

Selectboard
July 24, 2023
FINAL

SELECTBOARD MEETING
July 24, 2023
7PM - MUNICIPAL OFFICE BUILDING - HANOVER, NH

The meeting of the Selectboard was called to order at 7p.m. by Chair Athos Rassias. Also present were: Joanna Whitcomb, Vice Chair, Nancy Carter, Selectboard Member, Carey Callaghan, Secretary, Jennie Chamberlain, Selectboard Member, Alex Torpey, Town Manager

Absent: None

Vice Chair Rassias explained the process for public comment.

1. Emma Wolfe introduced herself as the new Vice President for Government and Community Relations at Dartmouth. She looks forward to working with the Selectboard. She met Mr. Torpey previously.

6. Quarterly update on traffic safety recommendations from staff

Mr. Torpey described who the safety committee is, when they meet, what they focus on and who they make recommendations to.

Five issues came in and were discussed among the committee. Information and recommendations on each item were presented to the board in their packet.

Issue 1 (2023-1 Request to review placement of crosswalk at Dunster-Wyeth) was discussed including background information and next steps presented. (Note: Materials prepared and distributed by residents of the Dunster-Wyeth neighborhood were shared with the Selectboard; such materials are available upon request).

Chamberlain commented about counting pedestrians for crosswalks.

Carter commented that the light/flashing crosswalk has helped her neighborhood substantially. She agrees with Chamberlain that there's no need to wait for a counting process to take action.

Callaghan asked, aside from costs, what reasons are there for not going forward with the item.

Mr. Torpey noted it has not been budgeted, though that can be discussed. Also, a policy should be followed. These decisions should not be made on an ad hoc basis from perceived issues without doing the research. If the policies are outdated, they should be updated to match the need.

Public comment

Aaron McKenna, Hanover voiced his public support of the crosswalk of issue 1 as a resident of the neighborhood.

Matt Lotterhead, Dunster Dr noted he does not allow his son to cross that road so he would not show up in a pedestrian count. He does walk that route and is familiar with the traffic. Other kids ride their bikes and there's no crosswalk on the way back. He believes that neighborhood has the highest number of children ages 2-10 in the town. Other crosswalks have gone in after an accident has occurred and he'd rather not have to wait for that.

Mike McGillen, Dunster Dr agreed with the previous points made. It's only one mile from town and there are about 67 houses in there, but access from town is cut off without that crosswalk. It would be proactive to install the crosswalk prior to an incident occurring. It is close to town and Dartmouth, but there is no safe access to the town's sidewalk network. The sidewalks are there, we just need a crosswalk and flashing lights.

Regarding the policy requirements, there should be consistency in context. He gave some examples and described the intersection in question and why it makes sense at that location.

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This idea has been vetted by the Bike Walk committee- it's not just a new idea from neighbors. He quoted from the Bike Walk Plan.

Carrie Russell, Dunster noted she agrees with everything that's been said. She also noted that those who use public transportation have to cross to access the bus stop which is unfair to ask a particular group to take the risks.

Carter noted the crosswalk would alert drivers there are pedestrians in the area and to drive more slowly.

Rassias noted it's a state road. Mr. Torpey noted we can ask if they will pay for it, but it will need to meet some state criteria.

Callaghan asked, if the board decided tonight to go forward with the crosswalk, how soon could it go in?

Mr. Torpey said it would depend on the response from the state and then where to find the funds/ which project gets pushed back on the list.

Whitcomb noted there have been some accidents in town, the Bike Walk plan has now been adopted, doing the counts is a good plan in September.

Chamberlain noted the cost of the flashers seems to have gone up- is that true? And camera counters were purchased but did not yield counts- perhaps those could be sold back to the data company. The flashers cost less than those camera counters did. Spending time and money counting the pedestrians will not give much added information. We know approximately how many people will cross.

Callaghan noted it is a catch-22 to count people crossing where there isn't a crosswalk, but it's worth taking the measurement.

