

1997 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

March 15, 1997

Hudson Memorial School

1. CALL TO ORDER BY THE MODERATOR, Michael Keenan, at 9:15 a.m. in the gymnasium of Hudson Memorial School, with about 200 people present.

2. POSTING OF THE COLORS, jointly, by the Fire & Police Departments

The National Anthem was sung a cappella by Kristen Kelly from Alvirne.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, led by Selectmen Chairman Ann Seabury

4. INVOCATION BY FATHER GARY BELLIVEAU of St. Kathryn's parish

5. REMARKS BY THE MODERATOR

Moderator Keenan reviewed the ground rules and he announced that a Protest Petition was submitted on a zoning question, Article 4.

6. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Chairman Ann Seabury, Rhona Charbonneau, Howard Dilworth, Jr., Shawn N. Jasper and E. Lorraine Madison

7. INTRODUCTION OF BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman John Knowles, John Beike, Ken Cantara, John Drabinowicz, Ben Nadeau, Paul Parker, Phil Parker, Cliff Steele, Kevin Walsh, Ann Seabury, Selectmen's Rep, Shawn N. Jasper, Alternate Selectmen's Rep, Jim Sullivan, School Board Rep, William Olszewski, Alternate School Bd.. Rep

8. INTRODUCTION OF HUDSON REPRESENTATIVES/SENATOR

Representatives David Alukonis, Donald B. White, Rudy Lessard, Lars Christiansen, Robert E. Clegg, Jr., Stanley Searles, Sr. and David S. Feng; and Senator Gary Francoeur

9. INTRODUCTION OF TOWN STAFF/OTHERS/SEATING OF NON-RESIDENTS IN HALL

Residents: Paul Sharon, Town Administrator; Cecile Nichols, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Steve Malizia, Finance Director; Frank Carpentino, Fire Chief; Mike Reynolds, Town Planner; Keith Bowen, Recreation Director; Sue Dufault, Library Director. Non-Residents: Richard Gendron, Chief of Police; Leo Lessard, Road Agent; Jim Michaud, Assessor; Mike Gospodarek, Town Engineer; Priscilla Boisvert, Recorder/Executive Assistant to Board of Selectmen; Susan Snide, Zoning Administrator; Ed Madigan, Building Inspector; Bill Oleksak, Code Enforcement Officer/Health Officer; Gary Wulf, Labor Relations Consultant; John Ratigan, Legal Counsel for the Town of Hudson; Press: Hudson-Litchfield News, Fidele Bernasconi and Andy Renzullo; Telegraph, Cheryl Dulak; Lowell SUN, Tim O'Connor

Hudson Cable Committee Members Coleman Kelly and Michael O'Keefe operated camera equipment that they arranged to use in order to videotape Town Meeting so it can be televised to cable subscribers at a later date.

10. DISCUSSION OF WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 5--Highway Garage Bond

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$950,000) gross budget for the construction and original equipping of a new highway facility, and said sum to be in addition to any federal, state or private funds made available

therefore, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$950,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Chapter 33), and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and sell such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon?" (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by Budget Committee.)

Moderator Keenan read Article 5 and asked for a motion. Selectman Charbonneau moved to forward Article 5 to the ballot was seconded by Ben Nadeau.

Selectman Charbonneau said this is for the garage and salt shed. The Town needs a building that's environmentally safe for its employees and equipment. The \$2 million worth of equipment needs to be protected. The current building does not have back doors. In case of a fire or other emergency, it would be difficult to get equipment out. She encouraged everyone to look at the pictures on display, telling them to notice the cracks on the window sills and in the cement. This building has been needed for some time. It makes good business sense to build a salt shed. They are currently paying \$29 a ton for salt which could be reduced to \$21 if they had a place to store it because they could buy in quantity. About 15% of the salt is lost by being stored outside. It hardens, and has to be broken up with a backhoe. The Town would save \$7,000-\$9,000 a year. She hoped they could count on everyone's vote for this much needed facility.

Amendment by Fred Giuffrida, 14 Pinewood Road, to reduce \$950,000 to \$475,000, was seconded by James Wilkins, 112 Belknap Road.

Mr. Giuffrida agreed a garage was needed, but not a Taj Mahal. He felt that \$475,000 was sufficient to park trucks and store salt on land already owned by the Town. He asked for justification for the proposed \$950,000 adding that his proposed number may be totally bogus but felt a garage could be built for considerably less than what the article stated. He has talked with people who built large projects in Town on land they had to buy and they said that buildings that require huge amounts of changes with a lot of finish work on the inside were built for considerably less.

Leo Lessard, Road Agent, provided the following estimates: dirt work, \$200,000; metal framing, \$300,000; heating system, \$50,000; lift, \$18,000, plus a mechanic's bay. Current office space is 1,043 square feet; proposed garage will have 600. The trucks must be able to get out in a hurry for public safety. Last year, the hydraulics on the plow trucks gelled up and were down for hours. It takes one truck six hours to plow 28 miles of road. Trucks and plowing equipment should be kept under cover in a heated garage. The lowest price he was quoted for a salt shed was \$103,000 and can probably do it himself for less.

John Bednar, 106 Ferry Street, said a garage is needed, but questioned the cost. He asked if anyone considered all of the trips that would have to be made back and forth if the garage was built on Constitution Drive, and the tepee concept for the salt shed. He thought \$100,000 could be shaved off the proposed amount.

Selectman Jasper opposed the amendment, as the proposed facility is no Taj Mahal. The \$950,000 figure is a reasonable number and the Board and Road Agent will work to further reduce it once they get into construction.

