

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Minutes of the October 16, 2018 Budget Review Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairman Coutu the meeting of October 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - led by Executive Assistant Donna Graham.
3. ATTENDANCE

Board of Selectmen: Roger Coutu, David Morin, Marilyn McGrath, Angela Routsis, Normand Martin

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia, Town Administrator; Donna Graham, Executive Assistant; Kathy Carpentier, Finance Director; Brian Groth, Town Planner; Elvis Dhima, Town Engineer; Bruce Buttrick, Zoning Administrator; Linda Pilla, Library Director; Robin Rodgers; David Shaw; Ken Dickinson

Chairman Coutu stated before we begin the proceedings this evening, I want to take a couple of moments of personal privilege. Yesterday evening those of you who watched or whether you watched or didn't watch, you may hear about it or read about it. I conducted myself in a fashion which was not professional as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Hudson. A position that I hold in the highest esteem but it would not have been readily visibly yesterday evening by the way I conducted myself. I went into a tirade about a procedural matter and it should have been handled differently. Fingers were being pointed. I was approached and reproached by a member of the Board of Selectmen and I know he won't mind my mentioning his name - Normand Martin. Selectman Martin came to me after the meeting or we had a discussion after the meeting with which Selectman Martin didn't appreciate my conduct. I accepted his remarks as being intended to try to rectify my conduct. I appreciate that Selectman Martin. My remarks were directed at the process and the procedure. I from my position was not pleased about the way things were being discussed or handled. That gave me no right to get into a screaming tirade. I apologize to the public. I apologize to my fellow members of the Board and I will do my best to restrain myself and be a lot more patient that I have been. With that said, I'll ask that all phones be shut off. We will begin this evening with the budget presentation.

4. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Coutu recognized Town Administrator Steve Malizia.

Steve Malizia indicated this is night two. You'll have some of the smaller town committees and departments. You'll have the Land Use Division, Water, Sewer, Library, Conservation, and Finance and Administration. That's the highlights for this evening.

Selectman Martin stated, I was going to ask to bring the Library Trustees up first, but on further discussions with another Selectman, I think that these departments are really smaller than the other big departments and I think we'll get through these relative quickly. Thank you.

Trustees of Trust Fund (5020), page 1

Chairman Coutu recognized Finance Director Kathy Carpentier.

Kathy Carpentier explained most of these are committee budgets, very small, and pretty much flat. If you have any questions, please stop me because I probably will speak quickly. Department 5020 is Trustees of the Trust Fund. There's a \$98 decrease in mileage and postage. It is a budget of \$3,675.

Selectman Martin asked under salary and benefits, who is the bookkeeper? I don't want a name. We pay a bookkeeper and a clerk? Ms. Carpentier said the bookkeeper is an elected official. One of the Trustees is designated the bookkeeper. That's the title and gets a small stipend based on a warrant article that was

done many, many moons ago. The other two positions are uncompensated.

Cemetery Trustees (5025), page 4

Kathy Carpentier stated there's a \$40 increase. We left the \$1,200 in professional services. This is to make repairs in the cemeteries and we increased \$50 for postage.

Selectman Martin stated we have a member of the Cemetery Trustees present! Chairman Coutu understood that - Mary Ellen Gannon was present. Did you have a question is that why you're here? Ms. Gannon said I haven't had any information on budgets. I've reached out. I'm kind of getting nowhere on any information on the Cemetery Trustees is there any backup info? Chairman Coutu stated it's a small budget. The budget for the Cemetery Trustees is \$1,250. They've requested \$50 for postage in the event that they have to send letters out I guess to plot owners and any other business they might do that would need some money for postage. For professional services, \$1,200. That money is typically used to repair broken stones and things of that nature. That's all the money that they request. That's all they've used year in year out. They've never had any further need for expenses. If you would take a seat, I'm just going to ask you one question. Have you attended any meetings of the Cemetery Trustees? Ms. Gannon indicated there has been no meetings held so far of the Cemetery Trustees.

Chairman Coutu asked do you know who the Chair person is of that committee. Mary Ellen said no. I'm just guessing it would be I believe David Alukonis since he's been on the Board the longest, but I am not getting any real communications back from him and I've never even met the other gentleman at all. Chairman Coutu said if you don't mind, I will ask our Administrative Assistant Ms. Graham to contact the chairman of the Trustees of the Cemetery and to get a hold of you and get you in the loop. You haven't been in it. We'll see if we can get you in the loop. If you have any problems after that and initial contact is made by Ms. Graham, she will contact you. You have her contact information. She will contact you and if you don't hear anything within a week, get a hold of her and we will ask him to come here before the Board of Selectmen.

Supervisors of the Checklist (5042), page 16

Kathy Carpentier noted there is no change to this budget. It is \$4,840. This is the elected officials - Supervisors of the Checklist. They keep the voting records.

Treasurer (5050), page 19

Ms. Carpentier stated there is no change in this budget - \$8,074. This is for the Town Treasurer who is an elected official and this is a stipend voted on by the taxpayers.

Sustainability Committee (5055), page 22

Kathy Carpentier said this is a \$1,300 budget and no change to the budget.

Budget Committee (5070), page 26

Kathy Carpentier no change - \$800 budget.

Chairman Coutu stated if any member of the Board has any questions at any time, please let me know.

Ethics Committee (5080), page 28

Kathy Carpentier said no change to this budget. It's a \$100 budget.

Planning & Planning Board (5571-5572), page 1

Chairman Coutu welcomed Brian Groth. He's new so this is your first budget before the Board and the Town Administrator is here to assist you if there's a need. Are you ready to present your budget? Mr.

Groth said yes.

Brian Groth explained the item that Planning is requesting outside of the budget is for a Master Plan update to be facilitated by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission. In doing so and by using them, they will also make a contribution towards this update. First I'd like to explain the merits of completing the Master Plan update. The Master Plan update is considered one of the most important duties of the Planning Board and it's often recommended that it's updated every 5 to 10 years. We're now on year 12 going onto 13. It's important for several reasons. One - it's the legal basis for our zoning regulations or cap fees. It's also a very significant piece as we look ahead towards securing grants for the town. They often look for updated Master Plan chapters that are relevant to whatever grant we might be pursuing. I would suspect that in the past 12 years there's been a lot of change in town both demographically in land use so it's important to bring this plan up to speed. As you can see, NRPC as part of being one of their members, they'll contribute nearly \$6,000 in kind towards the effort.

Chairman Coutu said it's not reflected in your budget. Steve Malizia noted that's outside the budget, correct? Kathy Carpentier stated its \$19,378. If the Board wanted to, they'd put it in 5571-252 professional services. Mr. Malizia indicated the actual budget itself is down \$5,000 if you look at the Planning Department budget.

Selectman McGrath asked is NRPC are they going to be giving a preliminary update that the Planning Board will review and make edits to? Brian Groth said yes most likely that's how it's done yes. If they do, Selectman McGrath asked if they do is there going to be additional costs. Mr. Groth didn't anticipate exceeding what they proposed here. Having worked for a planning commission with a similar scenario being on the other side of that table, I've done work similar to this if not identical. I would expect them to periodically review their progress with us. I'll be working to move it forward. Selectman McGrath stated I ask this because a number of years ago NRPC helped to update the Master Plan and there were a number of edits that kept bouncing back and forth and their cost went up because of that. It's just something that you're going to have to be diligent about making sure that they keep to their budget.

Selectman Routsis stated it does look like just so people know what the paper says, they are contributing 32 hours for six different meetings with town staff and/or the Planning Board. If we're paying for it, I hope we get it. If they're not having the meetings, if we can make sure that we do if this is something we add in. Brian Groth agreed. If this were to move forward what I would do is structure a scope and project schedule with NRPC.

Selectman McGrath asked to add one more thing. The Planning Board that we have today I don't know that any of the members that are sitting on the Planning Board today have ever participated in an update to the Master Plan. There may be some additional guidance there that's going to be required. Mr. Groth said I'm absolutely comfortable in looking forward to assisting in that role. It won't just be done by NRPC and isolation of the town. I'll be actively involved in the process.

Chairman Coutu said you'll be certain that the Board of Selectmen gets a copy. Mr. Groth said absolutely.

*Motion by Selectman Morin, seconded by Selectman McGrath, to increase \$19,378 to line item 5571-252 Planning, Professional Services.*

Selectman Morin stated that he thought this was very important process for the town where we're going and as the Planner said, it's needed for the zoning and planning for their future work.

In addition to that, Selectman McGrath stated it's important because of the cap fees that we collect from the developers. If we don't have an updated Master Plan that can inhibit collecting those cap fees and they're critical.

From my perspective, Chairman Coutu stated this is long overdue - 12 years is a little late in the game. We should be planning for our future. The growth has been tremendous over the past few years and we should have a plan going forward. I applaud you for taking an initiative to put a budget together and have NRPC on board with this. This pleases me. We're going to get back \$5,838 of our \$20,000 that we give them so

I like that part as well.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Coutu stated now if you want to go into your budget.

5571 - Planning, page 2

Chairman Coutu stated bottom line on that budget is that you are down \$5,000 from the previous year but we added \$19,000 so you're going to be up about \$14,000 on that budget. Any questions on that page?

5572 - Planning Board, page 6

Chairman Coutu indicated the Planning Board budget is level funded. As a matter of fact, it's down \$100 from last year and that would be in registration fees. I guess they anticipate paying \$100 less this year. Mr. Malizia stated just based on the history, they haven't done a whole heck of a lot.

Considering the volume of business we've been doing lately, Chairman Coutu knows in 2019 - this year's budget - we have \$4,000 for postage and newspaper ads. Is \$4,000 sufficient? Did you review this past year so far how we're doing in advertising and postage? You know more about what the traffic flow is whether there's other things coming up in the future. Are there any large projects or a multitude of projects coming forth? Brian Groth said not specifically on the horizon no. There's a couple of things coming up - a few commercial developments but we don't anticipate at this moment anything major.

Just a quick question, Selectman Routsis asked looking at previous years, last year, FY2018 our postage was up, in '17 it was even roughly, and '16 it was up. Do we maybe want to increase that a little give that the cost of postage goes up? Steve Malizia said we have the ability to transfer from lines. If you look at the bottom line of 8250 compared to what we spent \$6,500 last year, \$5,600 the year before, I think we have enough money to move it between a couple of accounts.

Selectman Martin asked professional services line, what's that cover? Steve Malizia stated specifically any minutes and transcriptions. Selectman Martin asked is there any plan to put a minute taker there or does somebody else within town do that? Mr. Malizia stated I'm not sure who's doing it right now. I know we have a minute taker for the Zoning Board. Brian Groth said we don't have a minute taker. The secretary of the Planning Board handles that duty. Mr. Malizia indicated we have it if we need it.

Selectman McGrath stated the secretary of the Planning Board doesn't prepare minutes. They prepare the decisions made, the motions that are made, who makes the motions. That doesn't include minutes of what transpire through the meeting. I think the last couple of years anyway especially since Brad got sick and wasn't able to do it any longer, people have been obtaining the CDs. I think we've gotten decision by Dave Lefevre that a paper copy of minutes is desirable. I think too that we've had difficulty finding people that want to sit at a Planning Board meeting, take down the notes, and then transcribe them. I think it's a double edge sword. We have difficulty finding somebody and then we really should be producing them as well. Brian Groth stated that's something I've been considering the length of my tenure so far. I wasn't going to push that to this point but I think it is something to consider in the future to have transcription of our meetings. Selectman McGrath stated Steve or Donna can give you a copy of Dave Lefevre's opinion about that. If I remember correctly, it was like a two page letter concerning that.

Chairman Coutu noted the Board will be reorganizing I believe at the next meeting. You might want to bring up at the meeting the potential for wanting to have somebody to transcribe and we will advertise and seek somebody. I know we have advertised in the past. As Selectman McGrath stated, it is difficult to find somebody but we can try it again. We don't know what's out there right now.

Selectman Martin stated I know it's hard to find somebody but the Zoning Board has a recorder who does a wonderful job with the Zoning Board. It's actually taking a lot of time away from the Zoning Board at a meeting to review the minutes. They go out in an e-mail format and they can edit their changes and send it back to her and she incorporates her changes. They still discuss them at a meeting but it isn't page by

page checking line item. You might want to reach out to her and maybe she'd be willing to do the Planning Board as well.

