

# Selectboard Town Manager Report | May 6, 2024

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## Agenda Items

### **Item #6 Business Requiring Discussion**

- a. Town Meeting Review

This is an agenda item to give the Selectboard the opportunity to discuss and finalize any of the logistics or roles and responsibilities for Town Meeting.

- b. Pilot Closure of Allen Street

Several stakeholders from the Downtown Working Group including business and property owners, Town staff, and the Regional Planning Commission will be presenting the proposal and answering any questions related to the pilot two-month closure of Allen Street for July and August this summer.

### **Item #7: Business Requiring Action**

- a. Recommendation to Set Public Hearing on Monday, May 20, 2024 to accept Unanticipated Funds in the amount of \$90,000.00 from Invest NH Municipal Per Unit Grant – the Planning and

Zoning Department has applied for and received a grant in the amount of \$90,000 received with the permitting of the Visions for Creative Housing in the amount of \$10,000 per unit of affordable housing being built by Visions for Creative Housing at 11 South Park Street. As these are unanticipated funds, the Selectboard must accept them.

The Planning and Zoning Department has reached out to InvestNH to indicate the process to approve the receipt of this award would not be possible until May 20, 2024. They have agreed to extend this award until late May.

The recommendation for these funds, once awarded would be 50% of the grant allocated to Visions for Creative Housing to enable solar installation on the roof and 50% of the grant designated to assist in the Mink Brook Community workforce housing project.

Action Requested: Schedule a Public Hearing on Monday, May 20, 2024 to accept unanticipated funds in the amount of \$90,000 from the for Invest NH Municipal Per Unit Grant and to authorize the Town Manager to execute all necessary documents.

**b. Approval of items i to vi By Consent**

i. Approval of Minutes – April 1, 2024, April 5, 2024, April 15, 2024

ii. Request to Approve water and sewer abatement – 2 Ceres Drive

Additional information on this request will be provided to you on Monday evening.

Action Requested: Approve the request for a water and sewer abatement.

iii. Donations – the Etna Library has received a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 from Thomas and Barbara Hall.

iv. Appointment of Election Volunteers for 2024 Town Meeting – an additional list of election volunteers has been provided by the Town Clerk for Monday evening. These volunteers have agreed to assist Town staff with the upcoming 2024 Town Meeting. Staff recommends appointing these individuals as ballot clerks and election volunteers for the upcoming meeting.

Action Requested: Appoint the additional ballot clerks and election volunteers as listed in the Town Clerk's list on Monday evening.

v. Recommendation to Set Polling Location and Hours for 2024 Town Meeting – The 2024 Town Meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at the Hanover High School Gymnasium, 41 Lebanon Street, Hanover, New Hampshire with polling hours from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and the Business Meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Action Requested: Set the 2024 Town Meeting Polling location at Hanover High School, 41 Lebanon Street, Hanover, New Hampshire with polling hours 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and the Business Meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

- vi. Banners – Friends of Dartmouth Cancer Center has requested to hang 9 light post banners to promote The Prouty from June 3, 2024 – July 15, 2024. If approved, we can accommodate this request with the understanding if an additional request comes in, some of these banners will be removed to accommodate other requests due to the duration of number of banners requested by Friends of Dartmouth Cancer Center.

Action Requested: Approve the Friends of Dartmouth Cancer Center’s request to hang 9 light post banners.

