



State of the Town Address

February 25, 2016

The great storyteller Roald Dahl once noted that, “We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams.” While that erstwhile quote may not seem to have relevance to a review of the last year here in Hanover, it actually acts as a great segway to this morning’s visit, our annual update on the state of the town. You see, making music – making good music – is most certainly analogous to good government, and it is the dreamers of dreams, from citizens to elected officials to the appointed leaders we will highlight today, who are the visionaries who make that good government happen.

The composers of our public orchestra, the Board of Selectmen, continue to write a symphony with their strategic goals, which set a course each day for the work of our employees in all departments. Begun nearly four years ago as a simple brainstorming exercise, The Board’s strategic planning is now a blueprint for Hanover’s future, guiding our thinking, our doing, and our leadership. In a few short years, Hanover has become a regional leader in open and transparent government, reaching new heights of citizen and civic engagement – and it all began with the simple willingness to chart a course for the future.

Our team – the local leaders who sit before you today and those who work for and with them - follow that path – the sheet music of Hanover’s symphony – on a daily basis. Their dedication and commitment to community continues to pervade everything they do – and the results are clear. Ladies and Gentlemen, the state of our Town is strong – and it has been a group effort.

Chief among those strategic goals – right alongside increased transparency and financial sustainability – has been the revitalization of the town’s business corridor along Route 53. This overarching priority has been a primary focus for the entirety of my time in Hanover, and I am pleased to report that our efforts are paying off. We created a marketing pamphlet that is on your tables and on our website that has been sent to dozens of companies – national, regional, and local – in an attempt to raise awareness that Hanover is open for business. Our efforts are bearing fruit. Joining us today at this event – to speak first hand on the state of the economy in Hanover and how its government works with not against this vital sector of our local economy, are several of the entrepreneurs, managers, and risk takers of Hanover’s business community who are succeeding – and who have forged strong partnerships with Town Hall and the people in it. The Town of Hanover encourages – not inhibits – responsible and sustainable growth. The Town of Hanover encourages – not inhibits – innovation and new ideas. The Town of Hanover encourages – not inhibits – partnership with the private sector. Effective leaders like David Rosenberg from Prime Motors, Ed Callahan from the Hanover Mall, and Frank Teixeira from the University Sports Complex are here today because they have lived that partnership – and are here to tell the tale of the symphonic melody they have composed alongside the elected and appointed leaders of this community.

Theirs are real success stories that they will share with us. When David Rosenberg contemplated expanding his automobile empire here in Hanover and sought to acquire the iconic Columbia Motors from the Delaney family, he proposed to modernize, improve, and expand an already vibrant location. He did – and we helped him get there. When a bankruptcy plagued another local icon – the Hanover Mall – longtime manager Ed Callahan kept faith and persevered – through strong collaboration with the town and his own entrepreneurial spirit, he attracted Dick’s Sporting Goods and better things are on the horizon for 2016 – and we’ll help him get there. When Frank Teixeira and a group of visionary investors pictured a world-class sports complex at the former Starland, where generations of memories came alive for families all over the south shore and they envisioned memories in a cutting edge athletic facility for a new generation of Hanoverites, we helped him get there. When the defunct ‘Villages’ apartment development was dusted off and re-proposed as a for sale condominium development led by Five Mark Builders, one of the north shore’s premier construction firms, we worked with the proponents to shape a development that would be good for the community. Five Mark Project Manager Joe Pegurri joins us today – and will be on the job as this key development marches toward success. We’ll help him get there.

These partnerships would not be possible without the energy, the vision, and the capability of our Planner Pete Matchak. Pete has embraced our collaborative approach and is an able and affable ambassador of friendship to the business community. Today, we stand on the precipice of a new era of vibrancy and Pete – we thank you for helping us get there. (Introduce Pete). Pete has recently been joined in the Planning Office with Associate Planner Heidi Cho. Heidi has an impeccable planning pedigree and has also provided a

razor sharp acumen and perspective on historic preservation which has been a huge help as we work to renovate and restore 'the peoples' house,' this venerable old building.