Zoning & ZBA (5581, 5583), page 8

As you recall, Steve Malizia explained this got moved out of the Fire Department approximately a year or so ago. As you also recall, the Board hired an Administrative Assistant for this department. That's what the increase is for here. Everything else I believe is stable. When you get to the ZBA, you'll also see the minute taker that we've referred to. Professional but it does take time and it costs money. That's budgeted.

Chairman Coutu noted our Zoning Administrator Bruce Buttrick is here. Good evening Bruce. Good evening. Starting with 5581, Bruce Buttrick stated it's basically the zoning and code enforcement element. As the Town Administrator indicated, our bottom line is an increase total being \$181,077. That's the inclusion of the newly hired Administrative Aide for Zoning and Code Enforcement. I'm pretty sure the other line items pretty much are the same carryovers. No major changes basically on this section of 5581 was personnel. I do want to thank you by the way for funding and including the position for the new hire. It's much appreciated.

Zoning Board of Adjustment (5583), page 12

Bruce Buttrick stated another line item increase as Selectman Martin indicated was the recorder. Prior to hiring our current one, it was almost a revolving door sometimes an absence, very difficult to have continuity when there wasn't somebody there taking the minutes. This arrangement at the moment is working very well especially the new process. There was a change and boards don't like change to do electronically to do the edits and then get the drafts back. Definitely a time saver at the meetings. It's not going line by line, editing, editing. So was a big improvement. The increase was with that efficiency in my opinion it's expensive. That's an expensive fee and that's under professional services.

Chairman Coutu asked Ms. Carpentier on that line item 252 the \$8,000 is that a 1090 item. Kathy Carpentier stated yes with this current one. I think in the past sometimes it's been through a company but this one is a 1099.

Selectman Martin asked about registration fees or the Zoning Board. It brought it down to \$100. Is that registration fees you use for the law lecture series and things like that? Has nobody been signing up? Mr. Buttrick thought because of the known tenure of the membership there's not a lot of new learning, however, we do have a few new faces and we have a new member just recently join. We may be having to kind of shuffle that around a bit to accommodate but that's the line item to charge it against would be the registration fees for the law lecture series typically in the fall. They run about \$75 for all three. Selectman Martin asked has anybody signed up to go. I don't know. Bruce stated this one we've had two.

Engineering (5585 & Warrant Article K), page 15

Chairman Coutu recognize the Town Engineer Elvis Dhima.

Good evening Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. The Engineering Department FY20 is level funded. I'll take any questions you might have.

On page 15, Chairman Coutu stated you'll notice that the budget is going up \$1,600 which is minimal. Steve Malizia indicated that's in the labor element. The remainder of the budget is zero.

Warrant Article K

Elvis Dhima was under the impression Mr. Malizia was going to present this. I should have brought my shield with me. As you are all aware, there's been multiple discussion about the circumferential highway. We've been going back and forth on this particular project. The Board of Selectmen members Selectmen Coutu and Morin attended a meeting with DOT. We finally were able to put this project back on the ten year plan. This allowed us to start applying for grants. We successfully submitted a grant for \$25 million through

a TIGER program under the Obama administration. Currently right now under the Trump administration it's called "BUILT". We're waiting for a design build. We show there was significant improvements on traffic, significant improvements on savings as well. With that said in that application we also stated that we would be asking the voters for a warrant article as this particular project is \$45 million. We could very well not get any funding at all from the feds at all on the first round or a second round for that matter. It's up for you to decide if we want to move forward with this project or this warrant article and ask the voters which way they feel so we know if we need to pursue the grant a second time if we don't get anything the first time. We're at the point that we need to decide if we want to pursue this or not or if the voters want to vote for this or not. If that's not the case, then we can focus on other improvements - smaller ones. I know how two Selectmen feel about it. I'll give you the floor Mr. Chairman. That's all I have to present.

Chairman Coutu stated you were at the meeting Mr. Dhima when we finally convinced the Department of Transportation to put it back on the ten year plan to bring it to the legislature. The legislature agreed to adopt it as part of the ten year plan. However if you recall the conversation we had with them, they made it very clear to us that this would probably be the last shot we're going to it doing this. As I mentioned to them, I've been going back and forth with them now for nine years I think. I've been here ten. I think I skipped the first year because we were there or Benson Park the first year. We spent a lot of time on that. Year after year the single biggest complaint in the Town of Hudson is traffic problems. There are no other solutions. There is one other but it's not going to help us. First of all, it would be cost prohibitive. We'd have to buy land on both sides of Lowell Road and bottle neck it all up here and it all comes down to one lane. What we need to do is we need to get traffic that's coming off the Sagamore Bridge to stop coming off the bridge and give them access to Route 111. If we pursue that and we're successful in building that section, they will expand that in the future to four lanes - two lanes on each side instead of the one that would be initially built. They're going to propose taking it from 111 to 102, eventually 102 over the Merrimack River to Route 3.

Chairman Coutu stated we also had a meeting most recently you and I, and Selectman Morin, and the Town Administrator with the Mayor of Nashua. We certainly have peaked his interest in wanting to get the flow of traffic because it's going to help eliminate some of the traffic coming down the bridge right here by Library Park and take people coming down 102 and if you're going north on Route 3 or even south, it might be the quicker access route is to go across the bridge and that will take care of a lot of the bottleneck here. Over the years my focus has always been about Lowell Road. Over the years, I've received many phone calls, many e-mails, many messages, many personal interactions with a lot of voters in town who say to me you're always talking about Lowell Road. 111 and 102 is no different. It is no different. You know it. I know it. You've tried everything you possibly can in terms of trying to get the lights to coincide with traffic flows so that we could get people through the intersections as quickly as possible. It's not easy. I've been their 14<sup>th</sup> car and waited 10 minutes to get through an intersection early in the morning because cars that want to turn left everybody is in a rush to get through the intersection. It's almost impossible for them to do. I sympathize with that and I sympathize with your ability to try to get it all fixed but I think it's running more smoothly as it ever has. From Highland Street off and going up 102, we have a relatively good flow of traffic though at times we do have bottlenecks here and there. School buses don't help us any but we have to transport the kids back and forth to school. It's a necessary evil and it does cause traffic congestion.

Chairman Coutu noted I've heard both positive and negatives about the potential of bonding to fill the first phase of what you call it - you've called it many things. Elvis Dhima said Hudson Boulevard. It's currently referred to and we submitted the application. Chairman Coutu stated "Hudson Boulevard" is what we'll refer to it as. It's appropriate. Again we're going to get one shot at this. I don't expect everybody is going to be on board. It's an expensive process. We had the ability to apply for grants. We could receive up to \$25 million. There is zero guarantee that we will get \$25 million. It is also conceivable depending on what the administration at the national level does that we could receive more money for a shovel ready project. The State of New Hampshire, Department of Transportation has assured us - and if I'm mistaken please correct me - that they will assist us through this entire project including dealing with environment, environmental agencies both State and national in order to expedite this. This is not their first go around with this project. The plan is well laid out. The route is well laid out. They've acquired all the property that's necessary in order for us to go and get this started. I'm recommending that the Board approve placing the warrant article on the ballot and let the voters decide. If they say no, and it's going to be a difficult task for us to get. We require 60 percent of the vote - super majority - and that's going to be a difficult task. If we don't get it, it's

the end of talking about circumferential highway. It will finally be buried and we're going to have to live with what we have from here on out. Then we'll have to do some traffic engineering and see if we can go - the other alternate is what Nashua does and a lot of larger communities do, one way streets. That solves a lot of issues but not the major problems. If anybody has anything now.

Selectman Routsis asked at our last meeting, NRPC was in here and showed us their ten year plan. They had this slated at \$52 million. Where is the difference from that \$52 million that they had to the \$45 million that we're budgeting in just a couple of weeks. Elvis Dhima thought that was just a number thrown here unfortunately. I think 2552. We have heard 35, 53. The number that was submitted to the feds was \$45 million. That was an estimate. It was prepared by MJ Engineering firm that did the grant. There is some estimation there and also a bit of a buffer. The number is \$45 million. I'm not sure where Jay came from that number. I saw that meeting as well. It's 45 and the feds have been asked to provide 25.

This is for whoever I guess was in the meeting with the State, Selectman Routsis said if the State felt that it was feasible that it needed to be back on the ten year plan, why is the State not considering chipping in to help pay for it as opposed to having it fall solely on Hudson? Steve Malizia stated there's a reason they put it back on the ten year plan is because we would fund it 100 percent. If we didn't fund it 100 percent, it wouldn't be on the ten year plan. Selectman Routsis asked it's something that we told them should be there. It's not something the State says should be there. Mr. Malizia agreed. Then we went to the legislature and they graciously put it in the ten year plan but all on our nickel.

Selectman Routsis' last question and this one is for KC. Do we have a rough breakdown of what this would cost if it were to pass at \$45 million and god forbid we got no grants? Kathy Carpentier stated we did the worst case scenario and ran a bond schedule. It's coming up. The first year is only interest only. It's \$.039 per thousand of your property value. It would cost the taxpayer \$117. In the second year, it's a full year of paying back principle and interest. It's \$336 and then it goes down to \$330 in the third year. That's assuming no grant money. I didn't run any other bond schedules but you can pretty much cut all those numbers in half if we were to get about \$25 million give or take.

Selectman McGrath had a couple of questions. The \$25 million grant that was applied for with the feds, when is the timeframe of that? If they made a decision would it be within the next 6 months? Within the next year? Within the next 5 years? Elvis Dhima indicated we were told by the end of this year - by December. The latest - January. Now I'm hearing January/February. It depends on what else they're dealing with. I'm hoping we have an answer by the end of the year. I'll definitely let the Board know and everyone else I'm sure. Selectman McGrath noted that certainly would alter the voting patterns of the voters if they knew ahead of the March or April - whenever we're going to have the election whether or not we're getting an additional \$25 million. Mr. Dhima stated we have to fund the entire project no matter what. The only difference if we have federal monies, we can go back for reimbursements. In other words, Selectman McGrath said the taxpayers of Hudson have to come up with \$45 million and then there's the possibility if the grant is issued then they might reimburse some of the costs but you can't guarantee that we'd get \$25 million. That solidifies my vote.

Number two, Selectman McGrath noted Selectman Coutu talked about meeting with Nashua Mayor Donchess and that he has a keen interest in this and because of course it would help to alleviate some traffic in his city. Is he willing to contribute any funds to this project? Elvis Dhima indicated I got feedback from other senior staff that attended that meeting. They're definitely very excited about it. They thought it was a unique opportunity for the region as much as them as us but there was no financial commitment from them. Selectman McGrath stated so he didn't offer any kind of financial contributions to this \$45 million project. Mr. Dhima didn't believe we asked him directly at that meeting. It was more this is what Hudson is doing. I'm not sure if we should ask or not but at that meeting I don't believe that question was asked.

Selectman McGrath had a question for KC. The tax impact that you went through the first year would be \$.39 on the taxes and it would be about \$117 for the average. The next year it goes up to \$300 and something. Is that in addition to the \$117 so that every year incrementally that the taxes would increase by those dollar values as opposed to...Ms. Carpentier said yes because we're raising \$45 million over 30 years. Selectman McGrath noted the taxpayers could see every year an increase in their taxes. It may go down a little bit based on the numbers that you've computed but first year would be \$117 and then the following

year \$336. That's \$400 something for the average home, right? Mr. Dhima didn't believe so. It was my understanding was \$170 the first year, \$300 the second year, and then it would start going down. It's not an add on is that what you're referring to. Ms. Carpentier stated it's not a one-time expense. When we built the fire station, it was a one-time impact to the voters. My bill is going to go up \$300 as a number and stay \$300 every year. It's not going to be \$300, then \$600, then \$900. It's \$300 my bill will be up and everything else remains the same - \$300 for the next 30 years to pay for this bond. Elvis Dhima indicated it doesn't add up. I think it was referring to adding up and that's not the case.

Kathy Carpentier asked to make one financial. None of this is represented in the number that we've given to you tonight because I didn't know what position you were taking so I didn't add the \$.38 into the tax rate that was presented to you. We will have to add that in if the Board so choose to forward this. I just wanted to make sure that was clear.