Robert Clegg, 39 Trigate Road, said this type of construction is what he does for a living and the Town got an extremely good deal. Somebody did their homework and worked with the contractor very well. He urged defeat of the amendment. (Start Tape 1, Second Side)

Selectman Dilworth said the Road Agent was from the private sector, and had the perspective outside of municipal government. A previous Public Works Manager had submitted plans for a garage, which was a Taj Mahal, and unacceptable. The proposed facility is a working building. Last year, they looked at facilities in other towns, so they knew what they wanted, how to ask the right questions, and the figure to expect. This request is reasonable and prudent.

Vote--Amendment to reduce \$950,000 to \$450,000 failed by a show of hands.

Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane, said some of the Budget Committee members expressed concern in terms of decommissioning the existing facilities. He wondered if additional funds would be needed to demolish the old building which probably contained some hazardous materials. Richard Wickham, 22 Chalifoux Road, wondered if the old building could be used for the salt shed. The Road Agent said no--it's not high enough and it has a metal roof which would be damaged by the salt. Also, it would not be cost effective or practical to run the equipment back and forth from Constitution Drive to load the salt.

Tony Lekas, 30 Barretts Hill Road, asked what was going to happen to the old building and if there were going to be excessive clean-up costs because of the salt. Selectman Jasper didn't anticipate any contamination issues. If this garage is approved, there will be time to decide what to do with the existing site.

Motion by Fidele Bernasconi to forward Article 5, in it's original form, to the Ballot was seconded by Brad Seabury and carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 5 is forwarded to the Ballot, as presented.

Article 6--Ratification of a single-year contract negotiated between the Town and the Police Union for Wage and Benefit increases.

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson approve the cost item included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Hudson Board of Selectmen and Local 3657 A.F.S.C.M.E. (Police Union) which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits:Year 1997-1998; Estimated Amount, \$95,754; And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$95,754 for the 1997-1998 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those paid in the prior fiscal year?" (This article has been designated by the Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Recommended by Budget Committee.)

Moderator Keenan read the article and asked for a motion. Motion by Selectman Jasper to send Article 6 to the Ballot was seconded by Selectman Madison.

Amendment--Tony Lekas asked if the word "revise" in the body of the text should be "raise." Selectman Jasper moved to amend, seconded by Gary Rodgers. By a show of hands, Moderator Keenan announced that the amendment carried.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, asked for an explanation of the special warrant article designation. Selectman Jasper said the Board was originally told that if it didn't say special, the monies contained within the article would be rolled into the operating budget and would not appear as separate articles on the Ballot. Since that time, they received information that all separate articles will be on the ballot. Therefore, that sentence really has no meaning.

Vote to send amended Article 6 to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 6 goes to the Ballot, as amended. (Amended portion of text is underlined.)

Article 7--Ratification of a single-year contract negotiated between the Town and the Administrative and Support Staff Union for Wage and Benefit increases.

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Hudson Board of Selectmen and Local 1801 A.F.S.C.M.E. (Administrative and Support Staff Union) which calls for the following increases in salary and benefits: Year 1997-1998, Estimated Amount \$13,250; And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$13,250 for the 1997-1998 fiscal year, said sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those paid in the prior fiscal year?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant

article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Moderator Keenan read Article 7 and asked for a motion. Selectman Dilworth moved this article to the Ballot, seconded by Selectman Charbonneau.

Selectman Dilworth, the Selectmen's representative on the negotiating team, said the one-year contract covers 17 people, who are essentially the little people--the worker bees--the clerical and secretarial help and provides for an across-the-board salary increase of 3.3% per hour, or an average salary increase of 2.84%. The highest increase would be 3.37% for the lowest paid employee.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, asked why the Budget Committee did not recommend this article. John Knowles, 51 Quail Run Drive, Budget Committee Chairman, said they were not presented with the text of the contract in a timely fashion, so they could not digest it in time to make a decision. As a default, they chose to not recommend, which doesn't imply disapproval of the contract itself. They didn't want to commit to something that they didn't really know about.

Vote on Article 7 carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 7 goes to the Ballot, as written.

Article 8--Wage and Benefit Increase for Non-Union Employees

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,500 for wage and benefit increases for non-union employees?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Chairman Seabury, seconded by Cecile Nichols, to forward Article 8 to the Ballot.

Chairman Seabury said this increase is for the six department heads who are not affiliated with a union.

Vote on the motion to send Article 8 to the Ballot, as written, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 8 moves to the Ballot, as written.

Article 9--Wage and Benefit Increase for Employees of the Library

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$17,616 for wage and benefit increases for the employees of the Hills Memorial Library?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Moderator Keenan read Article 9 and recognized Selectman Madison to move the article to the Ballot, which was seconded by Selectman Charbonneau.

Selectman Madison said they were bringing this forward as a formality because under RSA 202 A the Library Trustees have the entire management and control of their budget. Lisa Riley, 7 Jeanne Street, Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees, spoke in favor of the article. The \$17,616 represents three issues. The first is \$14,036 which is a 5% increase in salaries for the staff. 3% would be awarded across the board as a cost of living increase. The additional 2% would be awarded on a merit basis. In addition, they are asking for \$1,500 for the minimum wage increase. The federal minimum wage increase must be met. They employ students at the minimum wage, so they need the \$1,500 to meet the requirement. The additional \$2,080 is to increase the base salary of the circulation librarian. Last year, they lost an employee in this position because they were unable to offer her a salary commensurate with her experience and education. The position requires a Master's Degree in Library Science and the base salary today is \$22,080. Recently, they hired someone out of graduate

school. In order to keep him or attract another candidate, they would like to increase the base salary. The library staff is not represented by a collective bargaining unit and must rely on the trustees and on the fair-mindedness of voters to provide them with equitable wages.

Edward Gotham, 3 Philbrick Street, asked why the Budget Committee did not recommend this. John Knowles said the majority of the committee felt that the salary increases were too high.