## Town Manager Monthly Report

### May Report

<b>Upcoming events &amp; dates</b>	<p><b>Town Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Voting is May 14<sup>th</sup> at HHS from 7am-7pm. The business meeting begins at 7pm.</li><li>- As discussed, all residents have received a postcard invitation this year.</li><li>- We have a date for our Town Meeting open house/candidate forum, which is May 9<sup>th</sup> from 5-7pm at Rockefeller at Dartmouth. This will include a Town government/meeting 101, candidate forum, and informal Q+A session. All are welcome!</li><li>- I have requested a layout of the parking, traffic, etc, and we’ll post that online when available.</li></ul> <p><b>More upcoming events</b></p> <p><i>Howe Library’s event calendar:</i> <a href="https://www.thehowe.org/events/events-programs/">https://www.thehowe.org/events/events-programs/</a></p> <p>Live Free or Die: The Contested History of the Words on Your License Plate on Wednesday, May 22 @6:30PM (at Trumbull Hall)</p> <p><i>Etna Library’s event calendar:</i> <a href="https://www.etna-library.org/events">https://www.etna-library.org/events</a></p> <p><i>Parks and Rec event information:</i> <a href="https://www.hanovernh.org/672/Parks-and-Recreation">https://www.hanovernh.org/672/Parks-and-Recreation</a></p>
<b>Human Resources &amp; Personnel</b>	<p><b>Numbers:</b> Since last report we have had one employee leave none start.</p>

	<p><b>Current Openings.</b> We have ten open positions currently. All open positions are shown below and available here: <a href="http://hanovernh.org/employment">hanovernh.org/employment</a>.</p> <p><b>Fire Chief Search.</b> Finalists have been identified and we hope to have a decision announced in the next several weeks.</p>
<b>Budget &amp; Finance</b>	<p><b>Audit update.</b> As you are aware, the FY2022 Audit contains adverse opinions associated with the accounting for the Town’s capital assets. In addition, material weaknesses concerning balance sheet reconciliation and general ledger maintenance were noted. The Town took two immediate steps to address these, hiring a consultant to identify the missing capital assets and establish policies and procedures to ensure ongoing accurate accounting, and requesting approval of an Accounting/HR Analyst position. Unfortunately, our consultant made little progress on the capital assets and considering that, Ellen tackled the reconciliation. We currently have an inventory of assets that were in the accounting system for FY2020 but missing from FY2021 in the new system. This provides the basis for reconciling our capital assets for the FY23 audit and for bringing our accounting system up to date. The search for the new analyst is going well, with six phone screens performed last week. We are in the process of setting up in-person interviews with three of the most qualified candidates, all of whom have extensive accounting experience. We thank the Finance Committee and Selectboard for the support in adding this position to the FY25 budget, as we believe this will be instrumental going forward.</p> <p>The majority of the FY 2023 audit is complete. The current outstanding items include two questionnaires, support for a favorable adjustment to the Property Tax Revenue and a reconciliation of interfund transfers. The support for the property tax adjustment was sent to the auditors on April 10<sup>th</sup> and I expect to complete the questionnaires in the next two weeks. I have requested clarification on the requirements for the interfund transfers and will address any requirements once I receive that. In addition, as mentioned above, we plan to provide a capital asset reconciliation which will provide progress on the adverse opinions.</p> <p>We will provide the Selectboard an update on the status in each Town Manager’s report until the audit is complete and will continue to report on the progress towards updating and establishing policies and procedures.</p> <p><b>Rates and Fees.</b> We are starting to work with staff on preparing for rates &amp; fees discussions in June. We expect to have initial discussion the first meeting in June, with a public hearing and vote the second meeting in June.</p>
<b>Housing, redevelopment &amp; planning</b>	<p><b>Mink Brook Community Workforce Housing Project.</b> No updates to provide since the last meeting.</p> <p><b>Rental Registration.</b> We are continuing to interview candidates for this position.</p> <p><b>Grant funds.</b> See business requiring action.</p> <p>Rob Houseman, our planning director, presented alongside the Trust for Public Lands and others at the “Saving Special Places” conferences hosted by UNH. You can <a href="#">view the presentation here</a>. We like when our subject-matter expert staff share their knowledge with broader audiences and highlight positive work in Hanover.</p>

## Transportation & Mobility

**Lebanon Sidewalk Repairs.** I mentioned previously that I would provide an update on the Lebanon Sidewalk construction for Selectboard review to ensure that the work there didn't interfere with any potential future expansions or changes to the road. We were able to accommodate some small updates to improving the safety and ped/bike access on the street (such as a new mid-block crossing, improved handicap tip downs, and better-defined curb lines), with more able to be done at a later date based on whatever we decide to do. We feel as though we have successfully accommodated the ability to do more in the future and make some small improvements in the immediate term.