Selectman McGrath commented I've been involved with the planning and zoning for the last 30 plus years - almost 40. When I first got involved, Lenny Smith approached me very excitedly telling me we were getting the circumferential highway. It's almost 40 years ago. For many years he was just as excited as the first time he told me because he was certain as he drew breath that we were going to get the circumferential highway and it never happened. It didn't happen for a number of reasons. Cost was one of them but more significantly the impediments that would have to be overcome to build that roadway - wetlands, other issues, wetlands primarily, the EPA - their involvement in it and their stringent requirements for avoiding those wetlands and some of the other issues that they had, those were all reasons why it was never built. I can't support it as a taxpayer, as a voter, I cannot support this and I understand probably better than most the traffic that Hudson is dealing with. It's almost insurmountable to try and alter the traffic patterns in Hudson. I don't think that this is the solution. All you're doing is creating a parallel road next to Wason Road which is what they're using now. To try and envision that the traffic on Lowell Road is going to be lessened to a great degree, I just can't see it. I'm not an engineer but I've been doing this for a long time. I won't vote for it as a resident of this town but I will say this, I think that the voters ought to be given the opportunity to vote on it. Therefore a vote to put it on the warrant but I will not support it.

Chairman Coutu told Mr. Dhima you've been here long enough now. You've done some traffic analyses and you got involved in traffic for a while now. You're a traffic jam in itself with all the work you've had to do with traffic. Would it be fair to say from your professional opinion and experience that the circumferential highway will lessen the traffic significantly on Lowell Road. Based on the model that was done by NRPC, Mr. Dhima stated it appears that there is significant relief to a lot of roads in town and it appears that it's going to take about 20,000 vehicles per day through this circumferential highway road that we're doing. That is the only way we could have sold it to the feds. If the numbers were not there, if the benefits were not there, we wouldn't have had a chance to basically put it in. They simply would have said there's nothing here that shows there's a benefit to it. The cost benefit analysis was there and that's why we submitted it. If it wasn't, we had no business putting this grant in. We wouldn't have had the support from the State Senators and the DOT Commissioner. This went through the State as well. Prior to us submitting the grant, there was a courtesy review by DOT with us and our consultant and if they saw an issue with it, they would have said no we wouldn't provide support. If you have to say, the Commissioner was the last one that provided support. He was very hesitant because there's only so many projects that go out so they're very cautious on where they throw support on. I feel that if even if we missed something, our consultant and the State wouldn't have missed anything.

Mr. Dhima said it appears that there is a cost benefit to this from emission, from cost saving because you're cutting time, and from all the side roads that are taking a beating right now. Some of the roads are showing an 8 to 10 percent relief on site roads because they're not going to see that. People are going to use - just like Pelham Road when no one was using the intersection, all of a sudden now that you put the light in there all of a sudden I have a lot of traffic in there. Why? If you build it they will come. There's definitely a benefit there, there's no question about it. It doesn't even have to be my word. It's the modeling done by people way above us that have reviewed it, they have come up to it, they have agreed that this is it, and that's why we put it forward to the feds. The benefit is there. It's just the matter of getting it done. I totally understand that it's not fair that we're taking care of this problem and the State should have paid for it. I totally understand that. I also understand that the town and the people that live in town are paying because the commuters are taking the time in the road and the cue. I wish there was a better way but from the meetings



that we had with the State, the only way to get this done is if the town does it on their own. That's about it.

Selectman Morin indicated this has been already a hot topic in town. There's a lot of discussion going on it already and we haven't even made a decision one way or the other. We have heard from the neighborhoods that are affected by the traffic coming off of Lowell Road. Fifty years ago or whatever somebody envisioned that we were going to have this traffic issue and we do have it now and that's why they first proposed it because they knew this was going to happen. The EPA had a lot of issues with the road but as of today, things have changed in how they look at this stuff?

Elvis Dhima said yes. We were even told in the meeting with the State that it's either the emission or the wetland. They don't think it's a matter of filling a wetland. I think we fill wetland and we're going to mitigate and make other wetlands within the area. It's not a matter of we fill in an acre and that's the end of it. The issue with the EPA was the entire corridor - the four legs as Selectman Coutu presented was Sagamore to 111, 111 to 102, 102 to the bridge, and then beyond. The biggest issue they had was from what I'm understanding is that they had an issue with Pennichuck pond watershed and then obviously there's wetland along the entire corridor in Hudson and Litchfield for that matter. A lot of things have changed. It's a different administration. As it was explained to me, it's a matter of which one is better I guess - impacting wetland or burning a lot of gas out there sitting on traffic and waiting your turn. We're getting \$1.5 million for widening Lowell Road for the CMAQ project because it's a mission issue there. Because of that, it meets the criteria to get federal money.

Elvis Dhima believes that at the end of the day no matter what EPA says, it's a matter of are we going to inhale this or are we actually going to find a better way to grant less emission and less gas for the town. I expect from what I'm seeing that there's less resistance now from EPA to get things like this done as long as they're done in the proper way. Selectman Morin indicated there are new construction techniques to deal with wetlands to take a less of an impact on them, correct? Mr. Dhima stated the material has changed, the way they cross things have changed, they provide tunnels now for wildlife. Is there going to be maybe a bridge over there to go over certain water body? Probably. Our intent is to build this to the State's standards. That was the deal with the State. They're going to allow us to build it in their right of way, to their standards, and they can take it to the next level. I don't think they would have said we're going to come in and build two more lanes there if it was an issue with the environment. We all understand that this is not going to be an easy project. There's going to be a design build, hit the ground, and go if we get the green light. We have to deal with the Army Corps. of Engineers. We have to deal with EPA, with DES. I think it's a project that needs to be done and will get done.

Selectman Morin noted we have a circumferential highway right now and the neighbors are being impacted. If this doesn't pass, do we put more of a traffic burden on our residents and widen Wason Road, straighten it out, and make that the bypass? Elvis Dhima stated that will be option b. We'll have to do a combination of widening Lowell Road in some areas, try to get that a.m. traffic to the bridge, a.m. traffic from Wason Road to Lowell Road - maybe not go all the way up but maybe opening it up to a certain degree. Maybe the first mile from Lowell and Wason all the way up. The problem with Wason Road is that it's so challenging. You have had a lot of residents come in and complain about people speeding up, challenges during the winter operations with plowing, accidents. I'm not sure how much we can open up and make that safer. You have a hill on one side and you have a 20 foot ditch on the other. I drive that every time we go down there when we have developments. It's not easy. You're going to take a lot of land. People are not going to be happy about that. The current layout for the circumferential highway, Hudson Boulevard, the right of way is already established. It goes from 300 feet to 500 feet. What we are seeking is 80 feet within that. There's going to be a buffer on both sides. It's no impact whatsoever to the existing communities. They're going to Wason Road and it's a completely different game. I can tell you that when I was doing Main Street sidewalk in Nashua was to improve the sidewalk because we were impacting the businesses during business hours. It was a PR nightmare. You could have just small communities say one group out of that saying this is too much for us. This is not what we signed up for and that would be it.

Selectman Morin asked do you have an estimate on how many cars are driving on Wason Road today because of the traffic. The top of my head, Mr. Dhima thought that intersection at Sagamore is about 30,000 to 34,000 a day. It's somewhere in that range. Wason Road - I want to say it's about \$18,000 because when we did an analysis for a four-way stop at Wason and Musquash and they came up about a year ago.

People are having a hard time. It's a two way stop there and people are asking for a four way. There's so much traffic on Wason Road that it's not justified to make it a four-way stop. There's going to be so much backup. I want to say based on that, I thought it was about 18,000 but I could be wrong. I think it's about 18 to 20,000. It's quite a bit for a road like that which is a secondary road.

Selectman Morin said I can tell you I don't know how many car crashes I've been to at that intersection and I can tell you in the winter time when the snow covered the roads, we at all costs avoided Wason Road unless we had to go on because of that reason. Where we have that many vehicles traveling on that road, we're just going to get worse and it's going to be worse for the neighbors that are complaining now and the traffic is just going to continue and that's where they're going to go no matter what.

Elvis Dhima agreed. You have a vegetation issue there too, leaves as well. There's been an issue in the past when there's so much of it and the light doesn't get in. You have mold built up. I know that's been the case in the past with PD. Public Works has done everything they can to go out there and cut as much vegetation to expose that road to the sunlight. The first time I drove there when I took the job, I'm like oh my god it's a roller coaster.

Chairman Coutu stated a large number of people traveling that road are Pelham residents coming down to Market Basket. I see it every day. I've talked to people. I've recognized them from Pelham.

Selectman Routsis had two quick questions. If this was to pass and the construction happened when it was completed, who owns the road? Mr. Dhima said we will maintain the road. We will be responsible for plowing it. Adjustments need to be done to the Department of Public Works but they will own the right of way. I'm not sure what happens with the ownership of the road once the State steps in and builds the other barrel. I'm not sure but it was explained to me and correct me if I'm wrong, we will be expected to maintain it and plow it. We'll also be expected to be okay with the State installing a toll booth. That was left on the table.

Selectman Routsis stated if this were to pass just as an example, the State could possibly own the road but we would be responsible for repairing, maintenance, and plowing possibly. We don't know. Mr. Dhima said it's not any different than what they already have done which is basically own the entire Lowell Road and then every year they just give more and more to the town saying all right our limit just went a little bit further with urban impact. The same thing along 111 and the same thing along 102. My understanding was that we would be responsible from the very beginning. That's what the expectations were.

If they were to put a toll up, Selectman Routsis asked do we know if we would get any of those funds to compensate us back for what we spent or maintenance. Elvis Dhima said it's to be determined. I'm sure there's always room for back and forth there but my guess on it is they're going to take it all.

Chairman Coutu stated the State's not going to take it over the bondholders are. That land is owned by bondholders. Mr. Dhima agreed - the right of way. I'm not sure. We didn't get that far. Chairman Coutu stated they want their money back. They've put in millions of dollars to buy all of the property, and all of the houses, all of the right of way, and they want their money back. Right now they're getting nothing on their investment. Mr. Dhima agreed. Yes I think it's going to go to them. Chairman Coutu said they want to get that money back and the State did say that at some point they would want to put in a toll road. They want to see if Hudson is serious about its wanting to alleviate this traffic problem. If you fund the first phase, you maintain it, then we'll take it over and we'll widen it. We'll finish the first phase then we'll go in and do the second phase. This is not going to happen overnight. This could be a 20 year project in its entirety. We're looking out to the future. I'm sure the Master Plan is going to address the traffic woos and what the solution is. If the voters say no, that solution by virtue of a no vote will be taken off the table. They're not going to jockey with us every year - well can you put it back on. We want to try one more time. They made it pretty clear from my understanding we're getting one shot at this. Mr. Dhima said it took an act of god to put it back at the last minute. Chairman Coutu said we were lucky to get it back. It was a little temper tantrum I think on my part. It's back on the table and I like the idea of it being on the table. Unlike Selectman McGrath, I will support it. I appreciate Selectman McGrath's willingness to support putting it to the voters and let them decide. That's the purpose of warrant articles. I'm not going to get angry if they say no. We just know it's going to be put to bed and somebody calls you and says we have a traffic problem, well we had the solution.

Selectman McGrath had one question. Elvis did you take a look at the traffic counts on Wason Road that were done for the Market Basket. They're not all that old. They've probably grown since that time but we widened Wason Road using cap fees. They did some traffic counts at that time. You might want to just take a look at that and see. The number may be what you're guesstimating now but it may actually be a little higher too. Elvis Dhima noted it could very well be and again I didn't have the numbers in front of me. I know that it was numerous. I think even NRPC did some recent traffic counts and I can go back to that. Selectman McGrath indicated I haven't seen any wires going across the road to do traffic counts for a while. There were some done.

Mr. Dhima stated with the CMAQ project that we just got the State approval the other day. We got the agreement back from the State. We will put a camera up there with the ability to count traffic so we'd be able to see it every day then it will be beneficial to us. It fluctuates. You have good days out there. You have bad days. Trying to get a better idea on the average to what we get. I feel comfortable with 18 to 20,000 from Wason Road for now.

Selectman McGrath asked can we have those cameras catch people that run the red lights. Elvis Dhima indicated we see them all the time. It's a double edge sword. Chairman Coutu stated it's illegal to photograph vehicles. Mr. Dhima said you see them and there's nothing you can do about them. There's nothing worse than that feeling. You see them and there's nothing you can do about it.

Selectman Martin thought we've had a lot of conversation on this. I'm ready to make a motion to move it to the warrant.

*Motion by Selectman Morin, seconded by Selectman Morin, to move Warrant Article K to the ballot, carried 4-1.* Selectman Routsis in opposition.

Just for clarity, Selectman McGrath indicated I will not be voting for this project but I think that the voters ought to be given the opportunity to vote on it.

Selectman Routsis asked to speak to my (inaudible). I believe that it should go to the voters but I also know some voters look at how many selectmen voted for it and/or against it. I want people to know that it's not something I am for but if the voters choose to vote for it, I understand that but I also think it should be fair.