Vote on the motion to forward Article 9 to the ballot, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 9 was forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Article 10--Wage and Benefit Increase for Town Clerk/Tax Collector

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,711 said sum representing the wage increase necessary to establish the Town Clerk's base salary at \$40,000, plus benefits?" (This article has been designated by the Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Cmt.)

Moderator Keenan read Article 10. Motion by Selectman Dilworth, seconded by Selectman Jasper, to send Article 10 to the Ballot.

Selectman Dilworth said this represents a salary increase of 1.286% for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, adding that words can't begin to describe the amount of work she does. Last year they had a 97% tax collections rate; this year, it's 98%. This office handles auto registrations, taxes, and other clerical functions of town government.

Amendment by John Bednar, seconded by John Drabinowicz, to increase the amount of \$1,140 by \$500 for a new total increase of \$1,640 and a total salary of \$40,000.

Mr. Bednar objected to Selectmen haggling over increasing this salary to \$40,000 as the Town already saves money by combining the offices of Town Clerk/Tax Collector. When the Town hires someone new, they pay a lot of money, but they don't want to compensate a loyal employee. This office has vastly improved over past years. He urged people to vote in favor of the amendment.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, said the Town Clerk has been a Town employee for 10 years and works as Town Clerk, Tax Collector, and assists in voter registration. She is dedicated to the Town and deserves the reward.

Selectman Dilworth asked the maker of the amendment if he was amenable to changing the figure of \$1,640 to \$1,711 which includes the cost of Social Security, state retirement, insurance, etc. Mr. Bednar said he wanted to add \$500 to the base salary to make it \$40,000. Selectman Dilworth said the warrant article asks to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,140 to set the pay at \$39,500 plus benefits and \$40,000 plus benefits will require \$1,711 for an increase. Mr. Bednar asked what the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's current base salary was, saying he didn't want to confuse the issue. Selectman Dilworth said her base salary now is \$38,500 but the actual cost, with benefits, is \$43,909. Mr. Bednar said this is confusing and a poor way of presenting the information to the people. Mr. Keenan asked Mr. Bednar if it was his intention to raise the Town Clerk's base salary to \$40,000 a year. Mr. Bednar said yes.

Amendment to the Amendment by Selectman Dilworth to strike \$1,640 and insert \$1,711, was seconded by John Drabinowicz.

Selectman Dilworth said the intent is for a \$40,000 base salary and, to include benefits, a \$1,711 appropriation must be made.

Mr. Bednar asked if they were talking about base salary.

Moderator Keenan said base salary, plus benefits.

(Start Tape 2, Side A)

Tom Krupinski, 1 Cin-Fre Drive, said both figures in the article should be amended.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, said he wanted to offer a third amendment, which was not accepted by the Moderator.

Selectman Jasper said a number of people believe the maker of the first amendment did establish the Town Clerk's pay at \$40,000. He asked for a clarification. Mr. Keenan said the maker of the motion's intent was to give the Town Clerk a salary of \$40,000 per year, plus benefits. The amendment to the amendment increases the amount by \$71. Selectman Jasper said Selectman Dilworth's amendment will accomplish Mr. Bednar's objective, adding that he wholeheartedly endorses amendments.

Moderator Keenan said Mr. Bednar amended the article to increase the amount of \$1,140 to \$1,640. With additional information that was brought forward, to accomplish Mr. Bednar's intent, an additional \$71 needs to be raised. The amendment to the amendment would increase the original amendment amount by \$71.

Vote on the amendment to the amendment carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan said they are back to the amendment, which has been changed from \$1,640 to \$1,711.

Amendment to the amendment by Carl Howes to strike the word "pay" and replace it with "base salary," seconded by John Knowles, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan said they are voting to raise \$1,711 to establish the Town Clerk's base salary at \$40,000.

Vote on Article 10, as amended, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan said Article 10 will go to the Ballot, as amended. (Amended portion of text is underlined.)

Article 11--Adopting the Town Operating Budget

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$13,327,373? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$13,299,887, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous actions of the Town of Hudson or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only."

Chairman Seabury moved Article 11 to the Ballot, seconded by Selectman Charbonneau.

John Knowles, Budget Committee Chairman, said the number in the warrant is what the Budget Committee recommends, but it is not the number recommended by the Selectmen; it is \$100,000 greater than the Selectmen's budget. The Selectmen requested that the Budget Committee level-fund the Library's budget request to keep them at the same amount they had last year. The majority of the Budget Committee agreed with that. The \$22,150 was the increase that the Library requested for this year, from \$470,000 to \$490,000. It was felt that by both the Selectmen and the Budget Committee that the Greater Nashua Center for Economic Development hasn't really done anything for the Town, and they shouldn't be paying them \$6,700 a year in dues. There are other miscellaneous reductions scattered throughout the budget. The reason the budget is higher is a technicality. There is an item for replacement police vehicles--old vehicles that under the current plan are scheduled to be replaced. The Selectmen had intended to put it in the budget, so they requested that the Budget Committee add it in, which they agreed to do.

Amendment by Donna O'Hanian, 4 Roy Drive, seconded by Joe Wozniak, to increase the amount by \$4,000 to the Solid Waste line, 5970, for the purpose of removing Christmas trees.

Ms. O'Hanian said the BFI bid included a \$4,000 option for curbside pickup of Christmas trees. It would add about 1¢ per household to the tax bill, which would cost less than to drive to the landfill.

Joe Wozniak, 7 Sycamore Street, supported the amendment because the elderly don't have the wherewithal to take

Christmas trees to the landfill. This was a cost-effective solution.

John Knowles supported the amendment because many Christmas trees were out at the curbside after Christmas this year, waiting in vain to be picked up.