Attached are 2 sets of drawings included in the packet

- 1 Lebanon Street Concept - Future Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvement
- 2 2024 improvements highlighted - work to be completed this summer with ARPA funds (highlighted in red).

United Construction has been contracted to complete “2 2024 Improvements highlighted” beginning in early May with a late August completion. This includes replacing the sidewalk on the North side of Lebanon Street between Main Street and the ramp to the Hanover Inn rear parking lot to a new mid-block pedestrian crossing. On the South the existing sidewalk will be replaced from the Post Office to Hovey Lane.

The second plan provide “1 Lebanon Street Concept”, is a bicycle and pedestrian improvement plan. Most of the pedestrian improvements are included in the sidewalk construction contract (such as a new mid-block crossing, improved handicap tip downs, and better-defined curb lines). The bicycle improvement will be presented to stakeholders, including the Bike/Walk and the Selectboard, after piloting the concept. This summer’s Lebanon Street sidewalk project would not affect any of the concept’s alignment if approved. Except for where the 2 plans intersect and diverge at the intersection of Sanborn and Lebanon Street. Dartmouth College will be installing new hot and chilled water in the coming summers in the area which may affect the Lebanon/Sanborn/Crosby intersections configured. If there are no changes due to the Dartmouth project, Town staff is prepared to modify the intersections at a point in the future when this has been resolved.

**Verona Road Sidewalk Outreach.** At long last, the Hanover Bike Walk Committee is pleased to announce that plans are available for review for a proposed sidewalk along Verona to address a long-identified gap in our walk-bike network. Attached are details for times and dates of a site visit, where you can find markings on the ground to walk the proposed sidewalk at any time of your choosing, and the time and location of a poster session so that you can learn more about the proposal and provide feedback. To learn more about the project's history, please visit the [Hanover Bike Walk website](#).

### PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSIONS

**MAY 6<sup>th</sup> 10 AM - SITE VISIT** - at the intersection of Verona Road and East Wheelock

**MAY 6<sup>th</sup> 4:00 PM TO 5:30 PM - POSTER SESSION** - in the Town Hall meeting room

**Quarterly meetings.** We have not had time to put together a more comprehensive update, but do want to update on some of the more recent or high priority items not mentioned above. This includes:

### Questions from Jennie about signage.

1. The MUTCD does not regulate signs on sidewalks, only in roads, though we are not prohibited from using that as a guide.

2. The bike ordinance signs are not suggestions, they are regulatory signs warning people of a legal requirement per local ordinances.
3. We have gotten substantial feedback in the past that many of our traffic or parking related signs are not visible. This feedback has resulted in the use of careful hi-viz on certain signs that are not in the roadway for vehicles traveling (sidewalks, parking, etc).
4. We agree about concerns about sign pollution and not diluting important warning signs. We're open to discussing in more detail if there are specific signs that can be re-evaluated, and making sure the Town has a consistent messaging for all types of signs going forward. Open to any other feedback that we can take back to the group!

**W. Wheelock Crossing/Ledyard Bridge.** Currently NHDOT is doing very temporary painting as part of raising the storm drain inlets. When the road is later repaved, the temporary paint (instead of thermoplastic) will be applied based on and hopefully more consistent with Town plans and roads. We are awaiting plans and timelines from NHDOT to share for any feedback.

**Dunster Crosswalk.** After we contacted our state representatives and Executive Councilor, we did hear back from NHDOT. To follow up, the Regional Planning Commission is coordinating a meeting with NHDOT.

**Etna Speeding.** After we contacted our state representatives and Executive Councilor, we did hear back from NHDOT. To follow up, the Regional Planning Commission is coordinating a meeting with NHDOT.

**Lane drop pilots.** Do not have data yet to report back with, but that is being worked on.

## Downtown Hanover

**Reporting out and formalizing future.** We are continuing to discuss the plans based on the Selectboard's inclusion of the budget item that could allow a district. We will have more to report out soon!

**Summer events.** We thank everyone for another great Block Party on Allen Street. We saw many community members come down Friday and Saturday and enjoy the music and activities!