Sewer Fund (5561, 5562, 5564), page 1

Kathy Carpentier stated there is an outside the budget request. This is a part of what the Director of Public Works had requested. He splits the charge up so there's \$16,000 we have not made a determination on but the Director of Public Works spoke on it the other night.

Steve Malizia indicated the sewer is paid for by the users of the sewer. It is not a taxable budget. It's paid for the users of it. Overall it's down 21.8 percent from last year. I believe there were some capital expenditures from Nashua that were a one time for the treatment plant that we own a share of. We do not have those in this year's budget so the budget I believe is 21.8 percent lower bottom line. Again this is from sewer user revenue.

Billing/Collections (5561), page 5

Operations/Maintenance (5562), page 8

Line item 252, Selectman McGrath asked for FY19 the budget was \$10,000 and for FY20 its \$70,000 - professional services. Can you talk to that? Steve Malizia indicated that's for the assessment of potentially looking at a wastewater treatment plant in our own town. That's an assessment of that. In other words, we have to go through some engineering to determine if it's feasible for us to start looking at our own treatment.

This year if you remember, Elvis Dhima said the Board of Selectmen put money aside through the water to do a feasibility study for a water treatment facility. We got that done and an executive summary was

provided to the Board about how to move forward. We put that aside for now. We're going through the same exercise for the sewer now. The sewer capacity and the sewer allocations keep coming up. So we want to see if we can get one in time so that's what this is.

Chairman Coutu asked Mr. Dhima realistically the budget for FY19 was \$10,000 on that line item. It is now \$70,000. Let's be realists. Regardless of the study, do you think that this town is in a position to build and operate a sewer treatment plant? Elvis said that's a good question. That's come up multiple times. I think this study is more to see if we can even put it anywhere. It's not a matter of if we need it or not. I think we have the numbers on the sewer allocations to what we're currently pushing right now. I can tell you for the past seven years we push about between 1.22 and 1.4 if that's the case tops for sewer. We have an agreement for 2 million so we have a little bit of wiggle room. We also have dedicated sewer allocations for anyone within the sewer district that if they ever want to do something and they want additional sewer allocations, we have that ability. It's a matter of if the town ever wants to redraw that sewer district line and they want to expand to add additional businesses, to add additional commercial/industrial. It's not going to be as much focused on if we need it or not. I think we have a little bit of wiggle room in 5 or 10 years. It's do we even have the room to put it anywhere? We know that the feds haven't given a treatment facility permit for the past 30-40 years to discharge direct into the river just like Nashua does. There are other techniques instead of dumping it into the river, you can charge it back into the ground. I think it's a matter of do we even have the room in town to do it. I understand there's land in town but you've got to be close to where the mains are and can it be done or not. I think that's what this will answer for how much and will this really make sense. Are we going to be looking for 2 million gallons per day sewer treatment facility? I don't believe so. I believe the scope will probably be for half a million gallons per day treatment facility in addition to add another half a million gallons per day for a total of one.

Chairman Coutu asked isn't it a lot cheaper than spending an additional \$60,000 in that line item - 2.5 cents on the tax rate. Selectman Martin indicated it doesn't affect the tax rate. Chairman Coutu said the rate payers are going to pay more. Maybe not right away but if we continue spending their money, they will. Isn't it a lot cheaper for us to continue to make our plea to Mayor Donchess? He said he would be willing to talk. Rather than spend \$60,000 to find out we don't have the plan or land to do this.

Elvis Dhima stated I'll just put you at ease. Last year we carried \$50,000 to do that water treatment facility. We ended up only spending \$10,000. Once I got the answers to certain things, I stopped it right there. Just because we're carrying that amount of money doesn't mean that we're going to spend all that money. This could very well be just \$10,000 and we're going to leave that money right on the line. What it's going to come down to is the breakdown if we pursue it. If the Board wants to continue with this, figure out if we can do anything and most of the money is going to be done on testing. If we pick a site if the soil is there to do what we plan to do if the soils are not there or if there is no way to do anything, they just say Elvis you have a site that you can only process 50,000 gallons per day. There's no need to pursue it. We're not interested in that. Even though we're carrying a certain amount of money doesn't mean we're going to spend it all. We could spend a small fraction of that. We're just simply trying to based on the past Board of Selectmen that we needed some answers related to water and sewer because they keep coming up. We're just trying to do what the Board has told us to do in the past. Come up with what about water, what about sewer, what about traffic and just continue to stay proactive.

On the basis of what you just said, Chairman Coutu stated I will entertain a motion.

*Motion to cut line item 4326-5562-252 by \$50,000 leaving \$20,000 for the study.*

Chairman Coutu said we have no one willing to make the motion. Okay.

Selectman McGrath asked Elvis I think based on our conversations in the past, Selectman Luszey was a big proponent of trying to look at the water, and the sewer, and making sure that in the future if we want to attract businesses and commercial development to town that we need to be able to provide sewer and water. I think that was the reason for that. We have two large parcels of land in the south end of town. One of them came in for development a few years ago and that ended up not going forward but it was a sizable portion of land. It was a sizable development. I think that it was not only commercial development but I believe there was some residential property included. It was very large. There's another piece of property

not far from that as well and that's a large piece of property. That's a little bit more difficult to develop because of wetlands, ledge and slopes. That's a large development and that's been on the back burner for a whole lot of years. If both of those developments started to bubble up to the top again in the same type of uses, what would our sewer capacity be to attract those types of developments if that's what the town wanted to do? Outside of the sewer district, Elvis Dhima said there's not a chance they can hook up. One of them was the Green Meadow site adjacent. They're outside of the sewer district. Even if they want to connect depending on what they want to, I don't think they can unless the Board of Selectmen - you are the sewer and water commissioners - make an exemption. There are certain areas out there like single families that have been allowed to connect outside or anything of that scale. We have a certain number for a balance and then we have another unofficial number because things do change depending on things we do underground. We have a very good handle to how much sewer we're sending every day. The Public Works has set up monitoring centers in every single big pump station that allows us every day to see what's going on. There's an alarm. If there's a pump acting up, every morning the Public Works Director gets that report. I get a report. It's just a matter of planning for the future if there's anything big and we're just trying to be proactive. We could very well find out within the first phase that you don't have a piece of land in town that you can do what you're seeking that would support it therefore there's no need for testing.

Elvis Dhima explained the way it works is most of the money is in testing. What do I mean in testing? Trying to figure out what kind of soils you have that can accommodate the treatment instead of just discharging into the river. We'll be looking at the same setup that we did with the water. Are we looking to drop a straw in the river and suck from it or are we looking to put wells underground? It's kind of the same process for the treatment facility. It's a matter of if you discharge it after you treat it or you just drive it into the ground. Those are the things we'd be looking for. It depends on the soils. It's like a leaching field. It can be 100 x 100 but if its 20 acres and we know we don't have that. It has to be close to the existing sewer mains. We cannot be on the other side of town because we just don't have the capability to start pumping everything. It's a matter of catching it before it goes to Nashua. Those are the things we'd be looking for. We have something out there that can be looked at but they're limited. It makes the scope of work much tighter. We're not out there wondering like in the past - drilling wells out there to look for water. We're staying close to the river.

Selectman McGrath indicated that ties in with economic development. If we want to attract certain types of business or uses to the town, we've got to be able to provide water and they're going to be looking at that. Mr. Dhima said they always do. That always comes up. What do you have for utilities? Do we have gas? Do you have water? Do you have sewer? What kind of power do you have available? Those are the four things that come up every single time. Selectman McGrath indicated that will tie in with the Master Plan update as well.

Selectman Morin agreed with Selectman McGrath. That's why it's up there on the board on that list. There was a lot of discussion on that. Another question - how much do you think Nashua will give us and can they? Mr. Dhima didn't think they're going to give us anything if they don't have to. The only chance that the town has to get additional sewer allocation is if the State forces the City of Nashua to increase the capacity. Right now, they're right at the 80 percent threshold. By law once they hit the threshold, they're required to start planning for an increase. We get 12.58 percent automatically the second that they increase. What does that mean? If they go up 2 million gallons, we automatically get 12.58 percent of that which is another 250,000 gallons. It's not massive but it's something. That is the only chance the town is going to get any sewer allocations from them. It's not a matter of just being a bad neighbor, it's simply competition. That's how I've been explained. Why bring businesses to Hudson when they're more than capable of accommodating them. It's not just the sewer allocation, it's the industrial discharge permit as well. We have a much stiffer requirements than they do there. One of the reasons that I have it much stricter here than over there is that they're trying to drive the business over there. The only thing that has as big an impact is our tax rate. I think we're a better community to do business. Easier to work with, more approachable. We tried with Selectman Coutu. We tried with Mayor Lozeau. I think we kind of hit it a little bit with Mayor Donchess. I don't see it.

With them bringing in more industry and development over there, Selectman Morin stated they're using up what they've got. Do they have enough room to expand because I know where that is and there's not much? Elvis explained the problem that Nashua has is not expansion. It's they have sewer and drainage combined.

We have everything separated. They can't afford to separate them. So what happens when they have massive runoff, the treatment facility is getting overwhelmed. So unless they start separating them like Manchester is 100 percent, they're always going to keep adding drainage to their sewer and that's what's taking away capacity from them. Even with that typically they do about 8 -9 million gallons. I think their capacity right now is 10 to 12. We're shooting for 16 if something happens. It's been explained to me that the cost is too much for them to expand but then every time they go back to try to separate drainage, it's expensive as expanding the treatment. So we keep getting conflicting reports. We're keeping an eye on it obviously. The State is pretty open about what's happening. We paid for a report. I don't know if you know that or not. They didn't share the report with us regarding what the finance were about expansion. Still don't have a report about that. We have asked. I don't think it's going to happen. I don't want to sugarcoat it.

Chairman Coutu asked how much money do we have in capital reserve for sewer. Mr. Dhima thought about \$6 million. Kathy Carpentier said sewer - \$11.6 million.

Capital Projects (5564), page 14

Kathy Carpentier said capital projects is down \$530,000.

Chairman Coutu asked can you explain 624 - sewer construction. Nashua STP? Steve Malizia indicated we're required to pay expenses for the sewer treatment plant because we're a part owner.

Mr. Dhima said the 12.5 percent of the flows, that means that we have to pay for 12.5 percent of any improvements and anything that's updated with that.

Water Fund (5591-5594), page

Steve Malizia indicated this budget is 3.5 percent lower than it was last year. Again this is born by the cost of this as going by the water utility users. If you have water, you pay. If you don't, you don't pay.

Chairman Coutu asked how much money do you have in capital reserve for the water. Ms. Carpentier indicated \$3.7 million.

Selectman McGrath asked line item 122000 the insurance benefits. It jumped up from \$9,352 to \$34,890. Ms. Carpentier indicated that would be for the staff member in my office. We went from one and a half clerks to two clerks so it's the insurance benefits on the second clerk.

Chairman Coutu commented its \$25,000 additional for one clerk. Ms. Carpentier stated it depends upon what a person is eligible for whether they're single, two person, or family. The person happens to be a family person. Chairman Coutu was under the impression that we would cut that. We didn't? Steve Malizia asked when you cut that, you mean...Chairman Coutu said no one would get \$25,000. Mr. Malizia indicated nobody is getting \$25,000. That's what the insurance costs. Chairman Coutu thought we were getting cheaper insurance - \$25,000 and that's 90 percent. Ms. Carpentier said 80 percent. Chairman Coutu said insurance is...Ms. Carpentier said almost \$32,000 for Access Blue HMO plan. Starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, we did have a 16.3 percent increase. Chairman Coutu noted it's almost \$3,000 a month to insure an employee or an employee's family. Wow. To be fair, Ms. Carpentier stated its \$11,700 for employee, 23.5 for a two person, and 31.7 for a family. That's only one plan that we have but that's the bulk of what people take.

Water - Operations/Maintenance (5592) page 5

Chairman Coutu commented small equipment maintenance doubled for what reason. Elvis Dhima stated that particular number was under Pennichuck at the time that we carried it. Now we have a new contractor. We're finding out some things should have gone a little different than others so we're adjusting to that. Even though we're making this budget work right now even though we carried a certain number when we did this exercise last year, we just adjusted into what we're currently seeing right now. The bottom line is still less. Even though we're adjusting the certain lines within different divisions, the bottom line is still. Steve Malizia stated that line specifically is for meter change outs. The PUC requires 10 years but we do them at 20.