Please join me in welcoming Heidi to the orchestra. (introduce Heidi)

Just as important as our link to the business community – and the recipient of an equally enthusiastic effort over the last four years – is our collaboration and relationships with our non-profit partners. Just up the street, the people at the Cushing Centers are working to transform their campus and open it up to generational living, constructing workforce housing and creating a retail and administrative center that will be one of the 'anchor stores' on a revitalized route 53. We recently cut the ribbon on a collaborative public works project, constructing meandering walking paths that will benefit both the Cushing community and the public – a concrete example (yes, pun intended) of collaboration that will endure for decades. Interim CEO Peter O'Meara and Vice President Jansi Chandler are here as both friends and partners. We are grateful to work side by side with them in pursuit of their important mission.

The South Shore YMCA is one of the largest and most successful in the United States. We are proud to partner with this diverse service organization and are working with them on multiple fronts – including how best to share facilities – and meet regularly to share our vision and our ideas. Assistant Town Manager Tony Marino – who is in procurement class in Boston today – is a valued partner and confidant of our friends at the Y. They have opened their paradigm to discussions of working with us on increased sewer capacity. They have opened their facility for us to expand our recreational offerings, and they have opened their minds to limit our collaboration only by our collective imaginations. CEO Paul

Gorman is here today and we salute and thank you Paul for working with us toward a better Hanover.

As Brian noted, our volunteers are also an important part of the Hanover symphony. Dozens of volunteers show up each week and log hundreds of hours to provide support, guidance, and feedback on the work of our employees. Many of them are here in the audience and we salute their efforts today.

Of course, any good symphony is only as good as its parts – the music makers and dreamers of dreams noted by Dahl - and our individual departments perform their music each day with melodic precision and harmony.

On each of your tables is a copy of the town's proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget, a 400-page volume of information that provides not only the numbers, but the numbers behind the numbers, and the story behind those numbers. It is a beacon of transparency and openness and it, too, is the direct result of the vision of the Selectmen to open up the town's books to the community. This was a true team effort –with all sections of the orchestra performing in unison. If the Selectmen are the composers and I am the conductor, then Art Ceurvels is most certainly the concertmaster. His tireless efforts as project manager were central to this effort – and many others. His ability to imagine and create, then implement and follow up, is unparalleled. Hanover is fortunate to have his dedication and skills – and I am fortunate to honor both today. (Recognize Art)

Throughout our organization, each member of the orchestra does their part to make the music of good government. With us today is Pegge Powers from the Finance Department. Pegge's career has taken her from the secretarial pool at the FBI as a dedicated

administrative support staffer (where, by the way her weekly salary was \$34.00) to the kiddie pool as a dedicated mom. She's been with us for more than 28 years, and helps get the bills paid accurately and on time. At more than 83 years young, Pegge comes every day because she's part of something – and we're glad that she is indeed part of our something. Pegge, we salute your service and dedication. (recognize Pegge).

Police Chief Larry Sweeney knows a thing or two about dedication. Having served this community for well over thirty years, Chief Sweeney has seen the face of this community – and the face of law enforcement – change profoundly. Through it all, though, he has recognized that forging and forming relationships with the community he calls home is at the core of success. As an example of his – and as a result the departments' – success in this arena, I point toward our now veteran Superintendent Matt Ferron. The collaboration between the police and schools in Hanover has become an example that many communities draw on of how to work together to protect and to serve. From state of the art ALICE training for active shooter scenarios to the wildly successful school resource officer program, these departments are a shining example of the benefits of going beyond working together and truly pursuing a common goal of excellence in educational together. Matt and Larry are sitting together today not because they were told to but because they want to. We are all the beneficiaries of the deepness of that partnership and today we salute you both.

Also with us today from the Police Department is Officer Adam Hill, an example of today's young, enthusiastic, and well educated Police Officer. Adam represents all that is good about the future of policing – in Hanover and beyond. He is a resident of Hanover and the father of 4 daughters. He worked at the Hanover Mall as a special police officer for 2 years

and was most recently employed as a police officer at Northeastern University where he worked for 7 years before joining us just a couple of weeks ago. Please join me in welcoming Adam to our orchestra.