**Allen Street plans.** See presentation for today's meeting.

	<p><b>Local purchasing.</b> Dartmouth had representatives from their procurement office starting a longer conversation about how to help tie local businesses more into Dartmouth's purchasing ecosystem. All are supportive of this initiative to help integrate local businesses, and we are excited to see where it goes.</p> <p><b>Prouty.</b> Representatives from the Prouty joined again to talk about the event this year and integration with downtown businesses and plans.</p> <p><b>Downtown website.</b> Dartmouth has hired a student worker who is working with the Downtown group to help update and improve the ExploreHanoverNH.com website. We hope to continue to work on this to make it a destination for visiting the downtown.</p>
<b>College &amp; Town</b>	See above updates re: Downtown.
<b>Other Updates</b>	<p><b>High-speed internet update.</b> Attached is a letter from Lyme Fiber committing to a fiber build out in northern and northwestern Hanover, that should serve somewhere around 90 homes. We are still in conversation about more of 3 mile road and areas off 3 mile but they have not committed to any of that as of yet. This in conjunction with NHEC's fiber build on the backside of Moose Mountain, which will serve about 3/4 of the unserved homes in Hanover. This is a great update and there are still a few irons in the fire as our IT Department has taken the lead working on this with the ISPs and other stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Liberty support letter.</b> Liberty utilities is requesting a letter of support from the town of a grant that would being advanced electrical metering, customer portal and the ability to develop innovative electrical rates which are all goals of our Electrical Aggregation Plan adopted at town meeting in 2021.</p> <p>There is no obligation or financial implications to Hanover's support, but there a potential tremendous benefit that could help Hanover meet its 2030 Ready for 100 goals. Pete Kulbacki communicated with Clifton Below from Lebanon, and they will be endorsing Liberty's GRIP application. CPCNH is also collaborating with Liberty, Eversource and Unitil for a transactive energy GRIP application which ultimately would require Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) to become a reality.</p> <p><b>Annual Board workshops.</b> We are continuing to collect information tracking towards hopefully June workshops with all of the Town's boards and committees.</p> <p><b>International City/County Management Association.</b> I spoke at the ICMA Boston Local Government Re-imagined conference about podcasts, technology, and public engagement in local government. ICMA paid for the entire registration and travel, so thank you ICMA for the great opportunity!</p>



<p><b>Upcoming events &amp; dates</b></p>	<p><b>Town Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voting is May 14<sup>th</sup> at HHS from 7a-7pm. The business meeting begins at 7pm.</li> <li>- We will post more information when the layout plans are finalized</li> <li>- As discussed, all residents will be receiving a postcard invitation this year</li> <li>- We have a date for our Town Meeting 101 type open house,</li> </ul> <p>Howe Library's event calendar: <a href="https://www.thehowe.org/events/events-programs/">https://www.thehowe.org/events/events-programs/</a></p> <p>Etna Library's event calendar: <a href="https://www.etna-library.org/events">https://www.etna-library.org/events</a></p> <p><b>Reminder, please mark your calendars for the Spring Music Festival on Allen Street on 4/19! A new collaboration with the Music Department at Dartmouth. All are invited to another installment in our Allen Street Block Party series.</b></p> <p><b>Friday, April 19 @ 6-9 PM: New Music Festival</b> Presented by the Dartmouth College Department of Music, this lineup brings internationally acclaimed performers to the streets of Hanover! Join us to listen to the music of: DJ Sonicc Blush, Kokayi, and Boomscat.</p> <p><b>Saturday, April 20 @11 AM-5 PM: Springtime Festivities</b> Saturday will bring a fantabulous assortment of springtime fun, beginning with a fun, energetic family music performance at 11 AM. This will be followed by some lunchtime jams from Joe of the Occasional Jug band, which will also kick off a baby lamb meet and greet, a spring planting make and take, facepainting, jumbo bubbles and chalk, all on Allen Street! Finally, a Dartmouth student band will take us home at 3 PM thanks to Sawtooth Kitchen.</p> <p>Parks and Rec event information: <a href="https://www.hanovernh.org/672/Parks-and-Recreation">https://www.hanovernh.org/672/Parks-and-Recreation</a></p>
<p><b>Human Resources &amp; Personnel</b></p>	<p><b>Numbers:</b> Since last report we have had three employees leave employment and two start – Welcome Reilly at Fleet/DPW and Albert at Wastewater/DPW!</p> <p><b>Current Openings.</b> We have twelve open positions currently. All open positions are shown below and available here: <a href="https://www.hanovernh.org/employment">hanovernh.org/employment</a>.</p>



