

# Selectboard Town Manager Report | February 26, 2024, February 27, 2024 and February 28, 2024

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## Agenda Items

### Item #6: Business Requiring Action

- A. Recommendation to Set a Public Hearing on March 11, 2024 and/or March 18, 2024 for approval and adoption of the FY25 Budget

A Public Hearing must be scheduled to approve and adopt the FY25 Budget. Budget hearings start on Monday evening and conclude on Wednesday evening. It is anticipated we will be ready for the Public Hearing on Monday, March 11, 2024 with a back up date or second date of March 18, 2024.

Action Requested: Schedule a Public Hearing on March 11, 2024 and/or March 18, 2024 for approval and adoption of the FY25 Budget.

- B. Approval of items i to v By Consent

- i. Approval of Real Estate Tax Abatements

Some Etna residents did not receive their 2nd half tax bills due to issue with postal delivery. As the delay in payment is of no fault of the homeowners, we have four residents

requesting abatements in an amount over the allowed \$25.00 the tax collector can abate without Selectboard approval. In addition, we have had two other residents request abatements for reasons not specific to the delivery issues with the Etna Post Office. The list of affected residents has been provided to you under separate cover.

Action Requested: Approve these abatements on Monday evening.

- ii. Review and Approval of NH Office of Highway Safety Equipment Grant Application and to Authorize the Town Manager to Execute All Necessary Documents

The Hanover Police Department has received a grant, amending their current FY24 original award, from the NH Office of Highway Safety Equipment to purchase a portable pole mounted driver feedback sign and speed recording equipment in the amount of \$3,690.23. This grant is 75% of the purchase price of the unit with a 25% match, this match is contained in the current FY 24 budget.

Action Requested: Approve the NH Office of Highway Safety Equipment Grant for the Hanover Police Department and authorize the Town Manager to execute all necessary documents.

- iii. Approval of Minutes – February 5, 2024
- iv. Donations – Etna Library

The Etna Library has received the following donations in memory of Pietie Birnie: Susan Mullens \$25.00, Marcia Peraza \$100.00, Margaret Galbraith \$20.00, Mark Gerstel \$50.00, Victoria and Reid Drucker \$50.00, Arthur R. Poor, Jr. \$250.00, Susan Apel \$95.00, William and Ellen Brydges \$20.00, David and Ann Cioffi \$25.00, Richard and Pamela Booma \$50.00, Katharine and Peter Christie \$50.00, Eileen Donnelly \$20.00, Paula Tsai \$200.00, Bill Riehl and Lisa Giglione-Reihl \$150.00, Cynthia and Daniel Barnard Family Trust \$200.00, Mark and Paula Schleicher \$300.00, Mary and Leo Hamill \$50.00 and Gary and Sandra Johnson \$250.00.

The Etna Library also received an anonymous donation in the amount of \$5,000.00 and a donation from Susan Gagne in the amount of \$40.00 in memory of Richard Paul Rubacka.

The Etna Library has also received donations from Todd and Judith Fothergill \$100.00 and Richard Daly \$500.00.

Action Requested: Approve the above donations received by the Etna Library on Monday evening.

- v. Banners – Dartmouth College and Storrs Pond Recreation Area

Dartmouth College has requested an overhead banner be hung from Sunday June 2, 2024 to Sunday June 9, 2024 welcoming alumni and families. If approved, we can accommodate this request.

The Hanover Improvement Society has requested their Storrs Pond Recreation Area banner be hung through the spring and summer at available times to promote the recreation area. As this request is for times that are available we can accommodate this request if approved.

The Howe Library has requested 5 light pole banners to advertise their annual fundraiser from February 26, 2024 through March 25, 2024. If approved, we can accommodate this request.

Action Requested: Approve the Dartmouth College and Hanover Improvement Society banner requests on Monday evening.

## **BRIEF RECESS**

### **Department and Budget Presentations**

#### **A. Monday, February 26, 2024**

7:00 PM - Planning & Zoning  
7:20 PM - IT  
7:35 PM - Etna Library  
7:50 PM - Howe Library  
8:10 PM - Assessing  
8:25 PM - Fire and Ambulance  
8:50 PM - Tax Collector and Clerk  
9:05 PM – Additional Questions/feedback

#### **B. Tuesday, February 27, 2024**

6:05 PM - Police  
6:25 PM - Parking  
6:45 PM - Parks and Recreation  
7:10 PM - Department of Public Works  
7:30 PM - Water  
7:50 PM - Wastewater  
8:10 PM – Human Resources  
8:15 PM - Selectboard  
8:30 PM - Finance Department - Ellen  
8:45 PM - Town Manager - Alex  
9:00 PM - General Overhead and Overall Administration – Alex and Ellen

#### **C. Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

6:05 PM - Social Service Presentations  
7:00 PM - Capital Budget and CIPC Recommendations  
7:45 PM - Trustees of the Trust Funds  
8:25 PM - Overall budget Presentation, Highlights, Forecasting  
9:00 PM – Additional questions/feedback  
9:20 PM - Review of Feedback for March 11 and/or March 18 Budget Approval and next steps

# Town Manager Report

Unfortunately we did not have the time to put together a report in addition to the budget. A thorough catch-up report will be provided at either the March 11<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting.