We're trying to catch up with changing out meters in customer's homes so that we have accurate reading. Over time, meters slow down. You get less reading. You get less revenue. Chairman Coutu noted the next line - 204 - went up \$80,000 - unplanned maintenance with Whitewater. Is this the new company we hired? Ever since we hired them, our costs have increased significantly. What is the unplanned maintenance with Whitewater? Mr. Dhima explained unplanned maintenance can be anything from opening up a hydrant and a valve adjacent to it. Brakes that was unplanned. What's planned is typically exercising things. Unplanned is anything that wasn't planned for but we still have to carry a number for it in case things do happen. Opening up a water meter, Chairman Coutu said I'll take \$80,000. I'll open ever one of the water meters in this town. I'll figure it out. Is this number just a guess? Mr. Dhima said no. It's basically what we're seeing right now what's happening. We have had 15 fire hydrants we had to address and I would say about a handful of them the gate valve that was servicing that hydrant broke. We were not expecting that. We were trying to isolate the hydrant to fix it and the next thing you know we have two things now broken and we can't even isolate that particular area. Was that planned for? Absolutely not. Chairman Coutu asked is some of that Pennichuck's as a result of negligence on their part. Don't answer that question. Without getting into it, Mr. Dhima stated let's just say a lot of things are breaking that were not breaking before.

Selectman Routsis said it's basically those emergency things that you didn't expect to happen either off site or when you're off out of site. We're just planning for who knows what could happen based on what's currently happening. During the winter, Mr. Dhima said all of a sudden a water main breaks and we have to get in there. We've been very fortunate so far. We average about one break per month. We haven't had anything this month knock on wood. Typically those numbers go up during the winter - frost. So far it's been good. It's just been a big adjustment. Things are done differently now and that's just all there is to it. Things were done a certain way for a certain time. Things have been done differently now.

Chairman Coutu asked if there were any other questions on operation and maintenance.

Water Supply (5593) page 9

Chairman Coutu commented a low level funded - \$33,000 less. Any questions? Comments?

Debt Service (5594), page 12

Kathy Carpentier commented this is just for the water bond and principal and interest.

Chairman Coutu noted this is \$60,000 less. Mr. Malizia said yes because every year the interest declines because the bond gets paid down. Counting this year, nine more years it will be done. We'll own it outright. It's a 30 year bond.

Conservation Commission (5586 & Warrant Article E), page 1

Chairman Coutu noted Conservation Commission has an increase of \$12,000. Let's see where it is. It is in professional services. The Chairman of the Conservation Commission Ken Dickinson is here. Typically the Chairman presents the budget. Can you explain the increase in line 252 please from \$35,600 to \$48,600?

Ken Dickinson stated the numbers are based on a revised estimate from Amy Smagula who's the State Limnologist that we've referred to each year. She has a management plan that she has done that she has presented for each pond both Robinson Pond and Ottarnic. If we look at the breakdown of what is recommended for next year based on some findings that she had in the summer - so this is some early planning basically - we found that we gained a handle on the milfoil problem out at Robinson. We have a pretty good handle on that now.

Chairman Coutu saw that when you go back historically - 2016, '17, and '18 the costs were considerable. For whatever reason, there's an anomaly here and that's in 2019. The budget went down significantly and now I guess we're going to level it off. I understand it. Does everybody see that? That's definitely an anomaly for the 2019 year. The 48 is reasonable. The 51 is reasonable when you consider what was spent

in '16, '17, and '18 for conservation.

Mr. Dickinson stated one thing you have to remember with these numbers too is it's based on the no reimbursement from the State. It's a 25 percent reimbursement and it's really less in reality. Kathy Carpentier stated this is gross appropriation and there's a \$10,000 grant in the revenues with a 20 percent. This is gross of what they're be spending but they will be getting \$10,000 back. Ken said there's no guarantees but the projection is 25 percent grant.

#### Warrant Article E

Ken Dickinson indicated Brett Gagnon is here because he's done the legwork on the warrant article.

Brett Gagnon said I highlighted a few things for the major points. I'll try to be pretty brief tonight. Chairman Coutu asked should we talk first specifically about the warrant article then we go into the explanation. What is it that you want the voters to vote on in the warrant article? Mr. Gagnon said I would like the warrant article to state something of the next - 75 percent of the revenues of future payments from the land use change tax pursuant to RSA 79-A:25 to be placed in the conservation fund pursuant to RSA 36-a:5.

In other words, Chairman Coutu commented all of the land use monies that the town collects is generated as revenue...Steve Malizia explained when this tax comes into the town, 50 percent goes into the conservation fund. That was a warrant article some number of years ago. I can't remember specifically the year. What they're looking to do is go from 50 percent of those land use change tax revenues to 75 percent.

Chairman Coutu asked how much money do they have in the capital reserve. Ms. Carpentier indicated \$660,000 as of September. That is the only capital reserve fund they have. They also have a fund balance of almost \$6 million. Chairman Coutu noted they have \$1.6 million and \$660,000. Ms. Carpentier add to the Town Administrator, it was in the year 2005 that a warrant article was passed to add 50 percent of the current use receipts to the conservation commission fund. If I get this right, Chairman Coutu noted you have approximately available to you \$2.2 million and you're asking to increase your revenues taking away 25 percent - we each get 50 percent. The town gets 50 percent, the Conservation Commission gets 50 percent. You want the town to only get 25 percent and you want the Conservation Commission to get 75 of the current use change tax, correct?

Brett Gagnon said that would generally be correct Sir. I can explain that. Ken Dickinson note we are the town. We are part of the town. Chairman Coutu said you're part of the town but you're the Conservation Commission. Mr. Dickinson stated it sounds like when you say that that we're a separate entity and we're not. Chairman Coutu stated you're a separate entity within the town.

Selectman Routsis asked on average do we know how much that total amount is per year that we're talking about splitting. Kathy Carpentier said it does vary every year. It depends upon what gets paid and I'll go backwards - FY18 was \$98,000, \$176,000, \$262,000, \$103,000. They're kind of all over the place. That would be the 50 percent that went into conservation.

As you stated Chair, Brett Gagnon said that is generally the case but if I may state my point of why I think this is necessary and to kind of convince that it's not really about us asking for money. By no means are we being selfish in any way. The number we currently have though the 1.6 is actually slightly sorry for the term but disgraceful. We haven't actually bought land in 10 to 15 years so that has amounted over that time period. Technically if you do the math backwards, split 50/50, we've received - use the number 1.4 is what's in my head - we received about \$1.4 million. The town has received \$1.4 million because \$2.8 million. Current use change tax is only 10 percent of the land value. We've actually sold \$20 million worth of land in town for us to get that money and you have received \$1.4 million yourself as well.

With that in mind, Brett Gagnon indicated I'll be kind of quick here. The Hudson Conservation Commission believes that the current use change tax is designed specifically to mitigate development and to help stabilize the tax rate to the acquisition of conservation property. I'll reference some material in a moment. With the new drive by the commission in 2018 to protect priority open spaces around town, this warrant article will help fuel the initiative moving forward. The longer the commission can utilize the land change



tax income, the longer it will be until the Conservation Commission requests additional funds through bond for the town. Just to give an example of that not to go into details but if just 1, or 2, or 3 land parcel purchases go through that we would spend all that in maybe two years. From there, you're talking as you said the numbers to recoup that would be \$90,000 to \$100,000. To get back to that \$1.4 would be pretty slow. This is an effort to see what's coming and to prepare based on some actions that we have currently taken and are taking. To get into more detail if you actually look at the RSA, RSA 79-A:1 declaration of public interest - clearly states to be in the public interest to encourage the preservation of open space. Also you'll see it says "open space land imposes few if any costs on local government and therefore is an economic benefit to its citizens".

In the Hudson Town Master Plan, Mr. Gagnon indicated you can also reference Chapter 4 Existing Land Use, Section 8. It says, "Current use program is designed to prevent the conversion of open space to more intensive use by the pressure of property tax values incompatible with open space usage". New Hampshire's population has nearly doubled in the past 35 years at approximately 13,240 residents per year. You've also stated yourself that you're seeing a massive growth in town over the last 15 - 20 years or so. With that said, there's other information in these packets I did hand you. I would ask that you positively vote for this warrant article and let the town voters see what they want to do. I'll entertain any questions you may have and add clarification too.

Chairman Coutu thanked Mr. Gagnon for your presentation. Well done. Any questions?

Selectman McGrath asked when you were in last week you talked about this property around the Robinson Pond area that you want to acquire. What was the value? There was a round number - \$1.4 million? Brett stated no Ma'am. If I may will tiptoe around this conversation as much as I'd like to answer your questions, some of that needs to be nonpublic disclosure. We do not have a price at all. That number I think you're referring to was what was in my head. I was under the impression that our conservation fund had \$1.4 million but indeed it has \$1.6 million. I can't add too much more detail to your question unfortunately. Selectman McGrath noted actually you've got more than \$1.6 million. You've got close to \$2.2 million. Brett Gagnon said it's my understanding - I'm not sure what the capital fund is for but it could certainly differ in the conservation fund which is designated to purchase land.

Kathy Carpentier indicated it is for conservation land.

One more clarification just for this Board based on my research as well, Brett Gagnon said that current use change tax based on what the Master Plan says, 100 percent of that current use change tax goes into an account. It stays there for a year and based on the Master Plan, it does say it's 100 percent available to the Conservation Commission. If we were to purchase a property, we're allowed to take 100 percent of that current use tax acquired in one year. I could be wrong but that is what I read in the town documents and then after one year, it then gets split 50/50. Selectman McGrath noted with the Master Plan Update that may be updated as well.

Selectman McGrath had one other question before I make a comment. The 50 percent of the land use tax that we collect now for the town 50 percent goes to conservation, 50 percent goes to the town. What is that money used for? Is it segregated for special use or it goes into the general fund. Steve Malizia indicated general fund revenue. Kathy Carpentier indicated we actually don't even budget for it because we don't know how much it's going to be. If you knew we were going to get \$100,000 every year, we would put it in as an anticipated revenue. Since we don't know how much it's going to be, it's just extra revenue for us and it falls through to the undesignated fund balance for the town to use to do what they want with voter's approval in the future but it's not designated in any year...Selectman McGrath stated that that might pop up that we'd need to address.

Kathy Carpentier indicated there were some years where the warrant articles took a specific amount. Back in 2005, there was a warrant article and they actually took \$290,000 out of undesignated fund balance and put it in this capital reserve fund. A few times they've taken money out it and designated it back to this purpose of conservation land. The capital reserve fund was set up in 2001 for the purpose of acquiring land, development rights, or conservation easements.

Just to go one step further on the conservation easements, Selectman McGrath said the Planning Board can require on development properties conservation easements and they've done so. As a matter of fact, there's a conservation easement on my property to protect Limit Brook. That can happen as well. I don't know if you're aware of that. Brett Gagnon noted I've actually passed my business card to the Zoning Administrator so I can get in contact with them and make sure we work together on doing more of that. Selectman McGrath was a little concerned about bumping this up just 75 percent. I think that it's a little excessive and I'm concerned. My concern may not be warranted but that's my gut reaction to this.

Chairman Coutu shared Selectman McGrath's concerns.

Selectman Routsis looked at it and I think oh my goodness 75 percent but then I hear the numbers. I hear also in my mind how long it takes to get up to a certain amount. My thought is with the ever increasing costs of land for what the 75 percent is really going to give you to make it affordable to be able to buy land, it's going to take a long time to get to that to be able to get conservation land. I personally don't see a big deal with the 75 percent because it's going to help you get closer to be able to purchase land. We don't designate it towards anything honestly. At the end of the year, it's like you said extra revenue that we get.

Chairman Coutu commented it offsets the tax rate.

Selectman Routsis indicated we have other things that come in that assist with that. Its \$100,000 let's just say on average that us we're talking about possibly \$50,000 let's say. So we're talking about a \$50,000 impact to us but it's going to take the Conservation Commission much longer to be able to get money and save money in order to purchase land.

Chairman Coutu asked when was the last time again that they purchased land. Kathy Carpentier didn't have that. I heard 10 to 15 years ago is what I heard. Chairman Coutu said in my ten years sitting on this Board, only twice did they offer to purchase land.

Selectman Morin agreed with Chairman Coutu but sitting as their liaison, they are moving forward and taking the lead to get this done. They're very committed to make sure that they start getting land. We had this discussion and I said that ten years you guys haven't done anything. If you're going to do this and start requesting money for the town and they are. They are very actively - there's 4 properties right now that you're looking at. Mr. Gagnon said yes. One on deck with you currently and three active in line.