	<p><b>Fire Chief Search.</b> Finalists have been identified and will be coming in for final interviews in the coming weeks. We hope to have a decision announced in the next 2-4 weeks.</p>
<b>Budget &amp; Finance</b>	
<b>Housing, redevelopment &amp; planning</b>	<p><b>Mink Brook Community Workforce Housing Project.</b> Myself, Rob Houseman and Andrew Winter met with representatives from NH Housing two weeks ago. Without going too far into details here, most simply, the state of NH has limits on per-unit cost of projects that receive public funding through some of their programs, and typically prefer or require that money is moved into higher density or more "efficiently" built projects, meaning all units in one or two buildings, versus more "cottage style." The earliest general estimates of per-unit cost are well above NH Housing's limits.</p> <p>The next steps are that several additional funding sources are also being evaluated by Twin Pines, and our staff and Twin Pines are each evaluating creative ideas of how to try and lower the per-unit cost to make the project more likely to pencil out. Some of the ideas being explored include looking at "tiny home" styled houses, and other ideas that keep with the community and Selectboard's goals of having a project match the scale of the neighboring residential communities, but those may or may not be financeable through some of the state's funding sources.</p> <p><b>Rental Registration.</b> We are continuing to interview candidates for this position.</p> <p><b>TIF.</b> As we discussed and decided by the Selectboard previously, the Town isn't pursuing any action at Town Meeting this year to include on the Warrant a question about a potential Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Upon a question from a Selectboard member for more information responsive to the mechanics of how the RSA worked, here is a below statement from our attorney:</p> <p><i>We aren't proceeding this year because the town needs to have developed the plan and program BEFORE it can establish the district.</i></p> <p><u>See RSA 162-K:6</u></p> <p><b>162-K:6 District Establishment and Development Programs. –</b>  <i>A municipality which has adopted this chapter and which intends to establish a development district shall, in addition to establishing the district, establish a development program under this section and a tax increment financing plan under RSA 162-K:9 and 10.</i></p> <p><i>I read this to require that the district, program and plan all be adopted by town meeting together. While they can each be amended later, I do not believe the town may establish the district without a program and plan.</i></p>

<b>Transportation &amp; Mobility</b>	<p><b>Quarterly meetings.</b> We are a bit behind in getting up to speed with the RPC taking over this function for staff. We have our first meeting on Wednesday April 11<sup>th</sup>, but won't have a report ready in time for this meeting, but will for the next. That will includes updates on a bunch of topics, including sidewalk construction, "escooter" ordinance, and several more.</p> <p><b>W. Wheelock Crossing/bridge.</b> NHDOT is aware of our request and has responded that they agree with using paint instead of thermoplastic so that nothing permanent is done until we have a better sense of the West Wheelock Corridor. NHDOT reported that they are coordinating with VTrans and will get back to us, we haven't gotten any further updates.</p> <p><b>Dunster Crosswalk.</b> We have checked in with NHDOT and not heard back yet.</p> <p><b>Etna Speeding.</b> We have checked in with NHDOT and not heard back yet.</p>
<b>Downtown Hanover</b>	<p><b>Reporting out and formalizing future.</b> Once we have a chance to update the working group on the latest status and inclusion in the budget, we will come back to the Selectboard, likely asking to create and appoint the Advisory Board to further examine how best to structure everything going forward.</p> <p><b>Summer events.</b> Hanover Parks and Rec is getting ready to plan out a series of continuing and new events this year downtown, starting with the music series on April 19<sup>th</sup> in collaboration with the Dartmouth Music Department!</p> <p>Please note there is an additional brief memo from Parks and Rec – we are planning a temporary hanging of one banner across Allen Street for the duration of the weekend of the spring event (and two days prior). If this works well we would come back to the Selectboard to discuss the consideration of updating policies to make a permanent spot for that (or not).</p> <p><b>Allen Street plans.</b> We have discussed several times previously the idea of piloting additional closures on Allen Street to allow more outdoor dining, concerts, and other public events and activities that are in line with the new Master Plan. After the successful events last year, and some of the traffic issues created by Allen Street itself, we had intended to request a permanent closure this year. However, as we've discussed, staff agreed that was moving too quickly. We would like to pilot a longer than one-weekend closure, but less than permanent, to further evaluate the impact of any potential changes, and study how best to use our limited public spaces.</p>

