

Selectboard
April 7, 2025
FINAL

SELECTBOARD MEETING
April 7, 2025

7PM - MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING - HANOVER, NH

The meeting of the Selectboard was called to order at 7p.m. by C. Callaghan, Chair.

Also present were: Athos Rassias, Selectboard Member, Rob Houseman, Town Manager, Jennie Chamberlain, Selectboard Member, Jarett Berke, Secretary, Ellen Bullion, Finance Director

Absent: Joanna Whitcomb, Vice Chair

*Meeting audio on the video recording does not start until 7:23PM – item 4a.

1. Opening of Meeting

a. Call to Order

C. Callaghan called the meeting to order.

2. Agenda Review

None

3. Public Comment

a. Public may address the Board

Sharon Racusin, Cummings Rd spoke on the petition warrant she submitted for Town Meeting regarding the 287G program relating to Immigration. The program entangles local and state law enforcement and correctional institutions into federal immigration law. On top of pulling these people away from their primary tasks, the program has many issues including racism, profiling, and stereotypes.

The petition asks to prevent the Hanover police from participating or entering into any agreements of the program.

The Board noted in 2020 they created a Fair and Impartial Policing Ordinance. R. Houseman will distribute it to Selectboard members.

Susan Holcombe, 35 Cummings Road spoke on a petition warrant relating to school vouchers and the fiscal responsibility to reject any expansion of taxpayer funding for private education.

David Vincelette, 93 Lebanon St addressed issues he brings to all Selectboard meetings claiming local government officials have broken state and federal laws against him and calling for their response and investigations into these matters. Additionally, he asked who authorized the dumping of asphalt waste into the water and how the public was notified of the dumping.

4. Public Hearing

C. Callaghan noted the public hearings will be tabled tonight and picked up again at a meeting anticipated for April 14th.

a. Pre-Town Meeting Public Hearing including approval of Town Warrant

R. Houseman led the Board through the warrant articles explaining the purpose of each as necessary.

The first four are set and no action is required by the Board.

Article 5:

No board or public comments.

At 7:17 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve Article 5 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

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Article 6:

Public comments:

Kari Asmus, Etna resident, asked for additional information on the item which R. Houseman addressed. If the language is supplied by the state and not revisable, the explanatory information for the warrant article should better explain what the request is and what it's to be used for.

Additional research is to be done- no motion taken at this time.

Audio began at this point of the video streaming.

At 7:26 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 6. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

Article 7 and 8

No board or public comments.

At 7:27 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 7. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 7:27 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 8. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

Article 9

No board or public comments

At 7:28 pm J. Chamberlain MOVED to support Article 9. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

Article 10

R. Houseman introduced the item, explained what the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district mechanism is, that Hanover adopted it many years ago, and how it can be utilized to fund debt service to make improvements. The first step is to create the district, the second step is to devise a plan, and the third step is to present it at Town Meeting for appropriation. This is the first step in the process.

He gave a more thorough description of the item and the process and showed a slide presentation that informed the purpose of a TIF and the proposed improvements to downtown and some concept designs.

C. Callaghan noted this is the beginning of the process and there will be extensive discussion over the course of the year. Additionally, the public hearing will remain open through the next meeting.

R. Houseman also noted the staff is working on projecting the increased assessed value upcoming this year which will play a role in this decision process.

Public Comment:

Ben Keeney, Farm Rd and Chair of Dresden School Board (speaking as an individual since the Board has not yet discussed this item). He expressed concerns about the process and timeline of the creation of a TIF district and the school boards not yet having been informed per RSA statute.

R. Houseman addressed the comment indicating the steps he took to inform the school boards that he has since learned it didn't get to everyone, and he then directly emailed the individuals the information.

Doug Lance, 179 Lyme Road explained he is out in downtown on the sidewalks eight hours a day as his office. He talks to people and the lack of parking is an obstacle for people coming to town. He is not in favor of losing parking.

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Kari Asmus, Etna resident, commented that the diagonal parking is great for bicyclists because the driver is aware they can't see so they back up slowly. She spoke about changes to assessed valuation over the past years, read from the statute, and asked about the consequences of assessments going down in the TIF district.

