

Meeting Minutes of the Hanover Select Board Special Meeting held in a Hybrid Format with both in person attendees in the First Floor Hearing Room of Town Hall as well as remote attendees via Zoom videoconference, on Tuesday, January 17th, 2023 @ 7:00 pm.

Call meeting to order and Pledge of Allegiance

At 7:00pm the Chair called the meeting to order.

Present at Town Hall were Chair Rhonda Nyman, Vice Chair Vanessa O'Connor, Selectman David Delaney and Selectman Steve Louko, and present via Zoom, Selectman John Tuzik.

Also present at Town Hall were Town Manager Joe Colangelo (TM), Assistant Town Manager, CDMI and HR Director Ann Lee (ATM), Director of Public Affairs, Licensing and Insurances Janet Tierney (DPA), and Finance Director Chelsea Stevens (FD).

All rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

The Chair requested any public comments on topics not listed on tonight's Agenda, seeing none.

Budget

Review Updated FY2024 DRAFT Operating Budget

TM presented the Zero Budget Increase version of the FY2024 Draft Budget Presentation, [attached](#), which he noted it available online. TM stated that the discussion tonight is the outcome of the discussion last meeting where Superintendent Ferron discussed the Schools needs as well as the demands on the Schools. In order to fund Superintendent Ferron's budget requests for the School Department the Town Departments would be looking at zero-increase budgets. TM informed all that a zero-increase budget would be less than a service level budget, noting that this is not a full budget proposal this evening.

FD appeared before the Board and spoke on Free Cash with the Board. FD informed the Board that ARPA funds will be available until December 31, 2024 which is halfway through FY25 and the goal is to end with close to a zero ARPA funds balance.

The Board further discussed the budget with TM.

The Board expressed a desire to spread the cuts a little more evenly between the Town and School Departments. TM confirmed for the Board that to fund a budget with tonight's zero dollar increase on the Town Departments side, and full increase, as presented last week by the Superintendent of Schools, on the School Department side, it would also require a tax levy increase of 4.8%, the utilization of \$2.2 Million dollars of free cash, and a reduction of Town Department services. TM further confirmed that accommodating everything requested by the School Department, would involve a larger than normal tax increase, use of more free cash than normal, and still services in some Town Departments would go down.

Approved
3/20/2023

Discuss Fiscal Year 2024 Departmental Budget(s)

TM informed the Board that he had tasked the Town's Department Heads to prepare a presentation for the Board to show what a zero-increase budget would look like in each of their Departments.

Public Works

DPW Director Victor Diniak appeared before the board and presented the "Impacts of a Level-funded FY24 Budget" presentation, [attached](#).

The Board discussed the presentation with Mr. Diniak.

Fire

Fire Chief Cavallaro and Deputy Fire Chief Freeman appeared before the Board and presented the "Fire FY2024 Operating Budget Level Funded Budget" presentation, [attached](#).

The Board discussed the presentation with Chief Cavallaro.

Police

Police Chief Kane appeared before the Board and spoke on what a zero-increase budget would look like for the Police Department.

The Board further discussed the zero-increase budget concept with TM.

Community Services

Community Services Director Tammy Murray appeared before the Board and presented the "Hanover Community Services FY2024" presentation, [attached](#), to the Board.

Library

Library Director Ginny Johnson presented the "John Curtis Free Library Impact of Decrease to the FY 24 Budget Request" presentation, [attached](#).

Community Development & Municipal Inspections

Ann Lee, Assistant Town Manager/HR Director/Director of CDMI appeared before the Board and presented the "FY24 CDMI Zero Based Budget" presentation to the Board, [attached](#).

Ms. Lee informed the Board that current part time Town Planner Christine Stickney will be retiring in the near future and she would like to have that position posted soon. TM clarified that the main reason the position is not yet posted is to wait to get through the budget season and see what happens with that before making staffing decisions. TM also noted that the Town has been lucky to have Christine Stickney in that position with her knowledge and ability to perform the job.

