

SELECTBOARD MEETING
June 16, 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: Rob Houseman, Town Manager, Jennie Chamberlain, Selectboard Member, Jarett Berke, Secretary

Absent: Athos Rassias, Selectboard Member, Joanna Whitcomb, Vice Chair

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

Mary Hakken-Phillips, 79 Lebanon Street, State Representative spoke about a letter she sent to the Board last week regarding the Fourth of July Parade Political speech waiver request. She is seeking a waiver for the time/place restrictions in the Fourth of July Parade rules and regulations. She added some concerns that were not included in her letter:

- If the restrictions are loosened it doesn't mean they can't be tightened back up again if needed
- The restriction was not applied equally to all participant groups
- Relates to rules of no political campaigning on the Dartmouth Green, however Hanover committees can carry campaign signs and are directed to the Green by officials to exit the parade
- There are no provisions in the regulations preventing people from holding their own signs on the side of the road which is an incentive to not participate in the parade

Most importantly, the Fourth of July is a celebration of historical politics. To separate politics out of it isn't logical.

Political speech can be uncomfortable, but Hanover residents can handle it and, in fact, value it. She also expressed concerns about safety for State Representatives based on recent events, spoke of the sacrifices representatives make, and how important it is to stand up for important rights, such as free speech.

She requests the Selectboard waive the political speech restrictions for this year's parade.

C. Callaghan made comments addressing the Green and that there should be a solution there, freedom of speech, examples from other parades in the State, and current relationship between military and politics.

J. Chamberlain asked for clarification about what the time, place, and manner restrictions are. Ms. Hakken-Phillips noted it is posted on the Parks and Recreation website, but she doesn't know the origin of the development of the document relating to the parade.

J. Chamberlain is concerned that the restrictions aren't clear. If there was a list of criteria to participate in the parade that is understandable, but if it directs content related to politics, that is very subjective.

Mary Hakken-Phillips expressed concern that the current rules present a risk to the town with respect to how free speech is being regulated.

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Deb Nelson, Hanover, Democrat committee has participated in the parade for 20+ years. Signs used to be allowed. The rules were put in place due to one person (her and her committee). She understands the concerns, but it's the Fourth of July parade. There are no elections, so they can't have campaign signs. She wants to be able to carry signs about our democracy on the Fourth of July honoring Independence Day. She gave examples of proposed signs with quotes from historic documents.

Selectboard addressed public comment: Time is an issue. There are no additional scheduled Selectboard meetings before the parade. Action would have to take place tonight or at a special meeting.

J. Berke suggested the Board discuss it. The points raised warrant at least that and potentially a decision.

David Vincelette, 93 Lebanon Street had asked to be on the agenda and was informed by R. Houseman there are many steps required. He noted his dissatisfaction with the Board's lack of consistency by allowing other speakers tonight to speak during public comment for 20+ minutes and have discussions with the Board when he has not been given that same privilege and, in fact, has been arrested. He spoke on topics he has mentioned before about activities on his property, pollution, violations of his rights, and accusations against Hanover staff. He cited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comment concluded and the Board continued discussions about the topic above.

C. Callaghan is sympathetic but is concerned about the possible effects if the policy is changed.

Dena Romero noted the Fourth of July is a political event. It is celebrating the freedom of this country- the declaration that this country is not going to be governed by a king, but by a democracy. Are you not allowing signs with quotes from the Declaration of Independence? If so, we are in big trouble.

J. Berke heard the comments, has empathy for them, and gave examples of what people wouldn't want to see or would be offended by if they joined the parade: 2nd amendment rights supporters carrying weapons, pro-life supporters with blood-spattered clothing, Free Palestine activists.

The question is whether the parade is a celebration of independence or an opportunity to exercise free speech. He doesn't like the rules/ code of conduct we have. It's arbitrary to say you can campaign for someone running for office but cannot campaign for a cause. It's not in line with our values.

Public comment speakers noted they have never been approached by anyone from the college about being on the Green and taking their photo annually. It's only in the past couple of years that someone from the Parks and Recreation Department has approached them.

J. Chamberlain expressed concerns for the way the restrictions are written. It is very broad and can be interpreted to mean anything that is not the status quo. The policy needs to be clearer about what is accepted at the parade.