Please head to [hanovernh.org/budget](https://hanovernh.org/budget) for our FY25 budget dashboard.

## February's Report

I will provide a very brief report in the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting as the majority of the last two weeks have been solely dedicated to preparing the February 26 – 28 budget meetings with the Selectboard.

You can listen to the latest Hanover Happenings update that covers December 2023 and January 2024 here: <https://hanoverhappenings.castos.com/episodes/hanover-happenings-december-2023-and-january-2024-update>

## January's Report

*Trying a new format meant to help organize some of the ongoing reporting areas. A work in progress, and more sections will be added. Please let me know if you have any feedback!*

Upcoming events & dates	Ice skating rink on the Dartmouth Green is now open! 
Human Resources & Personnel	<b>Numbers:</b> Since last month we have had one employee leave employment and two start – Welcome Tyler (FT) and Talula (Seasonal) at Parks and Rec!  <b>Retention/Recruitment Study:</b> We have been meeting with stakeholders on a weekly basis since December, including collective bargaining units, all department heads, consultants, as well as with the Selectboard as we continue the challenge of working through the insights gained from the R&R study and how those translate into budget and personnel proposals to discuss and consider for FY25.  <b>Fire Chief Search.</b> We have received a number of highly qualified and competitive applications and have begun screening and interviewing candidates. We are also bringing in MRI to assist in the interview process, as they have been successful and highly regarded with their “assessment center” process that has been implemented

previously, such as at HPD. We are likely running 2-4 weeks behind our initial projections and instead of having someone in place by April, it looks more likely that May would be the soonest.

**Openings.** Currently we have eleven open positions. All open positions are available here: [hanovernh.org/employment](http://hanovernh.org/employment).

**Flexible schedules.** After reviewing department requests and coordinating among departments, we have begun to implement flexible schedules as of January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Again, as I mentioned last month, no public access or service availability is changing at this point in time, though there is an opportunity to improve that going forward for the public. Many staff who did not have the ability to “flex” their schedule have chosen to do so, which will help us improve the work/life balance and quality of working for the Town, which will improve the quality of services we offer. The goal is for all benefits-eligible employees to have something approximating one day every two weeks not scheduled for work during work hours so as to relieve pressure on schedules and help make the Town a more supportive employer.

**Hanover Police Milestones/Awards.** HPD is holding a ceremony this week to thank the following staff for their commitment and public service!

1. Formal Swearing in/Promotion of Ofc. Jeph Underwood, Cpl. Joe Landry, Sgt. Ethan Martin
2. Outstanding Service Award: Sgt. Fowler, Sgt. N. McNutt, Cpl. Landry.
3. Outstanding Service Award: Eric Hudson
4. Outstanding Service Award: Doug Hackett
5. Life Saving Award: Sgt. Ethan Martin
6. Unit Citation Award: Sgt. Fowler, Ofc. Aaron Frank, Comm. Officer Lisa Camarra
7. Unit Citation Award: Sgt. Chris Swain & Sgt. Nick McNutt
8. Civilian Employee of the Year: Elizabeth Rathburn (nominated by Sgt. Chris Swain)
9. Officer of the Year: Ofc. James Zeblisky (nominated by Sgt. Matt Ufford)

**Wastewater Excellence Award.** Hanover’s Wastewater staff were recognized by the EPA by winning the “2023 Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation and Maintenance Excellence Award.” They were nominated by the New Hampshire Department of Environment Services. This award recognizes staff for consistently adhering to strict guidelines for the operations and maintenance of the facility, and in doing so, helping to protect human and environmental health.