Lars Christiansen, 1 Stonewood Drive, opposed the amendment, saying many of them use artificial trees.

Robert Clegg favored the amendment, saying it would mean 25-30 less trees that gets thrown on his property.

James Wilkins, 112 Belknap, asked how they can make the trees acceptable for normal trash pickup. Donna O'Hanian yielded and said that trees are leaf and yard waste and it's illegal for that to be picked up with normal trash removal.

Selectman Charbonneau opposed the amendment. If people can get out to buy Christmas trees, they can take them to the landfill afterwards.

Kathleen Bills, 14 Tessier Street, favored the amendment to ensure a more beautiful Hudson--and the price is right.

Vote on the amendment to increase the budget by \$4,000 for Christmas tree pickup failed by a show of hands.

Amendment by Lisa Riley, 7 Jeanne Street, to increase line item 5060 Hills Memorial Library by \$22,150, was seconded by John Knowles.

Ms. Riley said this amount represents the sum requested by the Library Trustees which was not recommended by the Budget Committee. \$5,000 to increase the materials budget (books, CD ROMs, cassettes, etc.); \$8,000 to replace obsolete PC's; \$4,000 to replace the circulation station in the main room of the Library; \$1,000 extra for electricity; \$1,500 for bookmobile repairs; and \$1,500 for software upgrades.

Recess--Moderator Keenan declared a recess at 10:38 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:45 a.m.

(Start Tape 2, Second Side)

Selectman Dilworth said while all of these items probably are needed, the Library Trustees are somewhat autonomous from the Town and they are able to move money around in their budget as they see fit, and can buy these things out of what they have. Several times during the year the Library Trustees have asked their consultant to look into what they need for a library. In the past he's asked if they should be putting money away for a bookmobile, and now they are hearing that the bookmobile is costing more money to repair. He's having trouble accepting this 11th hour request.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, supported the amendment because the library provides a valuable service and costs are rising for books and computers.

John Knowles supported the amendment, saying the request is reasonable. Last year's budget was \$470,000. An increase of \$22,000 is under 2% which is under inflation.

Kathleen Bills, 14 Tessier Street, said a library should be one of the most impressive buildings in town. It speaks of the community it represents. It's time to put the library where it belongs, and it takes money to do that.

Vote on the amendment to add \$22,150 to Line 5060 carried by a show of hands. Moderator Keenan announced that Article 11 has been amended by an increase of \$22,150.

David Elliot, 29 Winslow Farm Road, asked for a clarification of the MS-7, saying last year the Fire Department was listed as \$2.3 million, with an actual amount spent of \$1.4 million, leaving a surplus of \$900,000. This year's recommended appropriation is \$2.5 million, which is \$1.1 million over last year, plus the \$900,000 that was not spent. (Side-bar discussion.) Selectman Jasper said there wasn't a \$900,000 surplus in the Fire Department--it may be the one-time expense of \$400,000 for the ladder truck and hydrant rental. (Side-bar discussion continued.)

Selectman Madison said the amount that was approved last year was \$1,725,000 and this year's recommendation is \$1,834,644. The amount spent for hydrant rental last year is \$726,942. She believes that is part of the figure Mr. Elliot is looking at.

Mr. Keenan asked Mr. Elliot if his questions were sufficiently answered. Mr. Elliot said no, but he will take a closer look at the Town Report.

Gary Francoeur, 23 Woodcrest Drive, asked how the Selectmen calculated the default budget. Selectman Madison had a handout that explained the numbers. Senator Francoeur said copies for everyone would have been helpful. She said that would be done in the future.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, suggested the default budget information should be included in the warrant in the future. He asked for an explanation for the \$9,100 request on account 4195, as there were no expenditures last year. Selectman Jasper said it was for the Cemetery Trustees. There was no prior budget because there were no trustees.

David Alukonis, 121 Central Street, a Cemetery Trustee, said the Highway Department mows the grass and does minor maintenance, but the Trustees are trying to repair old or broken stones that are ready to fall over. A large part of the budget is for the Cemetery of the Unknown, the poor farm cemetery, off of Old Derry Road, which dates back to 1869. There are no stones in that cemetery, but they want to preserve it and give it the honor it deserves. Mr. Howes referred to accounts 4316-4319 Street Lighting and asked why there was no appropriation indicated and where the money was coming from for street lights. Selectman Dilworth said out of the 5900 series and lights that don't work are reported to PSNH. Traffic lights cost about \$300 a month for electricity. Mr. Howes referred to 4903 Buildings, and said it looked like double-dipping for the highway garage. Selectman Dilworth said all of the articles have to be listed on the form; the amount wasn't doubled.

Vote on Article 11, as amended, by an increase of \$22,150 carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 11 is forwarded to the Ballot, as amended. (Amended portion of text is underlined.)

Article 12--Hiring of Police Officers

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$67,918 (grant funding pending -- it is anticipated that up to 75% of this sum may be paid by a grant), which represents the wages and benefits necessary to hire two full-time police officers?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Madison, to forward Article 12 to the Ballot.

Selectman Jasper said, based on the information they were given, Selectmen felt that these two positions were justified. Money is available and has been applied for. A study was done 10 years ago, at which time 40 sworn officers were recommended, and the PD is still seven short of that. (Start Tape 3, Side A)

David Elliot, 29 Winslow Farm Rd, asked how grant monies are handled. Selectman Jasper said as a revenue offset. Rudy Lessard, 115 Bush Hill Road, asked if this was a one-time grant. Selectman Jasper said it's a three-year commitment. After that time, there are no federal monies. The Board recognized the need for more officers and when the opportunity to get federal monies presented itself, they decided to take advantage of it.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, asked for better justification of the need for these officers.

