate that in the future cash will be given to the individuals in lieu of uniform purchases.

Ambulance Fund

Ms. Griffin explained that the revenue side of the Ambulance budget has increased due to increased allocations to the towns of Lyme and Norwich.

Cost allocation from the Fire Fund goes up from \$185,620 to \$213,714, which represents full benefits costs as opposed to just a small portion of the benefits costs associated with three firefighters' positions.

Mr. Manchester noted that in item 110-700, Operational Equipment, there were funds allocated for repairs, while he was under the assumption that Frank Austin handled all of the repairs. Chief Bradley explained that this allocation is for minor small equipment repair rather than fleet maintenance or vehicle repair.

Mr. Manchester asked if there was collision insurance carried on the vehicles. Chief Bradley answered that there is collision insurance carried with a \$1,000 deductible. Mr. Manchester asked if it was possible to go with a higher deductible or to self-insure. Ms. Griffin explained that some communities have opted for higher deductibles to reduce their premiums, but it has been found over the years that it is actually more cost effective

to use the \$1,000 deductible when the history of ambulance accidents is taken into consideration.

Mr. Manchester asked what the largest collision damage has been. Chief Bradley answered that the largest one he recalls is an aerial ladder bucket that hit an overhanging tree limb which cost just under \$50,000 to repair.

Human Services

Ms. Griffin noted that there are no significant changes in the Human Services budget. They continue to try to fine tune the General Assistance account, which is welfare assistance provided to Hanover clients, plus taxes that are abated due to hardship which are paid out of this line item.

Mr. Walsh questioned the increase in alcohol diversion fees. Mr. Gilbar explained that the funds actually carry over from year to year and do not get absorbed into the General Fund. They are carried over as deferred revenue and treated as surplus funds as revenue from the previous year.

Ms. Black stated that she has a problem with eliminating the money for the part-time health inspector. Ms. Griffin explained that she has tried to find someone interested in the job but has not been successful. Ms. Black suggested that the position be advertised again. She noted that inspections are not being received by the State in a timely manner, and that Hanover has a responsibility to its citizens to have its restaurants inspected on a regular basis. Ms. Black suggested that the item be kept in the budget as she feels it is one of the vital things that the Town should be doing. Mr. Walsh recommended that the item be put on the list for further discussion.

Regarding the Sawyer Welfare Fund, Ms. Black asked why it was being decreased to \$400 next year if \$500 was received this year. Mr. Gilbar explained that only \$400 was received last year, and the assumption was that the income will be relatively stable.

Mr. Walsh asked what special items would be in front of Town Meeting. Ms. Griffin explained that the following items would be in front of Town Meeting: CATV - \$5,000; Joigny - \$1,000; Nihonmatsu - \$1,000; ACORN - \$2,000; and The Family Place - \$2,000. She noted that on the wish list she has included additional money for Youth in Action and Headrest because they asked for more funds than she recommended in the proposed budget.

Dena Romero indicated that Mr. Gilbar had proposed a process to use for the Revenue that comes from the Sawyer Trust, and she wanted to make sure that the Board approved that process. Mr. Gilbar explained that he has shown the revenue of \$400 as an appropriation. Although it is a small amount of money, he noted that it could be used to cover areas of general assistance that do not fall within the current guidelines. During the course of the year Ms. Romero would make the expenditures and they would be reported to the Selectmen for their approval. The funds would be requested from the trustees of the Sawyer Trust at the end of the year along with any other requests.

Ms. Black suggested that Ms. Romero provide an annual report for approval of the Board rather than going through each expenditure. The Board concurred with this suggestion.

Housing Fund

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to adjourn as the Board of Selectmen and to reconvene as the Housing Authority Board. Ms. Connolly SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN AS THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND TO RECONVENE AS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD.