Clarification on that. Ken Dickinson said we are actually looking at more properties but we haven't completed an appraisal at this point in time like we've had on some of the other parcels. That's basically a work in progress and it has been more than two properties that have been before you within the last ten years. Maybe there was some properties that were discussed in nonpublic but they only went to a certain stage. It got held up for one reason or another. A lot of the parcels that came before you previously had maybe an issue that was unresolved for one reason or another that really didn't allow it to be purchased or there was some other outside problems say that had to be worked out first that delayed any further discussion on that property. We're trying to find properties that are more in line with the open space report that was published in 2012 and get a handle to see on the other priority parcels that were listed out there to see if there's any one that's in a position to sell land so that we can appropriately expend some of that money to increase the open space in town because as it's been stated before, the percentages are very low especially for population, growth, or just population period. Forget about the growth and just look at the population. Look at how much percentage of land we have for open space in town compared to surrounding communities or any other communities in Hillsborough County and were significantly low as a result. It would be good to be able to purchase land that makes sense for open space especially if we're preparing to build a highway potentially to get that place first prior to actually building the highway. With highway development means more growth.

Brett Gagnon asked to add some numbers to your statement Sir.

Chairman Coutu asked a question based on what he just said. Are you saying you're willing to buy land to prevent the construction of highway? Mr. Dickinson said no. It's just good planning. Good planning means that you have a balance of open space and you have a balance of developed area throughout the

community. If you develop everything, you'll end up maybe - I hate to say like some other communities that haven't had an opportunity to do that. You have all this urban space and there's no - I'm just thinking of the towns and cities in Massachusetts that didn't see that opportunity. They're overdeveloped now and they can't back track. A lot of their open space is only somewhat usable. It's not connected in any shape or form and that's unfortunate. What they were planning up front will have a better balance.

Chairman Coutu noted Mr. Dickinson you didn't answer my question. You made a comment about highways. Could you repeat that comment? Ken Dickinson said it's just planning up front. If you're planning a large development project that's going to bring in more development, it would be good to have a balance of open space in appropriate areas not to block the highway by any means but just to have say on the right portions of town that are going to remain rural say or a portion of the town for conservation land that's to remain undeveloped. So we protect our natural resources and then have the core say developed as much as possible.

Chairman Coutu asked is the registry that maintains the amount of conservation land within the community do you know whether or not Benson Park is listed as conservation land - a 168 acre parcel. Is that listed as conservation land? Ken Dickinson asked in the calculation. I believe it is yes. It did go up slightly when we purchased them. Chairman Coutu said when I look at a number and it says the Town of Hudson has X number of acres of conservation land, you're saying you believe that Benson Park is included in that. If I could, Mr. Dickinson stated that land transaction happened in 2009. We published the report in 2012. I believe we did factor that acreage into the report. We'd have to check with NRPC. Actually those numbers came from NRPC so that's a question for them. I'm not totally sure. I'd didn't crank the numbers myself Sir.

If I may to that point just for clarification as well, Brett Gagnon stated as we've witnessed in the past being in front of this Board, some information that's in the open space report and the Master Plan are actually incorrect. As you remember, Rangers Drive was technically listed as conservation land and we found out it was not. We've come across that issue not often but now and again so seeing what the legal deeds are saying versus what some of the reports are showing aren't always perfectly accurate. I think the only reason I may understand if Benson's is conversation was because it was more of a State project.

If I may interject just with a couple of things I wanted to hit, Mr. Gagnon said getting back to the actual warrant article for some comparisons, our direct neighbors - Litchfield is at 80 percent for this exact reason. Nashua is at 100 percent and Pelham which I am dear to is at 75 percent. As another example, Pelham changed to 75 percent 15 years ago. In doing so, they've saved over 1,000 acres since that time with that money and some other bonds. To kind of trickle into that, the reason I'm trying to request this currently is just like I said is because it's going to help us hold out a little longer. Once we do get up and running, and I can promise you we are, it will get to a point where we will politely and kindly ask the residents of this town if we could have a bond for additional money. This is actually keeping it off the tax burden of our residents and keeping it on taxes that are for developers. This money does not come from our residents whatsoever but is a complete benefit to our residents. Open space land is actually a tax negative. For every dollar spent on unresidential, you're actually losing money technically based on facts and figures I can show. Protecting open space raises the value of our residential home because more people want to live around open space and it raises the values of the home, your tax rate can be lower to get the same amount of money. I'm trying to help the town and in balance our stable tax rate on the list there.

Chairman Coutu stated most people want to live on the inner city. That's a known statistic. Most people want to live in the inner city. Brett Gagnon commented the open space report, with all due respect Sir, says that 80 percent I think support open space and 60 percent voted or said they were willing to spend tax money to actually protect more space in town.

Chairman Coutu asked if there were any further questions or comments. We'll see where it goes.

*Motion by Selectman Routsis, seconded by Selectman Morin, to forward Warrant Article E to the ballot.*

As I stated about the warrant article for the circumferential highway/Hudson Boulevard, Selectman McGrath had concerns about this but the voters ought to be able to be given the opportunity to vote on it. Therefore,

I will vote in favor to send this to the warrant but that doesn't mean that you'll have my vote in the polls.

Chairman Coutu agreed with Selectman McGrath. I, again, have no problem with having the voters decide whether or not - we should undertake certain practices that are different than what we have now and it's their decision to make. I will not be voting in support of the warrant article but I'll certainly send it to the voters. I'm not supporting it because I think you have sufficient monies. I think you're a little over anxious in wanting to buy an awful lot of land and we charge that responsibility to maintain that land in conservation to the Conservation Commission. They're doing an outstanding job now with the properties that are presently under their jurisdiction or they're under the town's jurisdiction but we have asked the Conservation Commission to be the guardians of them. The more land you buy, the more difficult it becomes to maintain that property. I know that you Mr. Dickinson based on your years of experience in conservation have given an awful lot of yourself, of your time, of your own personal equipment to help trench through the trails. Musquash Pond - it's a beautiful area. You've done an awful lot of work there. That comes with a lot of volunteerism. The forest - the same thing. I don't see that buying hundreds of acres of land for conservation there's going to be enough volunteers to maintain hundreds of acres of conservation land for the town unless we just want to let it all grow wild which might not be a bad idea in itself.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0.

Ken Dickinson thank the Board for giving I a chance because we felt like we were falling behind a little bit when we looked at what the other communities were doing. The Conservation Commission made a vote to let Mr. Gagnon do the legwork for the warrant article preparation. I think one of the main reasons why we looked at that is because he presented that other communities were proactive and we felt that we weren't being proactive. He felt like we needed to work on it basically. We're looking at the big picture long term.

Chairman Coutu said buying more conservation land. Mr. Dickinson said correct. In terms of maintenance, there's other ways to go with them just having the Conservation Commission itself maintain it. There's other ways to deal with it. Not all of it has to be developed with trails on it. Like you said, just be growth if you want to call it that. Chairman Coutu said you make your arguments to the voters. Chairman Coutu appreciated both on your volunteer and to serve the town. I really appreciate it.

Library (5060 & Warrant Article G)

Chairman Coutu recognized Chairman of Library Trustee Robin Rodgers, Library Director Linda Pilla, and Treasurer Kara Roy. Are you prepared to present your budget? Ms. Rodger said yes. Chairman Coutu said before you begin I want the voters to know that the Library has autonomy on their budget. I'm not saying that as a negative. I'm saying you're included in our budget. We can only suggest. We can't cut or add to the budget. We can suggest to you. So we will proceed. That is the ground rule as it has always been.

Robin Rodgers explained basically we had a great year at the library. We retired a Director and got a brand new one who is on fire doing a fabulous job. Chairman Coutu was impressed. Ms. Rodger said I'm very impressed as well. We even almost got Len to get a library card so it's getting there. We're up a tiny bit but that's because of the insurance that was sent to us from the town and also for health insurance increases on a few of our employees. So we're basically the same. The electric bill is projected to go up 20 - 25 percent. Chairman Coutu asked based on what. Kara Roy stated it's the delivery charge believe it or not. The usage remains virtually the same. Chairman Coutu noticed mine last month. I was shocked. I don't look at the bills my wife does. When I picked it up and looked at the delivery charge it was a little more than the cost of electricity. Tell me where it is I'll go get it and deliver it myself.

Chairman Coutu noted your budget is up \$51,000. Kara Roy believed it ended up being 1.4 percent. Robin Rodgers indicated this is our first full year of Kara being the Treasurer so some of our line items have shifted. That's just to accommodate the need of the different departments. Bottom line is still the same but we moved money around because magazines cost this much, but this person was paying for it, it's expensive. Kara said it's putting money in the right place at the right time.

Chairman Coutu had a question on salaries. On the full time and part time salaries, they're both up

obviously because we had raises voted by the voters last year. Is the raises for this year included in this number? Ms. Rodgers said yes. Chairman Coutu asked what are the raises you're proposing this year for the library. Ms. Rodgers indicated 2 percent. Chairman Coutu had no problem with that. Just for clarification, Kathy Carpentier said when you're comparing it to '18 because it was a separate warrant article, it wouldn't be in the '18s numbers. It looks like a bigger increase than it is because it wasn't in the operating budget last year. Everything considered, Chairman Coutu said it's a tight budget.

Robin Rodgers indicated we do have a warrant article that we're going to submit.

Chairman Coutu asked if anybody had any questions on the library budget.

Selectman Martin asked you went down in paper. It just seemed different to go down in paper. Kara Roy stated we used to buy our own and then we came onto the contract with the town but we still buy a very limited amount of specialty paper if you will. That's what that budget is for. The entire thing came out of the budget and we only have a small...Chairman Coutu indicated a lot of that specialty paper is used for children's activities.

Selectman Martin asked are you on the town contract for electricity rates. Steve Malizia said yes they are. Not for the delivery but for the supply. There are no contracts for delivery.

Selectman Morin said I've got to ask because it's going to come up not here but it's going to come up. Hills Library. Chairman Coutu noted give them the best and latest of the work that's been going to making itself sufficient. Robin stated we had our first meeting last month. The only people who showed up were library people and Ms. Routsis. I called the State and I asked the State Library Commission was it proper for the Budget Committee to ask the library to fundraise to support their budget and her answer was absolutely not. As a Board, we can't do that job. We need a friend. When we had the meeting, there were no friends. Chairman Coutu said the reason why...Robin didn't know the reason why. We got two I'm sorrys but nobody else said anything. Chairman Coutu indicated there have been so many changes in the dates of those meetings it became very complicated to keep track because the minute I wrote something on the calendar, beep oh they changed it again. It was constantly being changed. Ms. Rodger noted that's because we kept running into the fire station is going to open, and this is going to happen, and nobody would have come so we picked a day - the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month that's the day of the meeting.

Chairman Coutu told Robin the final meeting was on a day that I couldn't attend. You ended up with just library people. It isn't that we don't want to help, it's just that I'm at a point in the budget cycle where it's there. It's being well maintained. It's not costing us a fortune. Let's just let things be and let you progress in trying to lease it out for those smaller parties that you're doing now and do some advertising. I think that was the direction at our initial meeting we talked about doing and you would try to market it. Robin Rodgers stated we have a couple of things that are in the works. Nothing is written in stone obviously. We're looking into offering passports at the library which is a nationwide push. They want to take it out of the post office and have it in the library because the library is open in the evening and that sort of thing.

Chairman Coutu expressed that's fine if they give you the post office equipment. That stuff is very expensive.

Ms. Rodgers indicated they do it in Milford and Linda is on it. She has appointments with the Director in Milford to see how they do it, and what they do, and how it all works but they're making money. If we go into that program and it makes money, that money can be earmarked right for Hills. We also have one patron who's approached us and wants to know what the cost of running that building is and she's considering putting it in her will that it will take care of that building for us. I don't know when that might be but there are things that are coming that aren't fundraiser per say but would fund the building.

Chairman Coutu said there's no obligation for any department head to have to go out and raise money to keep their department going. Do you have the time to have a fundraiser to keep the (inaudible)...Kathy Carpentier said I'm not going there. Ms. Rodgers stated I never bought cookies from the firemen to buy up breathing apparatus. I just never did.

Selectman Routsis asked does this mean that the wine and cheese gala is off. Robin said the wine and cheese gala is off.

Selectman Martin commented if you have food at these meetings, he (Chairman Coutu) would be available.