Chief Richard Gendron said the Justice Department feels two officers are needed for every 1,000 residents. Another method of justification is by the volume of calls for service, and the amount of time spent on those calls. In one year, on the day shift, there were 6,172 calls; evenings, 5,785 and night, 2,264. A 1987 management study determined that 40 sworn officers were needed. They currently have 33. When they were preparing the budget, they requested two additional officers to staff the day shift with an extra man to escort prisoners to jail and court. They'd like to add an officer to late nights because when an officer makes an arrest, he is tied up for two to three hours, leaving only two people out on the street.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, said the Town needs more police officers and was in favor of upping the number to 40, adding that Hudson is lucky to have the dedicated Police force

they do have.

Vote on forwarding Article 12 to the Ballot, as written, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 12 is forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Article 13--Drug Task Force Officer

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$46,245, which represents the cost of wages and benefits necessary to assign a drug enforcement officer to the N.H. Attorney-General's Drug Task Force? (Grant funding pending--it is anticipated that 75% of this appropriation will be funded by the State of New Hampshire.)"

(This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Dilworth, to forward Article 13 to the Ballot.

Selectman Jasper said there is increased drug activity in this part of the state and that every community that has sent an officer to this program has gotten this 75%. It means an additional officer has to be hired. They will send a senior officer to the task force, and 75% of his salary will be paid. That amount will cover the total salary of a new 'junior' officer. In essence, it is a wash with no additional cost to the taxpayer. When there is any drug-related activity in Town, the Drug Task Force will come in and work with the Town. This is a pro-active stance by the Board on the fight on drugs.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, said if an officer goes to Concord, they will be short one officer. Selectman Jasper said if Articles 12 and 13 are approved, they will be hiring three officers. A senior officer will be sent to the Drug Task Force, which will pay for 75% of his salary and with that 75%, they will hire a lower paid replacement officer. Mr. Howes asked if someone else would be promoted to take the place of the one going to Concord. Chief Gendron said they would still have the same amount of police officers working in the Town. The officer sent to the Drug Task Force will receive training in drug investigations and gain experience in search and seizure laws, which are very complicated. In a 33-man department, it is difficult to do drug investigations effectively. He'd rather rely on the AG's 25-man unit to come in to conduct the investigation. A lot of drugs in Hudson are coming out of Nashua and Lowell. Mr. Howes asked if this was an on-going grant. The Chief said it was an on-going commitment the Town would make to the AG's Office. As long as the Selectmen authorize it, they will stay in the program and continue to get the grant money.

Ken Massey, 20 Fairway Drive, asked if the request for an officer would have been made if the grant monies were not there. As the state is finding it increasingly difficult to fund grants, there are no guarantees that the money will always be there. Selectman Jasper said it's federal money, not state. If the money isn't there, they will not participate. Mr. Massey said the war on drugs, nationwide, appears to be unsuccessful, with a rise in drug addiction and drug-related crimes. He asked how it will be determined if the Town derived any benefit from sending an officer to the Drug Task Force. Selectman Jasper didn't know of a way to measure that, saying the Town can't roll over and play dead. With drug activity on the rise, this is an opportunity to do something about it. The Board didn't discuss funding an officer without grant money. Chief Gendron said there are two ways to measure drug activity: the number of arrests made on a regular motor vehicle stop and what they see in the schools, and confidential information received from drug dealers. Dealers feel safer in towns where there is no Drug Task Force. About three weeks ago, there was a large seizure of heroin that came up from Lowell. Drugs travel through Hudson from Lowell and Lawrence en route to Nashua and Manchester. His goal is to reduce the amount of drug activity in Hudson in a safe manner. If grant money wasn't available, he'd still be asking the Board of Selectmen to send someone to the Drug Task Force.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, said part of the reason they're losing the drug war is the complacency of society. She has children in Alvirne and knows first-hand the problems with

drugs in Hudson and how it is increasing. If they send an officer to the Task Force, the Town would be sending a message to the drug dealers to stay away from Hudson. Selectman Dilworth said by sending one person to the AG's Drug Task Force, they are hiring one person and getting a department.

Helen Feng, 1 Timber Lane, said drugs have been a problem for 25 years, so the police must already have someone assigned to handle it. Chief Gendron said some time ago, Hudson had an officer that worked with a previous Chief and they oversaw the drug investigations. Today, the detectives handle some issues, but they are not trained to conduct investigations. They need someone who can make drug buys or identify drug dealers. The current police officers are all well known, so it's difficult for them to do that. One man cannot run a drug investigation. Sometimes they ask Nashua to help them and other times the Attorney General sends their people down. There is a need to participate in this program; Hudson is not fully equipped to handle it themselves. Selectman Charbonneau said the population is much larger than 25 years ago. With drugs coming up from Lowell and Lawrence, they have to think about protecting the residents. If they don't, where will they be in the next 25 years?

Vote--Article 13 was forwarded to the Ballot, as written, by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan stated that Article 13 is forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Article 14--School Resource Officer

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$41,080, which represents the cost of wages and benefits necessary to assign a full-time police officer to Alvirne High School? (50% of this sum shall be reimbursed by SAU No. 27.)" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Madison, to send the article to the Ballot.

Selectman Jasper said the program to have an officer at Alvirne has been successful in reducing the number of incidents and things of that nature. Last year, they approved a part-time officer, so there was \$12,000 in the budget for that; the school contributed half; and a grant paid for the remainder. This request is just a continuation of that program. Lars Christiansen, 1 Stonewood Lane, amended "full-time police officer," to "180-day police officer" because school is not in session a full year, seconded by Carl Howes. Mr. Christiansen said a lot of the students that acted up were from out of town, but that activity has diminished with the presence of a police officer. As a result of him being there, the atmosphere of the school has changed. Selectman Jasper opposed the amendment because it is a full-time officer, assigned to the school and doesn't make sense to pay someone \$40,000 for 180 days.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, supports an officer at Alvirne as the drug problem is worse than people realize. Selectman Madison opposed the amendment. If it passed, they would have to pro-rate the salary. This full-time officer would do other things when he's not at Alvirne.

