

Hanover Advisory Committee
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339
Meeting Minutes
Saturday, April 1, 2017 – 10:00 am
Advisory Committee Hearing Room
Hanover Town Hall

Opening:

The meeting was opened at 10:00 am by Edward Hickey, Chairman.

Committee Attendees:

Edward Hickey
Emmanuel Dockter
Wayne Moores
Angela Blanchard
Sandra Hayes
Jerry O’Hearn
Gavin Little-Gill
Brandon Freeman
Joan Port-Farwell

Other Attendees:

Anthony Marino, Assistant Town Manager
Jocelyn Keegan, Hanover Resident

Warrant for Annual Town Meeting Motion and Commentary Review:

Articles 1 to 6

The Committee reviewed articles 1 through 6 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. These articles are generally considered “housekeeping” articles as they appear on the warrant each year. Angela Blanchard made a motion to accept the motions as written for articles 1 through 6. This was seconded by Emmanuel Dockter. All were in favor and the motion passed. Angela Blanchard made a motion to accept the commentary as written for articles 1 through 6. This was seconded by Emmanuel Dockter. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article 7 – Set Pay for Elected Officials

The Committee had a lengthy discussion regarding the annual salary of the Hanover Town Clerk Cathy Harder-Bernier. Ms. Harder-Bernier is asking for a 26% raise to bring her salary to the average salary of other town clerks in surrounding towns. Vice Chairman Emmanuel Dockter suggested that the Committee approve a 3.2% raise to compensate Ms. Harder-Bernier for the many years the position did not receive the standard 2% raise during the prior town clerks employment. Chairman Ted Hickey commented that Ms. Harder-Bernier was fully aware of the Hanover Town Clerks annual salary when she ran for election to the position. Mr. Hickey gave an overview of some information he had received from discussions with members of the Board of Selectmen regarding day to day operations within Ms. Harder-Bernier office. Brandon Freeman expressed concern that if the Town Clerk’s salary is much lower than other town clerks in surrounding towns, it may be difficult to attract well qualified candidates for the position in the future. Emmanuel Dockter stated that he is hopeful that Warrant Article 32 may help with some of the salary issue for the Town Clerk position. Emmanuel Dockter also stated that the Advisory Committee’s reluctance to give Ms. Cathy Harder-Bernier the full raise she is requesting has nothing to do with her performance. A 26% raise is just unreasonable at this time. There

was some discussion about what commentary the Committee should include for the article. Tony Marino confirmed that the administrative assistant in the Town Clerk's office would receive the standard 2% raise. Emmanuel Dockter made a motion to set the salary for the Town Clerk for FY18 at \$63,929. This was seconded by Angela Blanchard. All were in favor, and the motion passed. The commentary will be decided at a later meeting.

Article 12 – Special Education Expenses

The Committee discussed that this article may not be needed due to changes in the way special education will be funded in FY18.

Article 10 – General Fund Operating Budget

The Committee had a general discussion about the operating budget. Ted Hickey explained the possibility of including a chart in Article 10 that lists all the capital request warrant articles funded by debt. Then including the amount the levy could be reduced if each particular capital request warrant article is not approved. The same idea for capital request warrant articles funded by free cash was considered; however, after discussions with the Town Manager Troy Clarkson and Chairman of the BOS Brian Barthelmes, it was decided that sticking with the debt funded articles would be best at this point. The practice of using free cash to reduce the levy would not be considered best practices by the Town's auditors and could affect the Town's bond rating. Ted Hickey requested that Tony Marino compile a list of capital request warrant articles that are funded by debt. Mr. Marino said he would get the information. Mr. Marino did have a spreadsheet which listed the articles funded by free cash, and he shared it with the Committee.

Article 13 – Public Safety Employee Training

The Committee discussed the use of these funds. Emmanuel Dockter asked why this recurring expense is not included in the operating budget. Angela Blanchard explained that the previous Town Administrator Stephen Rollins wanted these funds to remain separate so that they could only be used for specialized public safety training. Sandra Hayes made a motion to accept the motion and commentary for Article 13 as written. This was seconded by Joan Port-Farwell. Angela Blanchard recused herself from the vote. The remaining committee members were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article 14 – Town Hall Cupola

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding the Town Hall cupola. Sandra Hayes made a motion to accept the motion and commentary for Article 14 as written. This was seconded by Emmanuel Dockter. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article 15 – Aerial Ladder Replacement

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding article 15. All Committee members agreed that the Fire Department should be commended for obtaining a large grant to offset the cost of the new aerial ladder truck. Jerry O'Hearn made a motion to accept the motion and commentary for Article 15 as written. This was seconded by Sandra Hayes. Angela Blanchard recused herself from the vote. The remaining committee members were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article 16 – IV Infusion Pumps

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding article 16. It was decided to revisit a vote on this article once the funding source was confirmed.

Article 17 – Police Vehicles

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding article 17. Sandra Hayes made a motion to accept the motion and commentary for article 17 as written. This was seconded by Angela Blanchard. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article 18 – Establish PEG Access & Cable Related Fund

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding article 18 and will revisit the article at a later meeting.

Article 21 – Supplement Bond/Note Costs

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding article 21 and will revisit the article at a later meeting.