You can see the theme developing in this year's remarks. We have spent hundreds of hours fine-tuning our organization and information reporting over the last few years. From updating our website, to expanding our social media outreach, to producing videos on topics as varied as water quality and Christmas cooking, we have worked tirelessly to engage and inform the public. We are on the cusp of fulfilling another of the Selectmen's goals through even further improving our reporting with VisiGov, a state of the art financial reporting tool that will allow the public to see graphs and trends on the peoples' resources. The Selectmen's meetings will soon be paperless, with a new method of information sharing that will streamline and improve the way they obtain and retain the information coming from the Executive office. So the information on what we do and how we do it is pervasive and at your fingertips. And although those efforts are perennial and ongoing, today our focus is on the people who do all of the 'whats' and the 'its' and highlighting their role – and their importance in what we do. And like in an orchestra, each of them plays a critical role in making our music – individually and as part of the larger effort. For instance, you may notice that the layout of this room is different from the last couple of years. That's because our Town Hall custodian and Hanover resident Mark Rice had a brainstorm that the room would look better with the addresses delivered under the town seal. Mark knew – and Mark knows – that his opinion is as valuable as anyone else in the organization and he made the suggestion to change things up. We listened – and here we stand – thanks to

Mark and his willingness to contribute to the solution of a better symphony. (recognize Mark)

We also listened when the residents of our community raised concerns about the quality of our water and the condition of our roads. This year, we will embark on the town's most aggressive water quality improvement projects in a generation, updating our water treatment and improving our water distribution. At the forefront of that effort is Water Superintendent Neal Merritt, who drinks the water when he turns on the faucet at his Hanover home, and has a stake in improving that precious resource as a father, husband, friend and citizen. Just last week, Neal and his crews, assisted by Deputy DPW Superintendent Curt MacLean and his crews, braved the bitter cold and biting wind to repair a water main break. They do indeed serve because they care and today, we offer thanks – and a challenge of continued excellence – to Curt, Neal, and their teams. (recognize Curt and Neal)

Without the water from those pipes that our crews repaired, our Fire Department would have to resort to some pretty old-fashioned methods of firefighting. Thankfully, we've got seasoned professionals joining Chief Jeff Blanchard, another Hanover native turned Hanover lifetime public servant, in leading today's Fire and Rescue Department. Provisional Deputy Chief Justin Reed and Firefighter Chris Azizian are two 'first chairs' in their section of the orchestra, leading their colleagues and their community. As the newly appointed Provisional Deputy, Justin is filling the very big and very beloved shoes of Deputy Barbara Stone, who retired this year but continues her service to her hometown and whose service we certainly salute today. Justin has been serving the Hanover community since 2007 and was promoted to Captain in May of last year. He serves with distinction and has

answered the call to help Chief Blanchard lead the department while an assessment center is conducted to select a permanent replacement. Rather than see the provisional appointment as a sojourn, Justin has pounced on the opportunity to learn and to learn to lead. Young professionals like Justin are the future of our symphony, and I am pleased to introduce this music maker to you today.

Chris Azizian is the critical link between the leadership and today's professional firefighters and paramedics as the President of the Hanover Firefighters Local 2726. In a couple of weeks, he will celebrate ten years with the Department as a full-time firefighter/paramedic, and provides additional support as a member of the Plymouth County Tech Rescue Team, and has served on committees assisting the town in critical public safety decisions such as ambulance purchases. Chris is a symbol of what's right in firefighting and paramedicine today, and we are pleased to have him join us this morning.

The employees we highlighted today provide a snapshot into what it takes for the Hanover symphony to be heard. As the conductor, I can wave the baton, but unless each musician is willing – and motivated – to play their part, the music will not be melodious. That is the real story today and the true state of the town. We have a motivated, highly performing and dedicated workforce – the peoples' symphony – and it is my honor to honor them and their efforts today. But let this effort continue. On a national level, our public discourse has degraded to sound bytes and tweets. We can and should be an example of a positive and enduring dialogue and of a community that still believes in the nobility of public service and is not afraid to thank those that pursue it. I am not afraid to offer gratitude – and today stand to say thank you. To our employees, our volunteers, and you, our citizens for your roles in Hanover's symphony.

As part of the fulfillment of one of the Selectmen's goals to engage with the community, we conducted a citizen survey – another Art Ceurvels masterpiece - last year. It was sent to every mailing address in the community, and a statistically significant – over 500 residents – responded to the survey. The results tell the tale of the impact of the music we're making together. Copies of the survey results are available on your table, and on the town's website for you to review in detail, but the message was clear – our message of good government – of open government – and responsive government – is being heard. When we asked the question on a scale from 1-10, 'how happy are you living in Hanover,' more than 83% - eighty three percent – answered seven or higher. Half provided a 9 or a 10. That's a pretty happy community – and we are happy to lead the orchestra that brings you that beautiful music – every melodious moment of every harmonious day. Thank you – and let's continue to make beautiful music together.