J. Berke mentioned some comments from counsel who reviewed the policy language and made the restrictions specifically for this parade vs others. He doesn't think we should be in the business of limiting free speech.

C. Callaghan noted that only three of five board members are present tonight, but realizes there is not much time before the parade. He doesn't believe quotes from the Declaration of Independence constitute a political nature.

Clearly the policy needs to be reviewed, which is not likely to occur before the Fourth of July.

R. Houseman said he will have the Parks and Recreation Director watch the conversation, and he can meet with that staff to try and find out whether there was a formal Selectboard approval of the policy.

Kari Asmus noted it seems this would have to be an ordinance, not just an administrative policy and an ordinance would require two public hearings before adoption.

4. Public Hearing

a. Review and approval of FY26 Rates and Fees Schedule

R. Houseman noted the rates and fees were presented at the last meeting and staff were asked to look into some changes. Parking and Planning Departments are looking into more detail to present at a future meeting, but there hasn't been enough time to prepare and publicly notice changes for a hearing. The rates and fees presented last time are before the Board for approval tonight after a public hearing.

He anticipates bringing at least two changes back to the Board in the fall in September.

Dena Romano spoke about parking for handicapped spots and fines associated. She compared Hanover's fines to other NH cities. She won't argue with the initial \$500 ticket, but the late fee of \$1000 is too steep.

She also inquired about the fee for background checks going from \$25 to \$30 and gave explanations.

R. Houseman and the Board discussed the items to bring back in the fall:

- Parking rates and fees (for garage, street and lot parking rates)
- Parklet rates and fees
- Handicap parking surcharge after initial ticket
- Inconsistency with Rates and Fees schedule verses what's posted at the garage for hours/ free Saturdays

J. Berke encouraged the Parking Department to bring forward their data, ideas and solutions. They have expertise that we should be using and listening to.

E. Bullion commented on the discrepancy regarding the Saturday garage fees. She inquired and the Board agreed to that descriptive edit to the Rates and Fees document so it matches the garage signage.

At 8:13 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the FY26 Rates and Fees Schedule as amended. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

5. Announcements/recognition

R. Houseman recognized employees with 5-year anniversaries.

6. Business Requiring Discussion

b. Deer Management update

NH Fish and Game requires full compliance with the DMAP rules in order to expand the boundaries of the management area, including written permission from all landowners participating in the program, and a map showing approved parcels. The DMAP rules were provided for Board reference. Based on this information, the Town of Hanover will not be proposing any changes to the DMAP for 2025. He suggested the Conservation Commission has a budget and stewardship funds and can hopefully cover the analysis needed in order to put forth an application for next year. This year's application is due July 1st and there is no leeway for filing late.

Additionally, he suggested that community acts like this should be directed to his office so that his staff can navigate all the issues and present it to the Selectboard with all the information required.

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Kari Asmus, Etna addressed the funding mechanism for updating these maps. Staff are stretched too thin, and a consultant should handle the work. She is unsure about funding it through Conservation Commission and stewardship funds, perhaps it should come from the general fund which is much more robust. The budget is finalized, and the Conservation Commission budget does not include funding for this project- it should have been discussed during the budget hearings. The stewardship funds are already less than what's needed- there's no room to give funds to this project. She made suggestions of other funding lines to pull from for this project that she is in favor of.

She also asked whether the deer team could count on the town to enroll town owned land in the program.

J. Berke noted he is in support of moving the program forward but understands the time constraints and lack of resources to get it done immediately.

a. Organizational meeting for 2025-2026 Selectboard and committee assignments

C. Callaghan noted everyone re-upped for what they were already doing. He handed out a sheet with his list.

c. Hybrid Meeting overview

Considering the nature of Selectboard meetings, R. Houseman recommends conducting the online segment through Zoom Webinar as part of a hybrid meeting format. This method necessitates staff with clearly defined roles to ensure smooth functioning. He outlined the potential time commitments and responsibilities:

- Zoom Host/Technical Lead (1.5–2.5 hours per meeting): Oversees webinar setup, manages participant access and speaking permissions, troubleshoots technical issues in real-time, monitors raised hands, and maintains decorum during public comments and testimonies. Initially, this role might be filled by:

- o The Town Manager, although this may distract from focusing on specific agenda items.