	<p>We intend to do a presentation on May 6th to discuss the proposed plan to close Allen Street to motor vehicle traffic for the months of July and August. In the meantime, we are still working on various details with staff and the Regional Planning Commission, and continuing to do some stakeholder outreach to solicit feedback and concerns so that we can be prepared to present those concerns to the Selectboard on 5/6 for further discussion and a decision.</p> <p>Some of the other aspects to this plan (other than just public gathering/event spaces on Allen Street) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving safety and pedestrian/vehicle interactions on Main Street/Allen Street</li> <li>• Lack of coordinated delivery areas and periodically unsafe conditions, pilot of new delivery plans</li> <li>• Potential evaluation of change in traffic flow from School Street to allow two-way traffic on the open portion of Allen Street</li> </ul>
<b>College &amp; Town</b>	<p>Hanover was voted as one of the Top Small College Towns in the US. Read a really great article from The Dartmouth about some of the dynamics!</p> <p><a href="https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2024/04/town-and-gown-community-reactions-to-hanovers-top-small-college-town-nomination">https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2024/04/town-and-gown-community-reactions-to-hanovers-top-small-college-town-nomination</a></p>
<b>Other Updates</b>	<p><b>Annual Board workshops.</b> We have discussed previously the value in having an annual opportunity to bring all boards up to date with current legal requirements, such as the RTK law, as well as to onboard new people and help build trust and collaboration among and between our many boards and committees, as well with the staff they work with.</p> <p>We intend to begin this program this year, most likely in June after the re-organizations in May. Several staff are working on this, sourcing best practices from the NHMA (who many towns use annually to do a training for all new officials) and what other towns do. Please feel free to share any onboarding, continuing education, or workshop ideas with myself and Tracy Walsh, if you have them, so they can be incorporated into the planning.</p> <p>We will report back with more information, and will continue to work with the Chair in the meantime.</p> <p><b>Municipal Solutions Summit.</b> I facilitated a discussion at this two-day conference two weeks ago with about 20 Town Managers from the Upper Valley. My session was about the value and importance of authentic and effective public engagement.</p> <p>Over the two days, we discussed issues ranging from onboarding for new managers, board/manager relations, public engagement, economic/community</p>

development, shared services, retention and recruitment, and more. This was a particularly exciting conference because we did a different format that was much more interactive, where each participant was also bringing ideas to the table, and more time was spent in discussion and working on specific case studies than on presentation after presentation. Thanks to Eric Duffy, the Municipal Manager for Woodstock, Vermont, for organizing it.



**NHMA General Administration and Governance Committee.** I have been appointed to the New Hampshire Municipal Association's General Admin and Governance Committee. As the Selectboard enthusiastically supported when we discussed it on Monday, April 1st, I spent the morning of Friday the 5th in Concord with other municipal officials and NHMA starting work on the upcoming legislative agenda. Our committee includes topics such as the RTK/91a, elections, local control, and more and elected and appointed officials from across the state.

If there are any issues that any Selectboard member has encountered and wants to send to me to bring up in the conversations, please contact me this week so I can review it before our next NHMA meeting.

Although I talk to our state representatives about bills that impact Hanover, being involved in NHMA is a helpful way to make sure our interests in Hanover and the interests of local governments are fairly represented and being advocated for in Concord.