Finance

Finance Director Chelsea Stevens appeared before the Board and discussed what a zero-increase budget would look like for the Town's Finance Department. TM clarified that not all Finance Department employees can cover for others within the Department. due to the need for a fire wall separation between those receiving money and those accounting for the money, therefore there is a little less flexibility for cross coverage in the Finance Department. FD noted that from an auditing standpoint Accounting, Treasurer Collector and Assessing all have to remain separate.

Approved
3/20/2023

Discuss, Review and Provide Policy Direction to the Town Manager for Consideration on the FY2024 General Operating Budget in Preparation for the Final Budget Presentation and Submission on January 30th.

TM commented that January 30th will not be the end of the road for the budget proposal. It will move on to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee who will have their own recommendations and finally it will be voted on at Town Meeting.

TM requested direction from the Board on, for example, if the Town Department budget increases are not getting cut to zero, then what tax levy and free cash levels would the Board be comfortable with using.

The Board informed TM of their desire to keep the Library Budget at least at the minimum level to keep the Library certified. Chair of the Board of Library Trustees Jean Cianciola briefly provided the Select Board information on decertification of a Library, noting that if you lose certification, you cannot get it back for five years.

The Board discussed the possibility of making the free full day kindergarten program a stand-alone article at Town Meeting.

FD confirmed that it could be a separate article, however it would still be funded by either the tax levy or free cash, therefore it would be pretty much be in the same position with the budget whereby the Town would need to leave that amount available in the levy or in free cash to be able to appropriate it.

FD recommended funding it through the tax levy because if free cash were used to fund it, we would be in the same boat next year of trying to figure out how to fund it. FD stated that having it as a separate article would not help this budget, but it would leave it up to the taxpayers to make the decision of whether or not they want to be taxed to the levy to have this program or not. The Board further discussed the concept of making the free full day kindergarten program a separate Town Meeting article with TM.

The Board expressed a desire to see the cuts a little more spread out to the School Department and not just every other Town Department. TM agreed to reach out to the School Superintendent and Chair Nyman agreed to reach out to School Committee Chair Elizabeth Corbo to set up a meeting so that the two elected bodies can have this discussion.

Town Meeting

Review and Discuss Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant

TM ran through changes to the [Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant](#) with the Board, and encouraged the Select Board Members to go through the capital list and start making choices about those, as that will likely have an impact on the Town Meeting articles. TM informed all that all of the Drafts of the Town Meeting Warrant are available online for anyone who would like to track the progress made.

Chair requested any questions, seeing none.

Approved
3/20/2023

Town Manager Forum

TM informed all that the perk test at 611 Webster Street had failed.

TM stated that he will be officially informing the neighbor groups, the Fire Station Study Committee and others interested in the project tomorrow. TM further mentioned that the future of the project is uncertain now due to the results of the test, as the feasibility of moving the project forward at the location is uncertain. The Chair thanked TM for keeping the residents informed, answering emails and setting up meetings regarding the project.

Select Board Forum

Selectman Delaney gave a shout out to Hanover Fire and Police as they had recently taken care of his loved ones, and he thanked them for their efforts and the follow up thereafter.

Selectman Louko mentioned that he had recently had the opportunity to have lunch at the Brass Lantern over at South Shore VoTech. While there about the District and their future plans for expansion there from Superintendent Hickey. He stated that he highly recommended the Brass Lantern restaurant. The kids do a great job, the food is delicious, and the prices are very reasonable.

Consider Extending the Deadline of the Transfer Station Study Committee's Final Report to February 27th, 2023

Vice Chair O'Connor spoke on extending the deadline for the Transfer Station Study Committee to present their final report to the Board.

The Board voted to extend the deadline for the Transfer Station Study Committee to present final report to the Select Board to February 27th, 2023.

Executive Session

At: 9:39pm, in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, §21(a)3, the Chair requested a roll call vote to enter into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining agreement negotiations with the Police and Fire Unions, as a discussion of this topic in Open Session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

The Chair announced that the Board will not be returning to Open Session.

Roll Call Vote: Vice Chair O'Connor, aye, Selectman Tuzik, aye, Selectman Louko, aye, Selectman Delaney, aye, Chair Nyman, aye.

At 9:39pm the Board moved into Executive Session.

Adjourn

The meeting ended and adjourned at 10:12pm.

Approved
3/20/2023