### Warrant Article G

Robin Rodgers explained the warrant article is to ask for an additional two percent for our full timers who are still in the same mode of trying to make them comparable to the other communities in the surrounding area. Last year the voters gave us four percent and that did prop them up quite a bit considering but we're asking again for a two percent to use as a pool of money to use as merit to even off our employees - just the full timers.

Chairman Coutu asked to go back to where we started on the library budget. I asked you if the library budget included the raises and you said yes. Ms. Rodgers stated yes I said two percent. Chairman Coutu said you put two percent and now you're asking for an additional two percent. You're asking for the voters for a four percent raise which is a lot more than we're giving town employees. Ms. Rodgers understood but it's not an all the time thing that we're going to ask for. We did ask for it last year like I said. It was a five year plan that we wanted to put together so that we could get them on a step situation so that everybody in the same job level was making the same amount of money that was comparable to other communities in our area. We did a study of that and we are very considerably lower than everybody else. We have no union for these people. It's just us to speak for them. As opposed to asking for the full four percent in a warrant article, we gave everybody the two percent in our budget and then if we can have the two percent, we're asking the voter for that not just automatically taking it.

Kara Roy pointed out Mr. Chairman, I believe the dollar amount on that is about \$9,600. Chairman Coutu commented I don't care what it is, it's four percent. You don't have the number of employees we have in the Fire Department or the Police Department. They're not getting four percent. You got four percent last year. Ms. Roy noted they have a union that lets them equalize out their pay to be comparable to other communities like them. Our employees do not have that benefit. Chairman Coutu stated they got four percent last year. You're asking for an additional four percent this year. Robin Rodgers said we stated last year that when we started it was a five-year plan and we were going to forward with four percent for those five years. Chairman Coutu said you're telling the voters you're going to do this continuously until you have five years of this raise. Ms. Rodgers said four or five years so that we can put them on a level that they can make a step situation happen at the library. Kara commented it will not only help us retain the quality employees we have now but to attract quality employees.

Chairman Coutu asked what is the exodus of employees been in the past year. Robin Rodgers stated we've had several employees leave not because they're disheartened with the library but because people scoop them up and take them from us and offer them far better jobs and more money. That's why we lose them.

Chairman Coutu said I will support sending this to the voters but I will not be voting for it.

### *Motion by Selectman Routsis, seconded by Selectman Morin to forward Warrant Article G - wage and benefit increase for library personnel - to the ballot.*

Selectman McGrath made the same comment that I've made about the other warrant articles. I think that the voters ought to be given the opportunity to vote on it but that doesn't mean that I support it.

Robin Rodgers thank the Board for letting us have it. The voter is the bottom line. We should be able to ask them for anything. Chairman Coutu noted whatever they say we'll agree with. We have no choice. It's their town. The town belongs to all of us.

Selectman McGrath added to her comment. I understand the need to retain good people but I think it's unfair when town employees are getting much less and they see the comparison and they see four percent last year for the library, four percent this year for the library, and four percent going forward for the next three or four years and they're getting two percent. Ms. Rodgers understood what you're saying. I've

watched the Fire Department and the Police Department, and the Highway Department go through this exact same thing but they have unions to work for them and they get what they need. We don't have that luxury. It's just the two of us sitting here with all of our people behind us - all of our Trustees came this evening. We're all very committed and we're all working really hard to make these employees shine the way that we know that they can and giving them an increase is pretty much to bring them to where they should be. On other thing when you get hired at the library, you start at \$11.50. They hired the janitor at the senior center for \$15. We have education behind our \$11.50. Do you see where I am? Selectman McGrath said I do. Robin said I'm just fighting for them and I understand your situation where you're coming from too. They need someone to speak for them and that's what we're doing.

Selectman McGrath understood that but the Board of Selectmen as a whole voted on what we were willing to give for raises and to negotiate with the union contracts. You're right. They have representation but that doesn't mean that they get what they ask for. They can fight as hard as they can but we have to be concerned about the taxpayer that has to fund that. It's a balancing act. I understand your position and I hope you can understand mine.

Kara Roy added that at this point we're kind of working at a deficit because for years there was no consistent pay raises and no consistent pay scale for these folks. That's what we're trying to get to so that when we hire an Assistant Librarian, it's at a certain rate and as they progress in their career that it goes up. Ms. Rodgers indicated they can see that. Ms. Roy said and they know where it's going to go. Robin stated if you're a firefighter you can say oh when I reach X, Y, Z I'm going to get this much money. When you're a librarian, well I hope I'm going to get a raise.

Chairman Coutu stated you have talked about this step plan for over a year. Where is it? Kara Roy indicated that's what we're implementing. Robin Rodgers said that's what we're trying to do is get them to a place where we can make that happen. Chairman Coutu noted it takes two days to put this plan together. Ms. Roy said we have the plan. It's just we have to get to a place where we can implement the plan. They have to be at a certain level to be able to implement that plan. Ms. Rodgers said we're trying to make Librarian A and Librarian B the same pay and right now they're not. Do you see? Let's say I got hired in 2015 and I got hired at \$11.50 and I got 2 percent three years in a row, but then we didn't get a raise, and then there was nothing. Another person came in, she does the same exact job, she gets started at \$11.50 but she's only been there for two years which you're saying she hasn't been there long enough to get that much money. If you're doing the same job and she's doing the same amount of work, she should get the same pay. It should be oh I'm this person on the list and I get paid this much money. It's not how it works now.

Chairman Coutu noted that's not how it works in the private sector. Ms. Roy noted this isn't the private sector. Kathy Carpentier said it's not how it works for the fire either. Chairman Coutu indicated the majority of the voters work for the private sector.

Selectman Martin wanted to say that I echo the comments of Selectman McGrath. I will vote to forward it and let the voters vote on it and see what happens come Election Day. I haven't made up my mind yet. On that note, we are forgetting here that they're putting a two percent in their budget and they're asking the voters for a two percent extra. They're not represented by a union and most of our employees are represented by a union. We haven't heard any of the details going forward because we're still negotiating. Some unions could get 2 ½ or 3 percent but don't forget they also got the extras in there. Some unions have education payments for people. Most unions have steps in them. These people are getting not just the two percent but there are steps. Some of them are maxed out I understand all that but you can't forget that we got the education payment and the steps in the contract that the very folks that they're fighting for don't have.

Chairman Coutu said all they have to do is establish a step scale and it can be done in one year. It could have been done last year but they opted not to do it. It could be done this year. They're still not opting to do it. They're piecemealing it year by year by year until their five year plan gets everybody at balance. We did the same thing here but we resolved it I believe in two years with nonunion personnel we found that balance and got everybody at a point. That's what we did. Correct? If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. Ms. Carpentier believed you're wrong. We will be coming back to the Board.

Steve Malizia indicated you've done some internal equity things but you've done no external equity things. Chairman Coutu noted I'm not interested in external equity. Selectman Morin appreciated everybody's comment but Selectman Routsis was calling for a vote and we should vote on it. Chairman Coutu stated she didn't call for a vote. She said we have a motion on the floor. To me like I did last night, Selectman Morin said was calling for a vote. Chairman Coutu commented you called for a vote. Selectman Morin said I did Sir. Chairman Coutu stated you said there was a motion on the floor. Selectman Morin agreed which was calling for a vote. Chairman Coutu noted Robert's Rules of Order.

Vote: Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Coutu asked do you know what I'm saying about you could have done this all in one year. This is not a four percent raise. It's a two percent raise. This according to the way it was originally explained to me, this additional \$9,480 is to bring some equity. Some people are not going to get anything. Others are going to be brought up. Why don't you just get all of the money, bring it to where it wants to be, and be done with it and initiate your plan rather than do this over five years? That's my point. Robin Rodgers indicated we can't ask for the amount of money that we need to make it work in a five year situation in one year. We can't even get you to agree to two percent. If we came in here asking for 13 percent, you'd probably shoot us or throw us out of the building. Chairman Coutu said no you come in and you ask for a pool of money to bring equity to the pay scale so that you can put them on this step raise. They're the ones that are going to lose out in the end. If the voters say no, you've lost out. Now it's going to be draw out another year and another year. Figure out what the pool of money is, come before us...Robin asked instead of asking for a percent we should ask for a pool of money? Is that what you're saying?

Chairman Coutu noted you said it's 2 percent of the total but you're using it as a pool because not everybody is going to get 2 percent out of this \$9,000. Some people aren't going to get anything because they're higher than other people. Robin agreed and they understand that at the library. Chairman Coutu said to figure out what it's going to cost and to get it to that level where you're trying to bring it and then let the voters decide if they want to pay that as a beginning salary for the library. Now you'll have to do it next year.

BOS/Town Buildings (5110, 5115, 5120)

Steve Malizia indicated I'm just putting it on our radar that at some point in the near future it's not leaking yet but it's certainly more than 30 years old - the roof on this building. It's outside the budget.

Selectman Martin said it's proactive. It needs to be done. If we wait until next year and then all of a sudden the roof collapses because of the water - not that that's going to happen. Mr. Malizia stated we do have money in the major repairs capital reserve fund. If something were to happen, I bring it to your attention. We could certainly use that money next year. I just wanted to put it on your radar. Again, we've done that in the past with the flat roof. We actually went out and did it through the capital reserve. Chairman Coutu it wasn't certain that was leaking. Mr. Malizia indicated that was leaking. This one here facial boards are rotting, gutters are failing. At some point and I don't need to do it today...Chairman Coutu stated preventive maintenance if nothing else.

Selectman Routsis asked how much is in that capital reserve god forbid. Kathy Carpentier indicated almost \$166,000. The Board of Selectmen are the agents who expend so if you're approached without putting this into the budget, you could approve to use the funds from the capital reserve.

Chairman Coutu asked isn't the capital reserve for stuff like this. Steve Malizia said but if we know about it, what we like to do is budget and then gross up the revenue so that we have two offsets to it if we know about something. It's better to try to be that way than to just spend it without doing it that way. Looking at it prospectively, you would budget out the revenue...Chairman Coutu asked if something falling down or something. Steve said yes some of them have. The fascia boards are rotting. Chairman Coutu asked about if the gutters themselves are they rusty and stuff. Mr. Malizia indicated I haven't looked at them personally but some parts of them are failing. Chairman Coutu had no problem with putting this under building maintenance.



Motion by Selectman Martin, seconded by Selectman McGrath, to increase line 5120-224 building maintenance by \$30,000, carried 5-0.

Just for clarification, Kathy Carpentier noted I'm also increasing the revenues by that \$30,000 so there's no tax impact. Is that correct? Chairman Coutu said yes that is correct.

Board of Selectmen Admin. (5110), page 2

Steve Malizia explained there's a two percent salary increase (inaudible). The only other difference I believe is insurance benefits.

Chairman Coutu asked adjustments for new employees. Mr. Malizia said no me and Donna. We're in here so there's a two percent adjustment in here for us. Chairman Coutu said for yourselves but where's the insurance. Are you getting more insurance than everybody else? Steve indicated I don't take the insurance but if you look at the insurance line...Ms. Carpentier pointed out there is one person in the department that does take the insurance. It was a 16 percent increase. Chairman Coutu noted you're going up \$2,600. Mr. Malizia noted the rest of the budget is flat. That's the labor piece.

Town Facilities (5115), page 6

Kathy Carpentier explained this is a new department. Steve Malizia stated the Oakwood building has been vacated from the Rec. Department. I put minimum utilities towards it depending on what we do with it.

Selectman Routsis asked have we looked into possibly using it for say like storage of town documents or anything. Chairman Coutu stated we just had that discussion. Steve Malizia said yes. Again I'm just putting some minimum money in here. Ms. Carpentier said our storage is currently there. That's the whole summary.

While we're on that, Selectman Morin asked with the Burns Hill Fire Station if I remember correctly we were going to come up with some ideas for both of these buildings. It sounds like we have an idea for one of them. Steve Malizia commented I don't want to cut your short. Chief Buxton will be coming forward with Burns Hill with a plan that will take records and other materials put them at one location Burns Hill making Oakwood surplus. That's why I put a very minimal budget in here because I think we may be facing a decision do we want to keep it or do we want to dispose of it. Just in case, I put minimal heat, minimal electricity and it has a water meter.

Chairman Coutu said there's a parking situation with the school over there so they're interested. Mr. Malizia said there's a potential that they'd be interested. Chairman Coutu said we might be good neighbors and see what we can work out.

