

SELECTBOARD MEETING
April 14, 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, Joanna Whitcomb, Vice Chair, Jennie Chamberlain, Selectboard Member, Jarett Berke, Secretary, Ellen Bullion, Finance Director

Absent: None

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

David Vincelette, 93 Lebanon Street 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.

He asked if the room monitors are available for public to show pictures and videos. Board and staff noted items to be presented would likely need to be submitted ahead of time to be included in the public packet materials.

4. Public Hearing

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

R. Houseman supplied materials and recommendations in advance regarding the articles that were tabled until this meeting.

Article 10

J. Whitcomb recused herself from Article 10 discussion.

R. Houseman recommended withdrawing the TIF Warrant Article and allocating funding for design, financial analysis, and public outreach. He supplied a memo detailing the recommendation.

Based on the feedback received at the 4/4/25 CIPC meeting, the 4/10/2025 Selectboard meeting, and the 4/9/2025 Hanover School Board meeting, R. Houseman recommended that the Selectboard table the current Tax Increment Financing (TIF) warrant article and instead appropriate \$150,000 to the Town Manager's FY26 budget to retain a qualified consultant. This funding would support the development of preliminary designs, updated construction cost estimates, and a comprehensive evaluation of all potential funding mechanisms, including but not limited to a TIF District.

R. Houseman explained the rationale itemized in the memo for use of the requested funds.

He also explained the tax revenue that will go to the general fund rather than improvements to the TIF District if the Board decision is to delay creating the TIF district.

He provided a spreadsheet for a \$14,000,000 bond showing results of fixed principal payments.

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Board discussion:

J. Chamberlain does not agree to postpone the process. It is a dereliction of duty to push these projects down the road. The funding mechanism is not the only thing at stake. The infrastructure is in need of repairs. If we do not advance the TIF this year we need to put money aside for it, not just for outreach and studies, but for preliminary designs to move the project forward.

C. Callaghan has concerns about starting the design process without having selected the final project.

J. Berke is in support of what J. Chamberlain is suggesting. The Gateway to our City should be well designed and it has been neglected for a long time. He was disappointed after the last meeting because the focus was pulled away from drawing the boundaries of the TIF and onto small design and finance details that are several steps ahead in the process.

R. Houseman gave details on what the request of \$150,000 will do to move the project forward.

J. Berke clarified he is in support of the staff recommendation for Article 10.

A. Rassias is also in support.

J. Chamberlain is recommending allocating \$200,000 to \$400,000 to develop the designs in addition to the \$150,000 requested for outreach and research on the TIF.

R. Houseman reviewed some potential cost amounts for the project and the varying levels of design.

E. Bullion has a spreadsheet showing what allocating different amounts of funds will do to the undesignated fund balance percentage. Some of the numbers were reviewed.

Public Comment on Article 10:

Deb Nelson of Hanover is on the school board and commented that the school board understand the need for work on town infrastructure and they also have facility costs. After R. Houseman left the school board meeting, the board made a motion that was unanimously supported. She informed the Selectboard of that motion. (Read into the record)

Hanover School Board is opposed to the TIF at this time.

Doug Lance, 179 Lyme Road again expressed concerns about losing parking downtown. C. Callaghan and J. Berke explained the concept that was shown was just an idea, but there will be a lot of outreach and research before any decisions about that are made. Most of the funding being discussed is to work on and repair infrastructure.

Kari Asmus, of Etna, is in support of R. Houseman's amended recommendation for Article 10. She is concerned about the Town boards and School boards being on opposite sides of the issue. She suggests getting creative with the funding options and all working together. She gave additional funding opinions and options.

Some back and forth discussion and clarification comments were made by J. Berke following comments by K. Asmus (and previous comments made last week)

Ben Keeney, Farm Road and Chair of Dresden School Board reiterated his comments from last week to slow down and do the project right. He supports the amended Article 10 recommended tonight.

The Board members were in consensus to remove Article 10 from the warrant as recommended by the Town Manager.

C. Callaghan mentioned Article 19 will be the discussion whether to appropriate funds, either by raising taxes or reducing the undesignated fund balance and amend the budget accordingly.

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Article 14

R. Houseman proposed an updated recommendation for Article 14:

I recommend using "Road Right-of-Way" as part of the name for the consolidated CRF. This term does not conflict with the CRF statutes and is consistent with the Town's Road maintenance, repair, and reconstruction program. Road work routinely extends beyond the travel way and often includes shoulder work and drainage improvements. As written, this article would also enable the implementation of the adopted Complete Streets policy.

No public comments

At 8:13 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 14 as presented. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

Article 15

R. Houseman proposed an updated recommendation for Article 15:

I recommend reappropriating the Bridge CRF funds into the Capital Facilities Capital Reserve Funds. DPW notes that all future bridge work would be bonded and, therefore, this change does not adversely impact the Road Right-of-Way and Bridge Construction and Improvement Capital Reserve Fund.

No public comment

At 8:15 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 15 as presented. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

Article 19

If the board withdraws Article 10 -TIF district, R. Houseman recommends adding \$150,000 to the Operating Budget to fund a consultant as outlined above.

E. Bullion provided fund balance percentages based on the recommendation.

Board discussion:

J. Chamberlain is in favor of the recommendation. However, the \$150,000 will now be spent on partial designs of two projects and consulting fees on the financing options. She would like another \$300,000 be made available to fund designs so if ready later in the fiscal year, the project can move forward.

The Board discussed different amounts of money to appropriate and how that affects the fund balance percentage.

Public Comment

Kari Asmus, of Etna, believes if the original Article 10 had stayed in the warrant, there wouldn't have been \$150,000 in the budget for this purpose. She also commented that this is the type of funding that should come before the CIPC.

The Board was aware of the lack of funding for the TIF district and projects a few weeks ago, and that's why it's been added.

At 8:27 pm A. Rassias MOVED to increase the budget by \$200,000 from the undesignated fund balance to \$32,870,441. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. Vote: All in favor

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5. Adjournment

At 8:29 pm J. Whitcomb MOVED to adjourn. A. Rassias SECONDED. Vote: All in favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Jarett Berke, Secretary

SUMMARY

Item 4

At 8:13 pm A. Rassias MOVED to support Article 14 as presented. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

At 8:15 pm J. Berke MOVED to support Article 15 as presented. A. Rassias SECONDED. All in favor

At 8:27 pm A. Rassias MOVED to increase the budget by \$200,000 from the undesignated fund balance to \$32,870,441.

J. Chamberlain SECONDED. Vote: All in favor

Item 5

At 8:29 pm J. Whitcomb MOVED to adjourn. A. Rassias SECONDED. Vote: All in favor