

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 1996

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, Marilyn W. Black. Present were: Marilyn W. Black, Chairman; Jack H. Nelson, Vice Chairman, Katherine S. Connolly, Dorothy Behlen Heinrichs, Dorothy King, Clifford R. Vermilya, Town Manager and members of the public.

Ms. Black announced that this meeting was being taped by CATV6 and that assistive listening devices were available for anyone who wished to use them.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Buskey recently submitted a letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding the possibility of instituting a dog ordinance, and asked the Board for their comments.

Ms. Connolly stated she felt the issue should be placed on an agenda. She commented that neighboring communities have dog ordinances in effect, and that the problem in the Town of Hanover has now become a public health hazard, not only on the playing fields and people's lawns, but also in the downtown area.

Ms. Heinrichs commented that particularly there is a problem with dogs on the Dartmouth campus, and that the Town needs to address unsupervised pet behavior.

Mr. Buskey stated that the problem with dog waste occurs even when the dogs are supervised or on a leash.

Ms. Black indicated that this problem will be put on an agenda for a future meeting.

Stanley Udy, a resident of 3 Butternut Lane, asked the Board to set the walk light at Main Street at the corner near the Hanover Inn to allow for safer pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Vermilya stated that the traffic lights are a budget item under capital projects. He further stated that six or eight years ago as a result of two separate traffic studies, the Board made a decision to eliminate the push button walkway in an effort to improve traffic flow. The push buttons are still there, but they cannot be activated. Mr. Vermilya also indicated that the present controller is maximized in terms of

the cycles that it permits. If the Board wishes to have an exclusive walk light cycle, a new controller would have to be purchased.

Ms. Heinrichs asked whether setting the controller for "all walk only" that is triggered by a timer rather than a push button would lessen the impact on the backup of traffic.

Mr. Vermilya stated that traffic would still backup more than it is now, but would not backup as much as if it were triggered by a pushbutton.

Ms. Black stated that the Board would be discussing capital projects in the budget, and that this issue would come up again.

2. PRESENTATION OF TOWN MANAGER'S PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 1996-97 BUDGET

Mr. Vermilya stated that the budget represents six different funds: General fund, fire fund and sidewalk fund (all of which are tax supported funds) and the sewer, ambulance and parking fund (none of which are tax supported funds). The grand total for those six funds asks for an appropriation of \$10,159,409, which is an increase of \$514,336, or 5.3% over the total appropriations for the current year.

Mr. Vermilya explained that one of the reasons the appropriation is higher than in past years is that it includes three major pieces of equipment: A fire truck at \$240,000; a sidewalk plow at \$45,000 and an ambulance at \$75,000, for a total of \$360,000. If you take these three amounts out of the appropriation, the total increase in the six budgets is \$154,336, or 1.6%. He further stated that these three pieces of equipment are funded from the capital reserve fund and will not affect the tax rate.

Mr. Vermilya indicated that the budget as presented would call for an increase in the general and average fire fund tax rates of 6 cents or .88 percent. The total increase in the sidewalk district would be 5 cents or .70 percent. For those businesses in the downtown area who participate in the parking district assessment, a reduction is recommended from \$40,000 to \$35,000.

Mr. Vermilya stated there are no new positions requested, but extended hours for the computer management information expert and the children's librarian at Howe Library.

Mr. Vermilya indicated there are no new programs, but two extended programs as follows:

(1) To extend onto Maynard Street the new street lighting program which was started on the Dartmouth campus two years ago. The Town will be rebuilding Maynard Street this coming summer with a combination of Town forces and college funding of the materials, and in the process will continue the street lighting program.

In the summer of 1997, the Town plans to rebuild North College Street and extend street lights down North College Street to Lyme Road.

(2) To improve maintenance on the playing fields, which are utilized spring, summer and fall, and are beginning to show wear. A professional analysis done on the quality of the turf indicated that the fields should be fertilized and treated with a weed killing process twice a year, and the budget includes funds for this maintenance.

With regard to the operating departments, Mr. Vermilya stated that the largest single increase is in the police department which shows an increase of 10.4%. The primary reason for this increase is the need to replace the police cruisers, at an amount just under \$50,000. He commented that three years ago, the cruisers were leased on a two year basis, with the third year free. It is proposed to lease the cruisers this year on a three year basis. Without this item included, the increase in the police department budget goes from 10.4% to 4.9%.

Mr. Vermilya indicated that another significant increase in the budget is in the area of town property management, stating that a 4% to 5% increase is anticipated in electric rates, a 10% increase in sewer rates and a 25% increase in water rates.

Mr. Vermilya stated that under capital improvements there is funding appropriated to replace the heating system in the municipal building.