Mr. Christiansen withdrew his amendment; Mr. Howes withdrew his second.

David Elliot, 29 Winslow Farm Road, offered an amendment "along the lines of removing Alvirne High School and adding School System." Moderator Keenan said he needed a specific motion. Mr. Elliot amended motion to read, "Necessary to assign a full-time police officer to the School Department." There was no second.

(Start Tape 3, Second Side)

Amendment--Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, offered an amendment to strike the language, "necessary to assign a full-time police officer to Alvirne High School, and replace it with "necessary to fund a full-time officer who shall be assigned to Alvirne High School when school is in session." Motion was seconded by Joe Wozniak. Mr. Howes said his amendment was

to clarify what they were voting on.

Ken Massey, Fairway Drive, asked if this includes summer school.

(Moderator Keenan turned the gavel over to Terry McLlarky)
Selectman Jasper said they had to have faith that the Police Department would use the officer appropriately. He cautioned that they were getting into "bug dust" and minutia by specifically assigning a police officer through the process of Town Meeting. Chief Gendron said this was a joint effort with the school, and they talked about when the officer has to be there. He didn't envision the officer being there during the summer.

Fidele Bernasconi, 122 Bush Hill Road, said they shouldn't be micro-managing the Police Department, or any other department. The Town pays department heads good money-- and they do a hell of a job.

Jim Sullivan opposed the amendment. This position was partially funded by the School Department and grant monies are available. Alvirne was going to hire a security guard to work in the parking lot, but by working with the Town, it is upgraded to a police officer, with his salary being funded by different sources. The police officer works for the Town, assigned to the school when it is in session.

(Moderator Keenan resumed the gavel.)

William Arseneault, 3 Riverview Avenue, thought the assigning of officers was discretionary to the Police Department and Board of Selectmen. Chief Gendron agreed.

Vote on the Amendment failed by a show of hands.

John Drabinowicz, 8 Deerfield Avenue, supported Article 14. He said this is a good program and it appears to work. In the future, he hoped it would be funded 100% by the Town instead of shuffling funds back and forth between the Town and School, which creates unnecessary work.

Roland Harmon, 14 Spruce Street, asked if they were assigning an existing officer or hiring an additional person. Selectman Jasper said the officer is already on board; it's not hiring an additional person. Mr. Harmon said if a person was authorized last year for this purpose, and if someone is doing it, and if it's within the jurisdiction of the Selectmen and Police Chief to assign officers as they see fit, why was this before them? Selectman Jasper said it involved technicalities with funding, and they wanted the blessing of the Town to go forward with this program.

Vote on forwarding Article 14 to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 14 is forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Article 15 -- Two Firefighters

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$70,380, which represents the cost of wages and benefits necessary to hire two full-time emergency medical technician intermediate firefighters?" (This article has been designated by the Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Madison to forward Article 15 to the Ballot, seconded by Mary Jane Ames, 10 Sand Hill Road.

Amendment--Selectman Madison amended Article 15 by striking the figure \$74,031 and replacing it with \$70,380, seconded by Selectman Dilworth.

Selectman Madison said the Fire Chief discovered they used an incorrect figure to calculate the requested amount.

Vote on the Amendment carried by a show of hands.

Selectman Madison favored the amended article, saying that there has been no increase in fire fighters since 1985, although the Town has grown considerably. The Fire Department has a critical shortage of on-duty personnel to respond to emergency calls. They are asking for fire fighters at an intermediate level of skill because this is the baseline for advanced life support.

The higher the level of services provided at the scene of an emergency the greater the chances are for that person's recovery. Doctors and hospitals are expecting a higher level of skills at the emergency scene.

Vote on the Motion, as amended, carried by a show of hands. Moderator Keenan announced that Article 15 goes to the Ballot, as amended. (Amended portion of Article 11 text is underlined.)

Recess--Moderator Keenan declared a recess at 12:00 noon; meeting reconvened at 12:35 p.m. (Start Tape 4, Side A)
Article 16--Fire Department Dispatcher

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$29,931, which represents the cost of wages and benefits necessary to hire a full-time fire dispatcher?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Madison, seconded by Ben Nadeau, to forward Article 16 to the Ballot.

Selectman Madison asked for voter support of this article which was asking for a third full-time dispatcher. They can't keep part-timers that cover this shift on the weekends. If there is no dispatcher, a full-time fire fighter covers that post and it reduces the available manpower to go out on calls. Moving the dispatch center to Nashua, or combining Fire and Police dispatch, was determined not to be feasible. The Board feels that emergency fire calls should be handled by the Hudson Fire Department.

Ben Nadeau, 18 Hartson Circle, supported the article, having spent many days and nights at the Fire Department to see what the dispatchers do--which is a lot, in addition to dispatching calls. He agreed with the previous speaker. Joe Wozniak, 7 Sycamore Street, asked Selectman Madison what the cost of running the dispatch is, and what it would cost to go to Nashua. Chief Carpentino yielded, saying dispatch costs about \$80,000. Dispatchers also act as receptionist, do paperwork, and other administrative functions. When he came to Hudson about 2-1/2 months ago, the figure given to him for Nashua to take over the dispatch center was \$120,000. In further discussions with Nashua, they talked about a pro-rated system that would vary from year to year. They would take into consideration their dispatchers' salary and benefits, the total number of calls, compare that to the number of calls from Hudson, and come up with a figure. John Drabinowicz, 8 Deerfield Avenue, said the Budget Committee didn't recommend this article because they didn't have enough information from the Town. In subsequent conversations with the Fire Chief, he now supports it, saying they will spend money to save money in the long run.