Whit Spaulding, Etna asked about the process for switching from TIF to general revenue bond if that option is decided.

R. Houseman addressed the question.

John Dolan, Etna resident, addressed the process and the statute. As Chair of the CIPC it's important for him and the committee members to understand it before it is put into law. The CIPC held a meeting on Friday, though the school board liaison noted the school board had no knowledge of the TIF proposal. He recommended this not go to Town Meeting this year – wait to be sure all regulations have been followed correctly regarding its set up before bringing it to the residents.

Mia Vogt, School Street and South Main Street is not initially in favor of the street designs presented.

Ryan Romano, 8 Dairy Lane asked about the funding of the TIF in relation to taxes. R. Houseman explained the funding comes from the increased value of new growth in the district.

Mr. Romano expressed concerns about getting new renters/ businesses to come to the downtown, existing parking issues and concern for less parking and parallel parking and outdoor seating areas.

Kim Hartmann expressed concerns about the school board not receiving the financial impact data per legal requirement. She clarified for folks that this warrant article is not about the project itself. This is about defining the TIF district and the financing mechanism. She further clarified that the 100% of the funds will go to the Town not any portion to the schools. (75% to the projects, 25% to the Town general operating fund) This has been drawn up by Town staff, and there could be better revenue sharing ideas if the Town is willing to work with the school boards on the idea. She expressed frustration that the proposed TIF district assessed value as of April 1, 2025, is not yet available.

She expounded on her opinions on what should and shouldn't be done regarding this proposal and her concerns about the town tax rate vs school tax rate and the lack of appropriate process.

The Board discussed with R. Houseman the various deadlines upcoming.

Kelly McConnell, Chair of Hanover School Board highlighted that there are a lot of unanswered questions about the proposal as well as about Federal and State funding right now.

C. Callaghan again reiterated this will be taken up again at next week's meeting.

Article 11

At 8:40 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 11 as written. J. Berke SECONDED.

E. Bullion described an amendment to the article for \$500,000 which was part of the budget discussions. She gave additional information which adjusted some of the figures in the warrant article.

A. Rassias accepted the amendment.

No public comments.

Vote: All in favor

Article 12

E. Bullion described an amendment to the article.

No public comments.

At 8:45 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 12 as amended. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

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Article 13 and Article 14

At 8:47 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 13 and 14 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED.

J. Chamberlain offered an amendment for clarity on the naming to include the right of way and allow for complete streets development. R. Houseman explained some restrictions on what and how these articles need to proceed, but noted they can prepare some options on the next steps and wording and move forward in the spirit of the suggestion with Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and Town Counsel approvals.

Public Comment

Kari Asmus, Etna resident, spoke about road construction and improvement fund and CIPC projects and where particular funding should go for the road projects versus the building projects. She also asked for some language clarifications for the article.

R. Houseman agreed the language at the end about Selectboard as agents is not necessary and can be struck.

9:05pm Vote (Article 13 only) All in favor

Article 14 and 15 will not be acted on until the next meeting due to the changes necessary to the language.

Article 16

R. Houseman gave background information.

No board or public comments.

At 9:08 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 16 as written. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

Article 17

No board or public comments.

At 9:08 pm C. Callaghan MOVED to support Article 17 as amended. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

Article 18

At 9:09 pm C. Callaghan MOVED to support Article 18 as amended. J. Berke SECONDED.

Public Comment

Kari Asmus, Etna commented that the statute requires the governing body to make the decision on spending rather than just be informed about the spending.

All in favor

Article 19

E. Bullion explained an amendment to the article funding amounts.

At 9:12 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 19 as amended. A. Rassias SECONDED.

Public Comment

Kari Asmus, Etna commented she appreciates the progress on the website dashboard, but four of the budget related links don't work properly/ require a password. She also requested the (existing) TIF district be included in the budget as a supplemental schedule.