Rassias summarized that the board is in favor of this crosswalk and doing the needed research so there is consistency across the board.

Town Manager noted one new piece of information he heard tonight is that this neighborhood has only one entrance/exit to the rest of town and if there's no crosswalk, they have no access. Perhaps that should be looked at to find how many neighborhoods are affected by that same criteria and add crosswalks to the CIP along with addressing the policy in some way.

Whitcomb suggested making a motion to address the policy and add a crosswalk and pedestrian activated lights. Rassias did not think a motion was necessary, but the board could direct-Town Manager towards the next steps.

Next steps for Town Manager/ staff:

- Conduct the pedestrian count
- Ask the state if they will fund it and potentially contact Lebanon staff since half of the neighborhood is there
 - If not, find options to fund it within this budget
- Review the crosswalk policy
- Bring this discussion info back to the staff
- Bring back the revised policy to the Selectboard - probably September

2. Public Hearing to Review and Consider the Proposed Rate and Fee Schedule for FY 2023/2024

Annually Town Staff asks the Board to review and approved the revised Rate and Fee Schedule for the coming fiscal year based on the FY 2023/2024 budget adopted at Town Meeting.

Please note that many of our rates/fees have not been updated in many years and have now fallen beyond what it costs to provide the service. Importantly, not raising fees doesn't "save" money, but rather, it transfers the cost of the service from a rate/fee payer onto the taxpayers at-large. We are attempting to balance the need to have the fees recoup the costs, while being sensitive to the broader impact. Board members were provided a memo for review.

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Action Requested: Review and Approve the FY 2023/2024 Rates and Fees Schedule on Monday evening.

Public hearing opened

Ellen Bullion Director of Finance and Admin Services addressed the process and walked the board through the proposed fee schedule. She also answered some clarifying questions from the board members.

Callaghan asked about the large sewer and water projects underway and the increase of rates to help offset the costs. Are those included? Ms. Bullion noted these fees cover the requirement to support the projects but do not start to put money away. That should be discussed and added for future rates.

Parking/ Downtown was discussed, and the parking rates are not proposed to go up at this time.

Public Comment

None

At 8pm Callaghan MOVED to approve the FY24 proposed rate and fee schedule as presented. Whitcomb SECONDED. All in favor

(2nd) Public Comment

David Vincelette, 93 Lebanon St noted he has been arrested for refusing to stop speaking after five minutes at Selectboard meetings and he is not sure the five-minute rule is lawful. He asked if the board has made an official majority vote related to the five-minute speaking rule.

The board and Town Manager noted no vote is required for how the meeting is run. For items related to Town business, votes must be taken.

Mr. Vincelette further commented that other people are allowed to speak for much longer so if there is a five-minute rule, it needs to be the same for all.

He repeated the same comments he has made previously regarding actions the Town took on his property and the desire to have a federal investigation on actions the town staff took.

3. Public Hearing to accept unanticipated funds in the amount of \$16,825.00 from the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety to replace three radar systems and police overtime patrols and to authorize the Town Manager to Execute all Necessary Documents.

There are two components to the NH Highway Safety Grant. One grant provides funds for officer's overtime wages to conduct extra patrols for DUI Enforcement, Speed Enforcement, Distracted Driving Enforcement, and Bike/Ped enforcement. Additionally, there is a 75/25 matching grant to replace 3 of the department's 6 aging radar units. The department has funds in the 2023/2024 department budget to cover the remaining amounts due for the radar units.

Action Requested: Accept the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety funds in the amount of \$16,825.00 and authorize the Town Manager to execute any necessary documents.

Public hearing opened.

Chamberlain noted she spoke with Lt Martin and informed him the most common complaint regarding Bike/Ped is "close passes" and he said they would look out for that.