Vote on forwarding Article 16 to the Ballot, as written, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 16 is forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Commendation of Kristen Kelly, who sang the National Anthem

Motion by Selectman Howard Dilworth to commend Kristen Kelly, seconded by Town Administrator Paul Sharon, carried unanimously.

Article 17--Full-Time Technical Services Librarian

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,840, which represents the cost of wages and benefits necessary to increase the technical services librarian position from a part-time position to a full-time position?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Selectman Seabury moved to send this article to the Ballot, seconded by Selectman Madison.

Lisa Riley, Chairman of the Library Trustees, said this position is currently part-time, 30 hours per week, with an annual salary of \$17,160. It requires a Master's Degree in Library Science, knowledge of automated library systems, and some supervisory experience. It has been open for some time and they have been unable to attract qualified candidates because of the low salary and part-time status. Most candidates are professional people who want to be employed full time. The increase in salary will bring the annual base salary to \$26,000 plus about \$7,000 for benefits. The card catalogue is the heart of the library and the Technical Services Librarian is the soul. Materials coming into the library have to be catalogued accurately. Each library's catalogue is customized to the material in the library and to the people who use the materials. The Technical Services Librarian is responsible to catalogue the incoming materials so they can to be easily accessed by the public. This is a critical position in the library and has been vacant for some time. The library is open 65 hours a week and they have a limited number of professional people on staff so there are often areas in the library that have to be staffed by the student pages, who can't provide the professional service to the patrons. In addition, they are concerned with security issues in the library. There are three distinct areas where there is no visibility. Someone could have a serious problem, and no one would know. They'd like to have enough staff to make sure no one is working alone in those areas, especially the teenage pages, who work evenings and weekends.

Luann Stevenson, 11 McKinney Drive, asked why the Budget Committee didn't recommend this article. John Knowles said this was a lower priority item.

Fred Giuffrida, 14 Pinewood Road, asked why this has to be a Master's level position and how many other employees have Master's degrees. Lisa Riley explained it was the job requirement for the Technical Services Librarian position. The Reference Librarian has a Master's and the Library Director is pursuing hers. The Trustees want to hire people with adequate credentials, especially with the high level of technology in society.

Gene Anderson, 165 Highland Street, asked if there was a demand for the services of a Technical Services Librarian. Ms. Riley said yes, every library has a Technical Services Librarian because this work has to be done.

Ben Nadeau, 18 Hartson Circle, asked who was doing this work now. Ms. Riley said a Data Entry person was entering the records and the Director has been doing the cataloging, but in doing so, she is neglecting her other duties. The position has been open for some time. Candidates aren't interested because of the salary and part-time status.

Amendment Kevin Walsh moved to amend by striking \$15,840 and inserting \$0, seconded by Ben Nadeau.

Mr. Walsh said the information they just heard further underscores that a full-time position is not needed.

Bob Bianchi, 12 Sycamore Street, said if they zero out the article, it doesn't give the people the opportunity to vote, negating the intent of SB-2. He said people in Town are reluctant to spend money on the library and, for a town the size of Hudson, the poor library facilities are a disgrace.

Arlene Creeden, 45 Cottonwood Drive, opposed the amendment--they need this person. The Tech Services are barely functioning, and things may get misfiled. A teenage page covers the position and it's dangerous for her to be alone. Kathleen Bills, 14 Tessier Street, said her sister's attaining a Master's Degree in Library Science is one of her proudest accomplishments. People who use the library will be leading the community, adding that a library is as important as the Fire or Police Department. She opposed the amendment.

Richard Patterson, 95-A Wason Road, opposed the amendment and feels the position is justified. They should stop dumping on the library and face the fiscal realities. He has always received excellent service at the Library.

John Knowles, 51 Quail Run Drive, opposed the amendment. If the job of cataloging is part-time, qualified people aren't interested. A Library Science degree takes a lot of training and experience and it's not an easy goal to achieve.

Vote on the amendment to zero out the amount failed by a

show of hands.

Phyllis Appler, 52 Glen Drive, said if they want someone who has a Library Science degree, it is a Master's position.

Vote on the motion to forward Article 17 to the Ballot, as written, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 17 is forwarded to the Ballot, as written.

Article 18--Supervisors of the Checklist

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$970.00, which represents an increase in compensation for the supervisors of the checklist?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion to forward Article 18 to the Ballot, was seconded by Gary Rodgers.

Selectman Dilworth said these are elected positions. The Supervisors requested an increase from \$300 to \$600 each.

Vote on the motion to forward Article 18 to the ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 18 is submitted to the Ballot, as stated.

Article 19--Assessor's 1997-1998 Property Valuation Update (from surplus)

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson establish a capital reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of a Town-wide property valuation update project, and to raise and appropriate from surplus an amount equal to the June 30, 1997 fund balance, but not to exceed \$50,000? This will to be a non-lapsing account per RSA 32:3 and this will designate the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend." (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Gary Rodgers, forward Article 19 to the Ballot.

Neville Davis, 54 Sullivan Road, asked for an explanation of this article. Selectman Jasper said this project will keep values more current. During the '91 re-val, many saw up to a 50% increase in taxes. There are programs to constantly update values to keep things on an even keel to prevent rate shock. They're not asking to expend money at this time. If the Town doesn't like the program, any monies put into the capital reserve fund can be used for a regular reassessment, which will have to be done at some point anyway, usually every 10 years. The Selectman in '84 started such a fund and put away \$40,000. Unfortunately the Town Council spent the money elsewhere and then bonded the revaluation.
(Start Tape 4, Second Side)

Amendment by John Knowles, seconded by John Drabinowicz, to fix a clerical error by replacing the word "revise" with "raise." carried by a show of hands.