Budget & Finance

*See attached memos – budget memo is included in the packet and the audit memo will be distributed to the Selectboard and posted online as soon as available on Monday.*

Housing, redevelopment & planning	<p><b>Mink Brook Community Workforce Housing Project.</b> We are awaiting an update from Twin Pines on conversations they were having internally based on the last conversation with the Town's attorney.</p> <p><b>Rental Registration.</b> We are holding off on mailing out the postcards until we have a more clear timeline on when a person would start as the Rental Housing Inspector and be able to take over the program. We have had trouble finding applicants for the position so far.</p>
Transportation & Mobility	<p><b>Expanding capacity.</b> We identified the need in our prior quarterly meetings to increase staff capacity if the Selectboard would like to continue to implement and grow the number of transit and mobility related projects in town, which we don't have any dedicated staff for currently, and which currently pulls 4-6 senior employees routinely into the process to manage, which is a challenging and expensive way to do it. We are still working on some internal components to the plan that involve discussions with employees that are not ready to be discussed publicly and which will require proposals in the FY25 budget, but we also have some changes that we're making (at little to no cost) in the short-term by looking at a more collaborative engagement with our Regional Planning Commission. This is an exciting increase in an existing beneficial partnership that we'll have more information about in the coming month or two, and which will help really relieve some workload pressure from existing staff and ensure we can meet the goals of continuing to increase our mobility/transit policies and programs.</p> <p><b>W. Wheelock Crossing/bridge.</b> As discussed in the last meeting, Public Works and other staff had concerns about some of the elements contained in the proposed letter that was discussed to send to NHDOT. Staff are reviewing and will provide the SB an update on next recommended steps re: crossing (this is not the highest priority right now, as all of the same staff are working to complete requests for the CIPC, which we're also behind on). In the meantime, we are going to ask NHDOT to use paint (temporary) instead of thermoplastic (more permanent) so that we can ensure that what ultimately happens on the bridge matches to the changes that we're anticipating and discussing on West Wheelock over the next couple years and ideally which gives better bike access in the meantime too. We don't expect anything will be done over the winter.</p> <p>All are aligned as to the goals of making the bridge more, not less, pedestrian/bike friendly as NHDOT contemplates finishing the project.</p> <p>In the future, we'd like to have requests such as these sent through our existing quarterly staff meetings so we can do proper reviews before they get to the Selectboard and ensure a smoother and more transparent process.</p>

	<p><b>Girl Brook MUP.</b> Pending NHDOT approval of the respondent to the RFQ that we issued, we will be moving ahead with the project to create a MUP between Reservoir Rd and Verona.</p>
Downtown Hanover	<p> <b>New Business Alert</b>  We're pleased to welcome "The Works" café on Main Street (former Canoe Club site) - open long days they provide "fast casual" bowls, soups, sandwiches, etc, many with locally sourced ingredients. Check 'em out! <a href="https://workscafe.com/">https://workscafe.com/</a></p> <p><b>Ice Skating Rink Podcast.</b> In it, I sit down with Heather Drinan, Director, Dartmouth Government Relations, Jim Alberghini, Director Dartmouth Institutional Events &amp; Logistics, and John Sherman, Hanover Parks and Rec Director to talk about a brief history and logistics of how things work at the skating rink.</p> <p><b>Monthly Meetings.</b> Our upcoming monthly meeting will be largely focused on creating event/activity calendars between all the major stakeholders in Hanover/Upper Valley so we can ensure coordination, including for some of Hanover's newer events. Creating a shared calendar like this is a new group collaboration that we started last year and has been very helpful!</p> <p><b>Sustaining Engagement.</b> We are continuing conversations with property owners and businesses about finding ways to sustain this high level of engagement in the future. We plan to have more on that for the Selectboard's consideration in early 2024.</p>
College & Town	<p>Thanks to Dartmouth College for re-starting the ice rink on the Green and Hanover Parks and Rec for maintenance. This is a great collaboration that brings an important resource to the community at-large!</p> <p>You can find my discussions with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dartmouth President Sian Beilock: <a href="https://hanoverhappenings.castos.com/episodes/a-conversation-with-dartmouth-college-president-sian-beilock-about-mental-health-housing-community-collaboration-and-more">https://hanoverhappenings.castos.com/episodes/a-conversation-with-dartmouth-college-president-sian-beilock-about-mental-health-housing-community-collaboration-and-more</a></li> <li>- Dartmouth VP of Government and Community Relations: Emma Wolfe: <a href="https://hanoverhappenings.castos.com/episodes/a-conversation-with-emma-wolfe-dartmouths-new-vp-of-government-and-community-relations">https://hanoverhappenings.castos.com/episodes/a-conversation-with-emma-wolfe-dartmouths-new-vp-of-government-and-community-relations</a></li> </ul> <p>We have plans to identify ways to create more formal and sustained involvement and engagement from various stakeholders in town, and we'll have more on that in coming weeks/months.</p>

Other Updates	<p>The International City/County Management Association (ICMA), has invited me to run an education workshop at their <a href="#"><u>Local Government Reimagined Conference in Boston</u></a> this year about public information and engagement. Generously, they have even offered to comp the registration, travel and accommodations, which is somewhere around a \$1,000 value. I'm grateful for their appreciation of the great public information/engagement work we're doing in Hanover and their support, and look forward to getting to represent our community at another conference!</p>
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