



**TOWN OF HANOVER**  
550 HANOVER STREET  
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS 02339

*Advisory Committee*

**Hanover Advisory Committee**  
**550 Hanover Street**  
**Hanover, MA 02339**  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 12, 2022 – 6 PM  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Committee Attendees**

Emmanuel Dockter	Steve Freedman
Sandy Hayes	Jim Hoyes
Joan Pot-Farwell	Gavin Little-Gill
Gerry O'Hearn	Greg Satterwhite

**Residents At Large**

Mike Cianciola	Doug MacLellan
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**Absent**

Steve Kimto	Gavin Little-Gill
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**Other Attendees**

Joe Colangelo, Town Mgr.	Chelsea Stevens, Finance Dir.
John Geary	Steve Louko
Cathy Harder-Bernier	

Chairman Dockter called the meeting to order at 6 PM. With 7 members present and 2 absent.

There were no public comments.

Review of minutes from the 11/10/21 meeting was moved to the next meeting.

Town Manager Joe Colangelo reviewed the FY23 Initial Operating Budget. Joe reviewed the budget levers he used in developing the budget. He reviewed the budget with no increase to the tax levy and no use of free cash. A decision will need to be made on how to set the levers. He shared several slides on increasing the tax levy. He also shared a slide using free cash. Joe then shared budget items that might be best to utilize debt. Continuing with the debt suggestion he shared existing & projected tax supported debt service along with existing & projected debt. Joe concluded his presentation with historical & projected average residential property tax bill increases over the last 10 years in dollars, percentages and a comparison with other area towns. Joe values the direction from the Advisory Committee. The budget is 68.6 million dollars with \$500,000 of new growth. Free cash has not been applied. There are budget gaps and over the next several weeks the numbers will be reviewed and the numbers will be adjusted.

Members discussed that the service levels appears to be the same as the FY21 level. Members discussed the spending level of FY21. There was also discussion about the use of Free Cash.

Members discussed the gap, the tax levy and free cash.

The committee asked Finance Director Cheleas Stevens a to provide the committee with a presentation on Free Cash. This was well received and it gave the committee a better understanding on Proposition 2 ½ & Free Cash, how the levy limit is calculated and how new growth plays a role.

Joe shared that the town cut quite a bit from their budget and so did Community Services and Library. Chelsea shared in this conversation that there is more flexibility from ARPA for schools. Police is showing a large increase in salaries because it is the first time in 2 or 3 budget years that they have a contract to accurately budget CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement).

Emmanuel asked for the committees thoughts on how to create a baseline that would help Joe as he continues to work with Department Heads.

The committee shifted their discussion to the Capital Budget. They reviewed the possible use of debt for some capital projects. The committee asked if projects were prioritized? The committee discussed borrowing vs free cash. Joe shared that interest rates are low and it might be a good time to borrow.

The committee discussed the need to have foward planning. It would be good to have a strategic plan for items like the generator issue throughout town buildings. The committee thought it would be a good idea to have a 5-year plan prioritizing projects. The committee also asked if debt charts could be prepared that also showed projected new debt plans. The current charts only show existing debt and not the impact of potential new debt (i.e. new fire station).

Emmanuel reminded the committee that they want Department Heads to tell the story behind the numbers because it helps understand the numbers. They agree that having questions for them to answer ahead of time works, but the story is very important.

A committee member asked for information on COVID costs. Another member asked a question relating to the tax title properties and if legal fees are included in the budget to cover expenses.

The committee asked if there could be page numbers on Victor's budget.

The board will attend the Selectboard meeting on Monday, January 31<sup>st</sup> to listen to the Selectboard's review of the Operating Budget. The next Advisory committee meeting will be on Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.