Mr. Vermilya noted that capital projects in the general fund shows a significant decrease. He indicated that the reason for this decrease is that for the last three years the Town has been financing renovations to the public works garage at a rate of \$125,000 each year, adding to last year's appropriation \$125,000 from the sand and gravel reserve. This year, the Board intends to submit to the town meeting a bond issue for \$600,000 to \$700,000 to complete the renovations to the public works garage, therefore, it is not an item for an annual appropriation under capital improvements.

With regard to the fire fund, Mr. Vermilya noted that the major increase is \$240,000 for a new fire truck, which will be housed at the main station. The present engine at the main station will become a backup. Funds are in the reserve fund for this purpose, so it will not have an effect on the tax rate. Removing this expense for the new fire truck and \$30,000 which is requested to complete the second phase of the new roof on the Etna Station, the increase in the fire fund equals 2.6%.

Mr. Vermilya stated that the sidewalk fund shows a significant increase of approximately 80%, or \$44,000. However, the budget includes \$45,000 for replacement of the sidewalk plow, which is paid for by reserve funds and does not have an effect on the tax rate.

Mr. Vermilya indicated that an analysis of the sewer fund indicates that the budget will have to increase 10% in order to allow the sewer rental rates to support the operation of the sewer treatment system. Sewer rental rates are based on water usage; in recent years water usage in Hanover has shown no increase, and the rate has not been raised since 1992. Mr. Vermilya further noted that in the spring of 1996 the rate will probably be set by the Board, and the sewer fund will have to increase by 10%. Otherwise, there are no significant increases in the sewer fund expenditures, except for the acquisition of additional chemicals to treat the sludge, which is a necessity.

Mr. Vermilya commented that although the proposed budget shows an increase in the ambulance fund of 31%, the majority of which consists of the purchase of a new ambulance, he has recommended changes in this amount. He is recommending an increase in the amount of money proposed to purchase a different type of ambulance than previously planned. The funds for this purchase are from the reserve fund, and will not have an effect on either the community's contribution or the fees charged.

With regard to the parking fund, Mr. Vermilya noted that the parking fund budget shows a total increase of \$1,600, or approximately 3/10 of a percent, and would require \$5,000 less in assessment against the parking district. He further indicated that since the budget was presented the Town has received estimates from the consultants regarding the cost of converting the back parking lot from a metered to a managed lot, which represent a significant increase in cost.

Mr. Nelson commented on the line item for the bond to complete the improvements at the public works garage. He recommended that \$125,00 be put back into capital improvements in the event that the bond issue fails, as there is no money set aside for this purpose.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL LOCATION PROPOSED COMMUNITY CENTER

Ms. Black noted that at the meeting of January 22, 1996, the selectmen authorized Mr. Vermilya to sign an agreement regarding the Roberts property on Park Street, which abuts the Senior Housing complex. She indicated that the present community center building which is located at 42 Lebanon Street, is structurally in need of repairs and is too small for its existing use. Ms. Black further discussed financing options, including money received from the Elm Street swap, money in the housing authority fund and money being held in escrow which was received by the Town as a result of the Kendal tax litigation matter. Use of any of these options as a financing source would not affect the tax rate.

Mr. Nelson asked what amount of money was received from Dartmouth College on the Elm Street swap. Ms. Black replied that it was \$225,000 plus three to four years of interest, for a total close to \$250,000. She further indicated that there was approximately \$400,000 as a result of the Kendal tax litigation.

Mr. Vermilya noted that at the resolution of the Kendal tax case, Kendal paid the current year's amount plus an amount for previous years. The amount for previous years was placed in reserve to avoid a large dip in the tax rate which would only have increased again. He further noted that there was approximately \$110,000 available in the housing fund.

Mr. Nelson commented that Kendal had paid the money before the case was actually settled in a show of good faith.

Ms. Black indicated the cost to purchase the Roberts property is \$155,000, with possession taking place within five years or sooner, depending on the disposition the Roberts family wishes to make.

Bill Baschnagle asked if the plan was to expand the senior center as well as the youth center. Mr. Nelson indicated that the Board feels this location is better for a recreation center because of its proximity to the public schools. He further noted that the present recreation center was purchased with parking district funds, and that long-term the property would go back to the parking district.

Ms. Black indicated that the office of Dena Romero, the community counselor, is located on the second floor of 42 Lebanon Street and is not handicap accessible. As Ms. Romero deals with a number of elderly clients, her office should be relocated on a ground floor level. Ms. Black questioned the condition of the Roberts house and if it could be used as it exists for a recreation center and office space. Mr. Vermilya indicated that is familiar with the Roberts house, and its condition is much superior to the present senior center or community center.

Steve Buskey asked how large the Roberts lot is. Mr. Vermilya answered that the lot is not of consistent measurements, but approximates 16,376 sq.ft.