Town Hall Operations (5120), page 8

Chairman Coutu noted considering the age of this building I've said it year after year and I'll say it again, Wayne does a fantastic job considering he's got a lot of...Mr. Malizia thought with the doors and the railings up there. Chairman Coutu said I don't feel the drafts that I used to feel. Good job.

Hudson Community Center (4194) page 11

Kathy Carpentier explained page 11 has been zeroed out. It's the Hudson Community Center. The Town Administrator and the Rec. Director met and has been shifted under the responsibility of the Recreation Director. When we go over Recreation Department, we will go over the Hudson Community Center operating expenses. Ms. Carpentier noted the same with page 14 the Hudson Senior Center Facility. Just changing responsibility from the Town Administrator to the Rec. Director. We'll talk about those on our next budget deliberation.

Town Poor (5151), page 16

Kathy Carpentier express this is level funded. Steve Malizia remarked Ms. Wilson does a great job with this and Donna and Sue also back her up. They're all well versed and trained and they really are diligent in making sure that people get what they need but at a very efficient level. If you look over here, the history hasn't been particularly high and we've been cutting this through the years. It looks like it's a reasonable number. Chairman Coutu stated I'm amazed at how much money gets returned to us. Some of the people we've helped has paid us back. Mr. Malizia indicated we had a gentleman coming in once a month cash paying back. I think it took him 3 or 4 years. He came in every month and paid it back.

Legal (5200)

Chairman Coutu noted this is down. Steve Malizia noted the main reason is because we're trying to negotiate five contracts this year. Assuming they're all successful, there's no money there. Bottom line, I think we've been very frugal with our general counsel Attorney Lefevre. If we had to negotiate one or two of these contracts, I think we could take from that line and put it down to collective bargaining. Chairman Coutu stated if the voters say no on all the contracts, we'll have to negotiate all of them. Mr. Malizia assumed that we have a baseline from which to start. It would not take that much time. From a logic perspective, we haven't met with some of these groups in a couple of years. Now we've met with them so we have the basics and now I think you're talking percentages. Right? The budget is down on this. I think Attorney Lefevre has done a great job for us. We do value defense. Value defense is when we're defending our values for utilities, commercial property. I don't know what it's going to always be so I just wanted to make sure we have enough to be able to defend the values of the town.

Finance (5310, 5320)

Kathy Carpentier noted operating expenses are down \$2,146. Chairman Coutu commented your salaries are up. Is that because of adjustments in insurance? Ms. Carpentier said yes. Chairman Coutu said I know the increase is based on what the voters voted for so that's good. Any questions?

Finance Accounting (5320), page 4

Kathy Carpentier stated this is for my department, my staff. The biggest thing is the copy machine. It's pretty much level funded. Since we went into the new contract on the copy machines, Chairman Coutu asked has that been working okay for us. Ms. Carpentier said yes it has. We did have a new copier come into the fold that's outside the contract but they'll roll it the next time we do it and that would be the new fire station copier. They'll have to roll that in so we'll probably get a better price when they come in with the other 11 that we have. Library is also a part of that. It is definitely a cost savings for all of us and it's all on the same contract.

Insurance (5910)

Kathy Carpentier stated this is for our unemployment insurance, worker's comp. insurance, and property and liability insurance. I took the current bill that we just paid and increased them by 6 percent. Chairman Coutu asked we won't get that number until December. Steve Malizia explained these are our insurance coverages. We're insured with Primex for our property liability as well as our worker's comp. because of the premiums.

Chairman Coutu asked do we expect our property liability to go down. Kathy Carpentier said I took what we just recently paid and added 6 percent. It went down already. Mr. Malizia stated the budget for '19 was the number we guessed last year. We saved on that number. Ms. Carpentier said everything is based on claims. Steve indicated we have the active Safety Committee where that really helps us with our experience modification because we're looking at claims. We're trying to manage our claims. We have a very good experience rate. Chairman Coutu noted we have chargebacks too for sewer, water, and library. Kathy said that was kind of new. I think I did that a year or two ago. I was able to - they gave me a model to figure out how much their property is so I gave it to library and I gave it to water and sewer. Steve Malizia noted all their assets are insured. It should be the users of that water and the users of that sewer who's paying their share. Ms. Carpentier explained that number will change every year based on the value of their properties.

Chairman Coutu asked if that was offset by that as revenue. Steve Malizia indicated those numbers get charged off to their funds. Their funds have their own revenue source. The water utility has the customers and the sewer utility has their customers. Library is library - we all pay the tax. Ms. Carpentier noted they don't pay me. I just charge them.

Community Grants (5920), page 3

Steve Malizia stated basically we level funded it from one year to the other but if you look at page 5, you'll see the second column over from the right, that's what was asked for. For FY20, this book contains the requests from the various agencies and that the dollar figures they asked for are listed here as up to \$203,118. The directive was to level fund and we level funded what they got last year. If an agency got something last year, they're getting the same thing this year. The Board can change that if they'd like but that's been the practice of the Board.

Selectman Routsis asked didn't we give Harbor Homes additional funds last year. Off the budget, Steve Malizia said we did. Selectman Routsis asked do we know approximately how much that was. Mr. Malizia said \$3,000. That's what you gave them as a separate thing when they came in with a plea for I think they wanted \$100,000. They had a very large number that they had asked for extra but you were able to give them another \$3,000.

One big heartache Selectman Martin said he had is Nashua Transit at a rate of \$5. Do we actually know the ridership from Hudson to Nashua? What is our value for \$16,000? Chairman Coutu indicated they are transporting people with disabilities. They come to Hudson and I speak from experience on this. My wife's girlfriend which they've since moved - her cousin or niece lived in a house with her. She was wheelchair bound. She went to Alvirne the special needs program that they have. They came every day to pick her up and they went around that particular unit and picked up various people with disabilities and not just children. Children and adults. This was a young adult. They transport them to Alvirne and there's the care of unloading them off the bus because of wheelchairs, making sure that they're greeted at the door, so everybody helps bring them in. It's ongoing year round. It's not just during school time. Some are transported to Nashua. They may have what would appear to us to be an insignificant job but it's something for them to do. Some of them are transported and they're shown just to show them a different environment. They're taken for example to Sam's Club. There's a budget allocated to buy them lunches there or to another smaller restaurant. Then they're transported maybe over to something that's confined and that they have a controlled environment. They wouldn't throw them out in an apple orchard say but they might bring them to a movie. It's a controlled environment. They may have one or two caretakers with the bus driver.

Chairman Coutu believed we discussed Mr. Malizia a couple of years ago we asked to identify the cost and it was slightly more than what we were providing them. Steve Malizia said basically what they do is they provide folks that have mobility disability issues. They have to have documentation and what not. They provide access for folks who go to adult daycare. They either come to the Alvirne program, some go to St. Joe's in Nashua. They do healthcare so they'll do doctor's appointments and regular routine things like that, shopping, and employment. There's 543 hours of service that we get. Half of it is finance or half of it paid for with federal money so we pay the other half and then there's a share of a rider or user pays that \$5 at the box. The intention is to take these folks who otherwise wouldn't be able to get to places and to be able to get them to those places. Again, it's approximately 543 hours of service. Typically you may be on a regular routine where three days a week you go here or one day a week you go there. You get in a mobility van. It's not a bus. It's a van - it's the van service that transports these folks around. It's been pretty consistent for the last five or six years.

Selectman Martin reiterated the participant pays \$5. Mr. Malizia said correct. Selectman Martin said if some of its federally funded and we're funding the rest of it, why is the user paying? Steve said the annual cost is \$21,177. The estimated fair box revenue is \$5,028. The town has been asked to pay for \$16,000 as opposed to them paying all of it or us paying all of it. There's a share there. Of the share that we're paying, some of it's for the fare - \$5,000 as I said, some of it is us subsidizing at \$16,000.

Patriotic Purposes (5930), page 6

Kathy Carpentier noted its \$5,600. It's been flat for many, many years. Steve Malizia explained as you are aware, we make a contribution for Memorial Day observance and parade. The Legion sponsors that. We also contribute towards Old Home Days and Old Home Days fireworks. If it doesn't happen as you look back in '17, I think they didn't do the fireworks that year and we didn't pay or they didn't do the parade. One or the other. We didn't pay. We only pay when we get a request to pay. This is our contribution to lead events that happen in our community.

Other Expenses (5940), page 8

Kathy Carpentier stated this is slightly down \$8,850. This is for things that don't fit anywhere else - equipment rental of the postage machine upstairs, telephone that's not dedicated to a specific department, the Board of Selectmen's contingency of \$75,000, and accrued time payout contingency of \$60,000.

Chairman Coutu asked if we don't have telephones which are a solid item not assigned to departments where are they all in a box somewhere. Ms. Carpentier said no it's your telephone calls. It's your telephone bills. We don't say Donna called this person on this day and charge her department. We don't get down to that level. If somebody has a cell phone, it is charged to their department. Chairman Coutu reiterated what you're saying is we anticipate making \$27,000 worth of long-distance calls. Kathy said no. It could be the phone lines. It's all the phones that aren't specific to a department.

Selectman Martin noted land lines and not cell phones.

Selectman Routsis said the business phones don't charge for just long distance. They basically charge for any call that's incoming or outgoing that you receive.

Kathy Carpentier noted you can see it's been trending down. I think the IT Director took initiative a few years back to get rid of the copper lines. I'm speaking outside my expertise. Chairman Coutu noted in 2018 it was \$23,900. It's \$27,000 now. How is that going down? It's going up. Ms. Carpentier said the actuals have gone from 29, to 27, to 23. The budget is at 27. It's a small contingency but the actuals are trending down.

Hydrant Rental (5960), page 11

Kathy Carpentier noted this is level funded. This is the town paying the water fund for the hydrants.

Chairman Coutu asked do we have anybody monitor who makes long distance phone calls. Steve Malizia stated each department reviews their phone bills so each department is responsible for looking at the long distance calls. When I get a bill, I look at it and see who made calls. Chairman Coutu asked each department head is responsible for doing that. Mr. Malizia said yes. My understanding is they get circulated. Kathy Carpentier said if it's a dedicated bill but if it's the bill for the town, no I'm not sending that to 12 different department heads to look at their calls. No. Chairman Coutu said so it's not being monitored. If I were to randomly pick a department - put whatever number departments there are in a hat, I'd pick one out and I'd say I want to see all their phone bills for last year. Can that be provided to me the details? Kathy said yes but you're going to have to dig. There's a big bill and you're going to have to go through and figure out. We costed it out and who's phone calls. There's multiple bills. You could get to it yes.

Ms. Carpentier believed that's it for tonight other than and I believe Selectman Morin brought it up but I just want to make sure you're aware that Chief Buxton handed out the costs of the Burns Hill Station as requested the night before.

Steve Malizia said next Monday it will be Assessing, Police, and Recreation and any odds and ends.

Chairman Coutu remarked there's nothing to refer back to so there's nothing that's being held in abeyance. Mr. Malizia said the only thing you haven't taken any action on is the Public Works Director's request for dump bodies which would be split with a couple of departments. That was one thing he did not take any action. Chairman Coutu and Selectman Morin thought we did that. Mr. Malizia said you did not. He came in and said take out the roadside mower which we took out but we did not do anything...

Selectman Routsis thought we talked about moving 5552-403 and 5555-403 forward by taking out that replacement tractor. Kathy Carpentier said there was discussion. No motion was made.

*Motion by Selectman Martin, seconded by Selectman Routsis, to add \$48,000 to the general fund budget and \$16,000 to the sewer fund budget for four replacement dump bodies for the Mack trucks split between Streets, Drainage, and Sewer Department as recommended by the Public Works Director, carried 5-0.*

On that point if we still don't, Kathy Carpentier said you can decide if you're going to need that following meeting which I think is the 30<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Coutu said Monday should wrap it up. If we have nothing to fall back to, we won't have to go into the review. Ms. Carpentier stated you can cancel the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. The only thing you still would have pending but you can still be wrapped up and go and do it later on is as the contracts come in. They can be outside the budget deliberation schedule. They still need to follow the deadline. The deadline is way down the road so we're still good.

5. ADJOURNMENT

*Motion to adjourn at 9:50 p.m. by Selectman Martin, seconded by Selectman Routsis, carried 5-0.*

Recorded by HCTV and transcribed by Donna Graham, Executive Assistant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roger E. Coutu, Chairman

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David S. Morin, Vice-Chairman

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Marilyn E. McGrath, Selectman

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Angela Routsis, Selectman

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Normand G. Martin, Selectman