Public comment

None

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At 8:10pm Whitcomb MOVED to accept unanticipated funds in the amount of \$16,825.00 from the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety to replace three radar systems and police overtime patrols and to authorize the Town Manager, Alex Torpey to Execute all Necessary Documents. Carter SECONDED. All in favor

4. Discussion regarding Selectboard Liaison for Capital Improvement Plan Committee

Following up on our conversation in the last two meetings, the board needs to determine a final appointment. The Town Manager provided a memo summarizing the new process for review and discussion.

Action Requested: Appoint a liaison for the Capital Improvement Plan Committee

Discussion occurred regarding the structure of the committee and the process of developing, reviewing and approving a CIP. Callaghan read from the RSA. Proposed member representatives were listed.

Rassias suggested since Callaghan and Chamberlain have both expressed interest in being on the committee, they should both do so, though not set precedent that two Selectboard members are required. Only one is required.

Whitcomb suggested a change to the timeframe of the committee work to September through January annually.

The number of committee seats and how they will be selected was discussed. As it is not expected to be a large committee, it will be open to the public and any and all stakeholders with interest in the topics should attend. The board agreed there should be a solicitation process to find the final public seat.

At 8:26pm Rassias MOVED to appoint Callaghan and Chamberlain as Selectboard liaisons to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Carter SECONDED. All in favor

5. Update on Hanover Finance Committee Appointments

The Hanover Finance Committee had two open positions which have recently been filled by Richard W. Greger, Jr. who will fill Carey Callaghan's remaining term of two years and John Dolan who replaces Mac Gardner for a three year term. Rich Gregor has a strong business background and was the successful President of the Gile Hill Condominium Association during the early years. He has volunteered for Hanover schools and the Hanover Bike Walk Committee.

John Dolan also has a strong financial and consulting background and was, at one time, the State Budget Director under Governor John Lynch.

7. Discussion about Agenda/Minutes format, order and timing

The board discussed the format and order of the agenda, as well as the process for editing and reviewing minutes.

Suggested changes were explained:

- Minutes review
 - Suggest changes to the minutes electronically ahead of time and the tracked changes are included in the meeting packet therefore less discussion is needed during the meeting.
- Meeting flow
 - Order of topics
 - Accommodating public present
 - Add projected timeframes to each agenda item as a goal for the length of time expected to spend on each item

The board was willing to try the suggested changes starting with the next meeting.

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8. Donations – Etna Library and Hanover Parks and Recreation

The Etna Library received a donation from Eric and Susan Shirley in the amount of \$100.00 and a donation from Walter and Joyce Noll in the amount of \$200.00

The Hanover Parks and Recreation Department has received a donation from the Hanover Consumer Cooperative Society in the amount of \$200.00 to be used on the Appalachian Trail sidewalk project.

The Hanover Parks and Recreation Department has received a donation from Black Moon Games for \$250.00 and a donation from Roger Clarkson Realtors for \$250.00 to support the 2023 Ultimate Frisbee League.

Action Requested: Accept the donation in the amount of \$100.00 from Eric and Susan Shirley in the amount of \$100.00 and the donation from Walter and Joyce Noll in the amount of \$200.00 on behalf of the Etna Library.

Accept the donation in the amount of \$200.00 from the Hanover Consumer Cooperative Society in the amount of \$200.00 for the Hanover Parks and Recreation Appalachian Trail sidewalk project.

Accept the donations in the amount of \$250.00 each from Black Moon Games and Roger Clarkson Realtors to support the 2023 Ultimate Frisbee League.

At 8:45pm, Rassias MOVED to accept the donations presented. Callaghan SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

10. Consent Agenda

This is a new agenda category as discussed and guided at the 5/1 Selectboard meeting to accommodate additional “business” approvals that the Selectboard, rather than staff, must approve. The entire consent agenda can be moved in one motion, or any item can be pulled out by a member to be voted on separately. Consent agenda should be done by a roll-call vote

a. Recommendation to Adopt Abatements as Recommended by the Advisory Board of Assessors

The Advisory Board of Assessors met on June 15, 2023 to hear requests for abatements. The decisions of the Board of Assessors were in the meeting packet and are ready for the Selectboard’s acceptance. From there, if a property owner is still not in agreement with the decision of the Town, they can appeal their case to either Grafton County Superior Court or the NH Board of Land and Tax Appeals.