Vote: All in favor

Articles 20, 21, 22

R. Houseman noted the office received a request from Kari Asmus relating to Elderly, Blind and Disabled exemptions and provided supporting documentation. This is pertinent because of the anticipated increased assessments coming with this year's revaluation. R. Houseman has provided updated draft language for the warrants affected to the Board for review.

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R. Houseman and Kari Asmus gave detailed descriptions and explanations.

At 9:26 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 20 as written. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:26 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 21 as written. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:26 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 22 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Public hearing continued until the next meeting.

b. Proposed South Main and West Wheelock TIF District Warrant

Public hearing was continued to the next meeting

5. Announcements/recognition

None

6. Business Requiring Discussion

None

7. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Rob Houseman highlighted the following department updates:

- Fire
- Planning, Zoning, Codes
- DPW
- Police

8. Business Requiring Action

a. Approval of authorization request for allocation of NHSAVES rebate to complete ornamental LED streetlight replacements

The town received a Department of Energy (DOE) grant of \$271,000 with a local share of \$129,000 (\$32.25%) to change inefficient utility owned streetlights. All of the utility owned streetlights in Hanover have been replaced with LED network controllable lights as of July 2024. The project budget is \$400,000, we have spent \$273,000, leaving \$127,000 unexpended. The request is for the Selectboard to allocate \$27,367.80 NHSaves rebate to replace the town owned ornamental streetlights and in the event the Department of Energy reimburses the town with the Federal share, the funds be reallocated to other energy improvements approved by the Town Manager.

At 9:33 pm J. Berke MOVED to Approve the authorization request for allocation of NHSAVES rebate to complete ornamental LED streetlight replacements. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

b. Approval of March 24, 2025, Selectboard Minutes

This item was continued to the next meeting.

c. Approval of Items i to ii by Consent

i. Donation – Etna Library

\$20.00 given by Jeremey Merritt and Emily Biolsi

ii. Banner Requests – Pods for the Pulpit Crafts Fair

Pods for the Pulpit Crafts Fair sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley (UUCUV).

All proceeds from the fair will support the Upper Valley Haven.

This item was continued to the next meeting.

9. Selectboard Reports

- J. Berke
 - Downtown working group
- J. Whitcomb
 - No Report
- C. Callaghan
 - CIPC
 - Finance Committee
- A. Rassias
 - Nothing to Report
- J. Chamberlain
 - Planning Board, advanced 2 zoning articles
 - Sustainability
 - Earth Week Fair Saturday, April 26th 3-5PM, many participants

Other Business

None

10. Adjournment

Per NH RSA 91-A:3:II A, B, D, E and L, the Selectboard needed to attend a non-public session. The Board moved and took a roll call vote to enter the non-public session.

At 9:37pm A. Rassias MOVED to enter nonpublic session. J. Berke SECONDED.

Roll call vote: Rassias- yes, Callaghan- yes, Chamberlain- yes, Berke- yes

The board entered non-public session at 9:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jarett Berke, Secretary

SUMMARY

Item 4

At 7:17 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve Article 5 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

At 7:26 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 6. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 7:27 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 7. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 7:27 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 8. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 7:28 pm J. Chamberlain MOVED to support Article 9. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 8:40 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 11 as written. (then amended) J. Berke SECONDED. Vote: All in favor

At 8:45 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 12 as amended. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

At 8:47 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 13 and 14 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED.

9:05pm Vote (Article 13 only) All in favor

At 9:08 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 16 as written. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:08 pm C. Callaghan MOVED to support Article 17 as amended. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

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At 9:09 pm C. Callaghan MOVED to support Article 18 as amended. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:12 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 19 as amended. A. Rassias SECONDED. Vote: All in favor

At 9:26 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 20 as written. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:26 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 21 as written. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 9:26 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 22 as written. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8a

At 9:33 pm J. Berke MOVED to Approve the authorization request for allocation of NHSAVES rebate to complete ornamental LED streetlight replacements. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

Item 10

At 9:37pm A. Rassias MOVED to enter nonpublic session. J. Berke SECONDED.

Roll call vote: Rassias- yes, Callaghan- yes, Chamberlain- yes, Berke- yes

The Board entered non-public session at 9:37pm.