Ms. Griffin indicated that the Housing Fund supports the housing facility at Summer Park on Lebanon Street. Also housed within the Housing Fund is a portion of the Senior Center program which is allocated and a portion which is allocated through the Parks and Rec budget to the General Fund. Senior Center maintenance is supported by the Housing Fund, and Senior Center programs are supported by the General Fund and allocated to the General Fund in the Parks and Rec Department budget. She indicated that there are no remarkable recommendations in the Housing Fund budget for the coming year.

Ms. Griffin explained that the chief sources of revenue are tenant rental payments; this number fluctuates depending on who the tenants are and what their income eligibility is. Another large source of revenue is HUD funding that flows through the Hanover Housing Authority to support the operations of the facility.

Ms. Griffin explained that Professional Services largely reflects the Lebanon Housing Authority contract which has been a huge help in dealing with the day to day management issues of that facility.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that savings have been seen in utilities largely because of an electric audit conducted by Granite State Electric during which new energy saving lighting was installed. Several of the appliances were also upgraded resulting in less expensive energy costs. She added, however, that the facility is still somewhat expensive because of electric heat.

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to approve the Housing Fund Budget for FY 2000/2001. Mr. Colligan SECONDED THE MOTION and the Housing Authority Board VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE HOUSING FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2000/2001.

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to adjourn as the Housing Authority Board. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Housing Authority Board VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN AS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD.

Mr. Colligan MADE THE MOTION to reconvene as the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Black SECONDED THE MOTION and the Housing Authority Board VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO RECONVENE AS THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

3. RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE VALLEY NET PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE WIDE AREA NETWORK SERVICES TO THE TOWN OF HANOVER.

MIS Coordinator Corey Stevens explained that he has worked with Valley Net on the Valley Net proposal for an exchange of some space in the basement of Town Hall in return for the Town receiving the line items presented in the proposal for maintaining the wide area network throughout the Town.

Mr. Walsh noted that it appears as though Mr. Stevens has put together a good deal for the Town and a good deal for Valley Net. He asked what would happen if the Town Hall were to be sold within the next five years. Ms. Griffin answered that if that occurred then Valley Net would have to find a new location; the lease runs with the current owner of the property. An agreement will still need to be reached with Valley Net; Mr. Stevens wanted to be sure that the concept was something the Board was comfortable with.

Mr. Walsh stated that he feels the agreement is a great value to the Town as it will use space that is not terribly central to the Town's operation. Ms. Griffin explained that the location of the space is in the southeast corner of the building.

Mr. Colligan MADE THE MOTION to approve the Valley Net proposal to provide wide area network services to the Town of Hanover subject to the proposed agreement. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE VALLEY NET PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE WIDE AREA NETWORK SERVICES TO THE TOWN OF HANOVER SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED AGREEMENT.

2. RECOMMENDATION TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR MARCH 20, 2000 TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO ALL POLE LICENSES ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RELATED TO THE TAXING OF UTILITY POLES PURSUANT TO RSA 231:163.

Mr. Manchester asked how many dollars of extra revenue are anticipated as a result of enabling the Town to assess a tax on the land encumbered by the utility poles. Ms. Griffin answered that it will be necessary to do a complete inventory of the poles. Mike Ryan stated that he will request a full inventory from Bell Atlantic and from Granite State Electric. The revenue anticipated cannot be determined until that inventory has been received.

Ms. Griffin pointed out that this is a landmark decision in the State Supreme Court. It will result in an important source of additional revenue, but more importantly it recognizes the impact the utility poles have on the right-of-ways.

Mr. Manchester asked how the area a pole is taking up is determined. Mr. Ryan answered that Rochester in the past was using 9 sq.ft. per pole and 27 ft. for guide wires. The court case only decided whether they were taxable or nontaxable, it did not make a judgment on the proper way to assess the value.

Ms. Connolly MADE THE MOTION to set a public hearing for March 20, 2000 to consider an amendment to all pole licenses issued by the Board of Selectmen related to the taxing of utility poles pursuant to RSA 231:163. Ms. Black SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR MARCH 20, 2000 TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO ALL POLE LICENSES ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RELATED TO THE TAXING OF UTILITY POLES PURSUANT TO RSA 231:163.

4. RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE COPIER LEASE.

Ms. Griffin stated that the new copier is on loan so that the Town could try it out by copying the budget document. There were 30,000 free copies offered to try out the copier, so the budget copies were virtually free.

Mr. Gilbar explained that one of the main reasons for looking at a digital copier is that it actually does three functions; it acts as a copier, a printer and a fax machine. He noted that there are some desk jet printers in the Town Hall which are in bad shape and will cost more to fix than to replace. Also, the cost of printing to a laser jet printer is higher than it is to a copier printer. It costs less than a penny a page on the copier and 7 or 8 cents a page on the laser printers. Mr. Gilbar added that the finance charge is built into the lease cost.

Mr. Walsh pointed out that more and more the Town is going to want to have all of its copiers leased from one vendor for all parts of Town. If the Town enters into a single lease with this particular copier, it would make it hard to put it into a broader master lease. He would like to see a provision included that if there is a lease for several pieces of equipment, that this copier lease can get rolled into it as a credit. He would like to see the lease term staggered so that a bigger lease position is available.

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to approve the copier lease as presented to the Board in its packet of information of March 3, 2000. Mr. Manchester SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE COPIER LEASE AS PRESENTED TO THE BOARD IN ITS PACKET OF INFORMATION OF MARCH 3, 2000.

5. RECOMMENDATION OF ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS TO APPROVE ABATEMENT APPLICATIONS.

Assessor Mike Ryan stated that the recommendation for abatement applications was as a result of data errors in old records.

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to approve the Advisory Board of Assessor's recommendation to approve abatement applications of February 29, 1999. Mr. Colligan SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSOR'S RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE ABATEMENT APPLICATIONS OF FEBRUARY 29, 1999.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

Ms. Griffin indicated that she has been busy working on the first draft of the Warrant. She added that the Planning Board is still working through their Zoning Ordinance Amendments, with the second public hearing yet to come.

Ms. Griffin reported that she had been involved in meetings with various department heads and Mary Munter, and has an upcoming meeting with Whitman Press with regard to the Town Report.

8. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS.

Ms. Connolly

Ms. Connolly reported that the upcoming Planning Board meeting of March 7 will include two cases, one for Dartmouth College and the other for Simpson Development.

Ms. Connolly referred to a copy of a conservation easement which was included in the Board's information. This easement is in relation to a request from the College for a zoning change on land that adjoins the golf course. As part of this request, it was suggested that a conservation easement be put on the land to keep it from turning into anything other than a golf course. The Town would be the recipient of this conservation easement. She explained that the Town has to be satisfied with and accept the conservation easement in order for the Planning Board to include it on the Warrant. Ms. Connolly noted that the easement refers only to 10 acres, not the entire golf course.

Ms. Griffin stated that she will put the matter on the Board's agenda for March 20th.

Mr. Walsh recalled that the land in question is all wetlands and steep slopes. Ms. Connolly explained that the area contains two ravines that come toward each other in the middle.

Ms. Griffin noted that the concern was that rezoning could end up with it becoming more intensively developed, and Dartmouth College has indicated it would like to put a conservation easement on it as a guarantee that it would continue to be used as a golf course.

Ms. Black

Ms. Black reported that the Recycling Committee met, and she will have information for the Board when the Recycling budget is discussed.

Mr. Manchester

Mr. Manchester reported that the Planning Board meeting of March 7th will deal with the Dartmouth College Valley Road project.

Mr. Colligan

Mr. Colligan reported that he had reviewed the information provided to him regarding home rule, and although he still does not understand how it will apply, he will support it.

Mr. Walsh

Mr. Walsh reported that the Community Substance Abuse Advisory Committee met recently and had a very good meeting.

9. OTHER BUSINESS.

There was no other business to come before the meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT.


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

Ms. Black MADE THE MOTION to go to non-public session to discuss a matter which may affect the reputation of an individual. Ms. Connolly 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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


John Colligan, Secretary

These minutes were taken and transcribed by Nancy Richards.