Mr. Nelson made a recommendation that the financing for the purchase of the Roberts property should come from the funds available from the Elm Street exchange, as that exchange had to do with recreation and the primary use of this acquisition will be for recreation.

Ms. Black noted that this proposal must go to town meeting; the Town has signed an intent to buy the property with the approval of town meeting.

Mr. Nelson commented that the proposal at town meeting will have two facets; (1) the purchase of the property; and (2) the funding of the purchase.

4. TO CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON TOWN MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the town manager's job description as presented and discussed minor revisions and wording changes.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Nelson MADE THE MOTION to approve the town manager's job description as rewritten. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE TOWN MANAGER'S JOB DESCRIPTION AS REWRITTEN.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Vermilya had nothing to report.

Mr. Nelson MADE THE MOTION to accept the results of the January 25, 1996 meeting of the advisory board of assessors. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF THE JANUARY 25, 1996 MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

6. SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Ms. King

Ms. King had nothing to report.

Mr. Nelson

Mr. Nelson noted that on February 1, 1996 there will be a meeting of the committee putting together the public works project, and also a meeting of the parking and transportation board.

Ms. Connolly

Ms. Connolly indicated that the planning board is working on zoning amendments.

Ms. Heinrichs

Ms. Heinrichs asked for a volunteer to serve on the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee By-Ways Committee.

Ms. Black

Ms. Black NOMINATED Diane Fredyma to serve on the Connecticut River Watershed Council. The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE NOMINATION OF DIANE FREDYMA TO SERVE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL.

Ms. Black stated that the trails committee had sent in an application recently to be awarded a Trail Town U.S.A. designation for the Town of Hanover.

Ms. Black read a letter she had received from the New Hampshire Citizens Action Group requesting the Board of Selectmen to put an article on the warrant concerning limitations on political contributions.

Mr. Nelson suggested that this would be a good warrant item. Ms. Black noted that the information would be on file at the town hall if anyone were interested in getting this issue on the warrant.

Jack Stimson, representing the recreation board, reported on results of a survey completed for the planning commission which shows what the public wants in terms of recreation: More walking trails (40%); more bike trails (48%); new recreation center (33%) and tennis courts (24%). Mr. Stimson noted that the City of Lebanon is putting a bike trail from Lebanon to the hospital, with a link-up to Greensboro Road. Mr. Stimson asked the Board of Selectmen how to get the Town of Hanover recreation department involved in the creation of bike trails, etc.

Ms. Connolly reported there is money available for a bike trail which leaves Brook Road and goes through the Barrett-Ransmeier property, the college property and the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center property, ending up on the access road to the hospital. If built, this bike path will connect Norwich, Vt. to Lebanon, N.H.

Ms. Connolly stated they have 80% of the funds necessary for the Town's portion of the bike trail; the other 20% is subject to voter approval. There is \$210,000 available from the Department of Transportation to fund this project.

Mr. Nelson suggested that the rec board request information from the planning board as to how the rec board might begin to get involved in the bike path construction.

Ms. Connolly indicated that the project will require zoning approval as well as approval from the boards in Lebanon, but that it is not a planning board issue.

Ms. Black stated that if the rec board would come up with a proposal for a bike path that is local in nature and that the Board can do internally, the rec board should submit that proposal to the Board of Selectmen.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Heinrichs MADE THE MOTION to adjourn. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Ms. Heinrichs MADE THE MOTION to go to nonpublic session to discuss matters that may affect the reputation of an individual. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO TO NONPUBLIC SESSION TO DISCUSS MATTERS THAT MAY AFFECT THE REPUTATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

SUMMARY

1. After a brief discussion, Mr. Nelson MADE THE MOTION to approve the town manager's job description as rewritten. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE TOWN MANAGER'S JOB DESCRIPTION AS REWRITTEN.
2. Mr. Nelson MADE THE MOTION to accept the results of the January 25, 1996 meeting of the advisory board of assessors. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF THE JANUARY 25, 1996 MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ASSESSORS.
3. Ms. Black NOMINATED Diane Fredyma to serve on the Connecticut River Watershed Council. The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE NOMINATION OF DIANE FREDYMA TO SERVE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL.
4. Ms. Heinrichs MADE THE MOTION to adjourn. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
5. Ms. Heinrichs MADE THE MOTION to go to nonpublic session to discuss matters that may affect the reputation of an individual. Ms. King SECONDED THE MOTION and the Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO TO NONPUBLIC SESSION TO DISCUSS MATTERS THAT MAY AFFECT THE REPUTATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

Respectfully submitted,


Dorothy C. King, Secretary

These minutes were taken and transcribed by Nancy A. Richards.