Article 22 – Reduce CPA Surcharge

Tony Marino explained that if this article is approved, there will still need to be a separate ballot question at a later date to adopt the change. It was also noted that a reduction in the surcharge will reduce the percentage of matching funds from the state. Mr. Marino noted to the Committee that a reduction in funds may also restrict the Town's ability to invest in affordable housing projects that may become possible in the future. Chairman Ted Hickey asked each Committee member their initial thoughts on the article. Angela Blanchard said she is undecided but is concerned about the lack of oversight on project completion times after CPC funds have been approved. Gavin Little-Gill is in favor of a reduction and believes the CPC has not done a good job accepting projects that are consistent with its core missions. Jerry O'Hearn is undecided at this time. Emmanuel Dockter and Sandra Hayes are not in favor of the reduction. Joan Port-Farwell is in favor of the reduction. Mrs. Port-Farwell is disappointed since when CPA was first adopted, resident 65 or older were supposed to be exempt from the tax. However, as it currently stands, residents can apply with the Assessor's office to be exempt from the tax, but CPC does not make an effort to let residents know about this option. Jocelyn Keegan asked to comment and stated that she had never heard of this option, and CPC should definitely do a better job in educating residents. Tony Marino stated that the reduction would save \$64.00 per year on the average tax bill. Ted Hickey is not in favor of the reduction. When managed properly, he believes the CPA can greatly benefit the community and to reduce it in response to increased tax bills is not the answer. Reducing spending in other areas is a better option. The Committee decided to table the discussion regarding a motion and commentary for article 22 and revisit it at a later meeting. The Committee had a brief discussion regarding the CPC including contingency language in their warrant articles to ensure other funding is acquired before their approved funding is released for a project. Tony Marino read the below email into the record regarding this topic. *"Attorney Donald Gorton from DOR said there is no written guidance on this issue. However, he stated that it is DOR's position there is no authority under the CPA to make contingent appropriations and that appropriations must be definite under the CPA. He stated that the only time contingent appropriations would be authorized would be in the context of a Proposition 2½ Override. Therefore, it is DOR's position that there is no authority for CPC to make recommendations based on outside funding sources becoming available. Based upon DOR's position, it's recommended that you inform CPC that it must strike the contingencies."*

Article 29 – Zoning Board Appointment

The Committee discussed article 29 which is intended to give the Board of Selectmen the power to appoint one of their members, in this case Mr. David Delaney, to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Committee discussed whether this article granted the BOS a one-time appointment of one of their members or if they would have this power to appoint a member forever. Tony Marino will get the answer for the Committee.

Article 34-Pickup Truck with Plow

Gavin Little-Gill expressed concern about the accuracy of the Town owned vehicle inventory list. Sandra Hayes looked for information regarding which truck the new purchase would be replacing. Victor Diniak's submitted paperwork stated that the new truck would replace the grounds foreman's 2009

pick-up truck with plow. In turn, the 2009 truck would replace one of two trucks at the water treatment plants, whichever was in worse shape at the time. No decision was reached.

Article 41- Water Service Van

The Committee discussed article 41 and expressed their concern that the current van being replaced only has 80,000 miles and maybe could be driven longer.

Article 45-Technology Upgrades

The Committee discussed article 45. Gavin Little-Gill expressed concern that these expenses should be included in the operating budget based on other discussions. He also has questions about the need to spend \$65k on servers in the high school before the broader technology strategy around cloud was developed. There was additional discussion about some of the decentralized technology functions like telephones and separate voip initiatives. The Committee requested some additional information from Bill Hartigan but has yet to receive any. Tony Marino stated he will contact Mr. Hartigan and report back to the Committee.

Article 50-Two Off Premise Liquor Licenses

The Committee discussed article 50. Chairman Ted Hickey explained the theory behind offering the site specific licenses. The new owners of the Hanover Mall view the licenses as an important and valuable incentive to attract strong anchor tenants to the mall which will enable them to finance a larger and more valuable property that will generate higher tax revenue to benefit the residents of Hanover. Mr. Hickey would like the Committee to write commentary for this article that carefully explains the benefit of these liquor licenses and the possible increased revenue for the community.

Article 54-Multi-Use Recreational Facility

The Committee discussed article 54. Tony Marino informed the Committee that the proposed location of the project has been changed. The Committee feels the article should be withdrawn until site specific plans are finalized. Chairman Ted Hickey also expressed concern that the impact of the project on the Town has not been vetted.

Article 55-Historical & Cultural Resources

The Committee discussed article 55 and does not feel inclined to support it. The Committee requested further details regarding this project from Town Planner Peter Matchak and has yet to receive the information.

Article 57-Town Owned/Occupied Buildings

The Committee discussed article 57 and its intended purpose to clarify the appropriate color for the Town Hall. The Committee generally feels that this article should be denied since a ballot vote for the Town Hall color will be held.

NOTE: The Committee briefly discussed each article on the annual town meeting warrant. The articles mentioned specifically above had more detailed, lengthy discussions, but each article was touched on briefly.

Warrant for Special Town Meeting Motion and Commentary Review:

The Committee discussed each article on the special town meeting warrant and gave their generally thoughts. Each article will be revisited at a later date for a vote.

Next Meetings

The Committee's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment

Emmanuel Dockter made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Angela Blanchard. All were in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Article	Free Cash Amount
Town Hall Cupola	45,000.00
School Budget Trsfr	140,635.00
Snow & Ice	150,000.00
Police Vehicles	132,000.00
HS Auditorium Storage	27,000.00
Kitchen Equip - MS & Cedar	64,000.00
Repave Areas Cedar School	110,000.00
Town Hall HVAC Units	68,000.00
Kitchen HV Unit HS	25,000.00
Sylvester Re-Use Study	30,000.00
Large Dump Truck	190,000.00
Pickup Truck w/ Plow	41,000.00
Dam Inspection/Design	30,000.00
2.5 Ton Vibratory Roller	40,000.00
Tractor	40,000.00
Phase II Master Plan	30,000.00
Restoration Town Hall	202,000.00
Technology Upgrades	100,000.00
SPED Expenses	500,000.00
Public Safety Training	30,000.00
Compensation Plan	25,000.00
	2,019,635.00
Free Cash Certified	2,543,589.00
% Proposed Usage	0.79