Action Requested: The Selectboard’s role is to accept what the Board of Assessors has decided as the final step in the Town process.

b. Review and approval of Petition for Pole License

The board received information previously for the Control Point Technologies Petition for License to Erect/Relocate Pole and Related Facilities for new construction on Old Jones Farm Lane to install 4 poles with cables and devices in the public way to provide service to a new customer at Lot 5-76-01. Town Staff has reviewed this request and recommends approval.

Action Requested: Approve the pole license request for Old Jones Farm Lane.

c. Classification of Talent Acquisition Coordinator/General Recruiter Position

Some information was given to the board in their meeting packet and Town Manager gave background at the meeting regarding staffing shortages especially in DPW. This position will be a 6-month contract, about 30hours a week with the goal of filling all open positions.

At 8:53pm, Callaghan MOVED to approve the items in the consent agenda. Carter SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

11. Town Reports

a. Town Manager Report

- HR/Staffing
- Recruiter Job classification
- Woodstock IT services
 - Explanations for what the benefits are for doing this
- Mink Brook Housing and Conservation FAQ
 - Rassias expounded that there is still a lot of information to learn and public input to receive prior to action
- CIP Memo
- Rates and fees memo from Ellen
- Downtown Hanover
 - Block party
 - Halloween event
 - Home for the Holidays
- Recent storm updates
- Other Updates

9. Approval of June 26, 2023 Minutes

At 9:19pm, Rassias MOVED to approve the minutes of June 26th as amended. Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

b. Selectboard Report

- Whitcomb
 - Sustainable master plan committee met and worked on the Transportation chapter
 - Trustee of Trust Funds met and reviewed the funds and extensive conversation about the Bressett funds. It would be helpful for Selectboard to develop some guidelines for the Bressett funds so it's clear for those applying for the funds how they can be used along with an application.
 - Whitcomb and another member will come up with a draft to present.
- Rassias- None
- Callaghan
 - Attended first Advisory Board of Assessors
- Chamberlain
 - Safety committee – Bike Walk was not asking for a south bound bike lane, just when it gets resurfaced, to make sure the northbound bike lane is a full 5 feet for safety.
 - Striping so there is fair warning
 - Bike Walk is hoping to do a Bike valet at the Aug event
 - Disability- active wheelchair signage
- Carter- None

c. Any other committee report

- None

12. Other Business

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None

13. Adjournment

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

Roll call vote: Rassias- yes, Callaghan- yes, Chamberlain-yes, Whitcomb-yes, Carter-yes

The board entered non-public session at 9:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carey Callaghan, Secretary

SUMMARY

Item 2

At 8pm Callaghan MOVED to approve the FY24 proposed rate and fee schedule as presented. Whitcomb SECONDED. All in favor

Item 3

At 8:10pm Whitcomb MOVED to accept unanticipated funds in the amount of \$16,825.00 from the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety to replace three radar systems and police overtime patrols and to authorize the Town Manager, Alex Torpey to Execute all Necessary Documents. Carter SECONDED. All in favor

Item 4

At 8:26pm Rassias MOVED to appoint Callaghan and Chamberlain as Selectboard liaisons to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Carter SECONDED. All in favor

Item 8

At 8:45pm, Rassias MOVED to accept the donations presented. Callaghan SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

Item 10

At 8:53pm, Callaghan MOVED to approve the items in the consent agenda. Carter SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

Item 9

At 9:19pm, Rassias MOVED to approve the minutes of June 26th as amended. Whitcomb SECONDED the Motion. All in favor

Item 13

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

Roll call vote: Rassias- yes, Callaghan- yes, Chamberlain-yes, Whitcomb-yes, Carter-yes

The board entered non-public session at 9:30pm.