- o A Selectboard member for smaller meetings.

- The Chair: Facilitates the meeting, recognizes speakers, and enforces engagement rules. Given the complexities involved in Selectboard meetings, he advises providing a stipend for designated Zoom Hosts or creating a part-time AV/IT support position to meet the demands of hybrid operations.

Finally, he urges the Selectboard to consider whether to implement the hybrid meeting format and review the draft policy provided.

The Board supported starting to try it out at the next meeting. There will be a trial time to test if it works well. Adopting the policies will be more involved.

J. Chamberlain noted the Planning Board uses this and it works well.

J. Berke volunteered to assist running the zoom meetings as Secretary.

7. Town Manager Monthly Report

None

8. Business Requiring Action

a. Approval of FY26 Rates and Fees Schedule

See above

b. Review and Approval of Grants Management Policy

The policy is to satisfy an element of our Single Audit corrective action plan, and the due date is 6/30/25.

E. Bullion provided information along with the policy.

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During FY2024, the Town expended Federal awards that exceeded the threshold of \$750,000 which triggered the requirement for a Single Audit. The audit was completed within the required 9 months post fiscal year end and the documents were submitted to the Federal Clearinghouse. The Single Audit resulted in a corrective action plan with three deliverables, including the adoption of a Grant Management Policy, provided for your review. The other two deliverables relate to the Town's Fixed Asset tracking and Balance Sheet reconciliations, which have been addressed.

The policy provided` is modeled on several New Hampshire town's policies and was developed with input from Peter Kulbacki and Christina Hall, who are often involved with managing grants. The resulting policy is quite technical but addresses the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

At 8:51pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the Grants Management Policy. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

c. Approval of the Designation of Authorities for Clean Water SRF Loan

The Designation of Authorities enables the town to seek up to \$100,000 in reimbursement from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). These funds were authorized by the approval of Warrant article 6 at Town Meeting.

At 8:52 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the Designation of Authorities for Clean Water SRF Loan. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

d. Approval of June 2, 2025, Selectboard Minutes

At 8:53pm J. Chamberlain MOVED to Approve the minutes of June 2 as submitted. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

e. Approval of item i to iii Consent

i. Donation - Etna Library

\$75.00 given by the Hanover Garden Club

\$100.00 given by Jerry and Pat Balkom

ii. Donation - Fire Department

1994 Volvo 850 given by Mary Zimmerman for training purposes

iii. Donation - Application for Raffle Permit

Northern Lights Quilt Guild would like to have a raffle where funds would go to NICU, fire victims, etc.

At 8:54 pm J. Berke MOVED to Approve the consent agenda. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

J. Chamberlain wondered if the Board should grant a waiver for the Fourth of July Parade that allows signage with quotes from the Declaration of Independence as requested.

R. Housman summarized that the Board agrees the current policy doesn't meet the goal. It's a department adopted policy and that's an issue for the Town Manager to address with the department. The board has given clear guidance this evening.

9. Selectboard Reports

- J. Berke
 - Commented that graduation was very strong downtown
 - Representative Goodlander will be in Town this week touring and meeting downtown business owners

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- C. Callaghan
 - Nothing to report
- J. Chamberlain
 - Bike Walk – Shared Streets Vision survey posted on Town website
 - Conservation Commission – worked on budgeting and planning
 - Sustainable Hanover – meeting Wednesday 8:30 AM

10. Adjournment

The board did not need to attend a non-public session.

J. Berke MOVED to adjourn at 9:00pm. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jarett Berke, Secretary

SUMMARY

Item 4a

At 8:13 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the FY26 Rates and Fees Schedule. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8b

At 8:51pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the Grants Management Policy. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8c

At 8:52 pm J. Berke MOVED to approve the Designation of Authorities for Clean Water SRF Loan. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8d

At 8:53pm J. Chamberlain MOVED to Approve the minutes of June 2 as submitted. J. Berke SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8e

At 8:54 pm J. Berke MOVED to Approve the consent agenda. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor

Item 10

J. Berke MOVED to adjourn at 9:00pm. J. Chamberlain SECONDED. All in favor.