John Bednar approved of the article.

John Drabinowicz asked if this can just grow and grow and the Selectmen can spend it whenever they wish. Selectman Jasper said yes, but if they were going to do a program, it would be by sealed bid. Mr. Drabinowicz asked if this money could conceivably be use for something other than the intended purpose. Selectman Jasper said it has to be expended for the reason it was appropriated.

Ken Massey, 20 Fairway Drive, Trustee of the Trust Funds, said the Selectmen could request the release of funds and must state the specific purpose. Then it would be up to the Trustees to determine whether or not the use for which the money was being requested was consistent with the article.

Vote on the motion to forward Article 19 to the Ballot carried

by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan stated that Article 19 moves to the Ballot, as written.

Article 20--Purchase of 10-Wheel Dump Truck

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$98,726 for the purchase of a multi-purpose, 10-wheel dump truck equipped with a large capacity combination sander/dump body, front-mounted plow, and wing plow, to be used principally in sewer and drainage construction in the summer months and principally for plowing, sanding and hauling snow in the winter months?" (This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Charbonneau to forward Article 20 to the Warrant, seconded by Gary Rodgers.

Selectman Charbonneau said this would be the Town's first 10-wheeler and can carry 14 tons of material. A truck this size would eliminate the need to make multiple runs back to the Highway garage to refill sand or salt and it would eliminate two or three 6-wheelers, which will save labor costs. The Town leases a truck for plowing at \$15,000 a year, which could be applied to the purchase of a truck. The cost breakdown is 50% for streets, 25% for drains and 25% for sewer. During other months, the truck would be used for other functions.

John Bednar questioned the \$98,726 amount, asking for a cost breakdown of the items. Leo Lessard said the dump body is \$30,000; the wing, bull and irons are \$16,000; the rest is the truck (the engine, the cab, the chassis, the tires, etc.). Mr. Bednar said the three components that make up the total cost were not being used by the sewer. He said they shouldn't mix up equipment costs with maintenance costs. (The Selectmen were calculating the figures Mr. Bednar wanted.) Mr. Lessard announced that the figure was \$52,726. Mr. Bednar said the percentage breakdown shouldn't be on the \$98,726, the gross cost of the equipment. \$53,000 is the net cost and applicable to drainage, sewer and Town.

Moderator Keenan said this was getting confusing and asked Mr. Bednar if the question was answered. Mr. Bednar said no. The percentage breakdown was reiterated. Mr. Bednar said you can't mix sewer and drain departments. He wanted to know what the sewer gets for the \$50,000. Mr. Lessard reiterated the percentage breakdown. Mr. Bednar said they should be talking about 25% of \$53,000 for the sewer cost. Mr. Lessard said the truck will to be used for sewer jobs an estimated 25% of the time.

Amendment by John Bednar, seconded by James Wilkins, 112 Belknap Road, to strike all words after the word "plow," and add the words, "\$12,400 to be assessed to the Sewer Utility." Mr. Bednar thought \$12,000 was more equitable a figure for the Sewer Utility, the net cost for the equipment. The truck itself, used for the sewer, is \$12,400.

Selectman Dilworth subtracted \$16,000 (the cost of the plowing equipment) from the \$98,726. He took 25% of that, which is the truck, and the number he arrived at is \$20,681.50.

John Knowles opposed the amendment. If the intent is to remove all costs associated with the plow, he wondered if it was expected that the plow would never to be expected to plow out the sewers or the pumping stations.

Selectman Jasper opposed the amendment because it doesn't snow 50% of the year. Therefore, they can assume that the truck is going to be used more than 50% of the year for sewers and drains.

Joe Wozniak supported the amendment. The Sewer Utility should be assessed only for the truck itself, not the wing plow or the front mounted plow or the sander.

Fred Giuffrida opposed the amendment because there's nothing saying that the allocation of percentages was based upon equipment, as opposed to usage, or any other criteria. Selectman Dilworth said the sander comes already built into the dump body.

Amendment to the Amendment by Bill Arseneault, from \$15,400 to \$15,795.

Moderator Keenan said the amendment was \$12,000 not \$15,400. Mr. Bednar withdrew his amendment. The seconder

also withdrew.

Amendment by Bill Arseneault to strike out all the words after "plow" in the fourth line, inserting, "\$15,795 to be assessed to the Sewer Utility," seconded by James Wilkins.

Selectman Dilworth said the numbers are wrong. \$98,726 less \$16,000 for plowing equipment is \$82,726 times .25, which is 1/4 of the truck, is \$20,681.50 not \$15,000. He opposed the amendment. James Wilkins, 112 Belknap, asked if they were trying to figure out how much to remove to take out the sander. Selectman Dilworth said it's not an orange V-shaped thing on the back of a dump truck, it's in the dump body. Mr. Wilkins said they were paying for something they were never going to use. The sanding function of the truck should to be taken out, as well as the plows.

Ken Massey, 20 Fairway Drive, said they were trying to micro-manage the Town. An apportioned cost of the vehicle should be done on a time basis and not a calendar basis. The truck will be used significantly more in sewer work than for plowing. He urged defeat of the amendment. Fred Giuffrida moved the amendment.

Vote on the amendment failed by a show of hands.

Amendment by Carl Howes to reduce the amount of \$98,726 to \$83,726, seconded by Fred Giuffrida.

Mr. Howes said the budget already contains \$15,000 for the purpose of leasing a truck. If a truck is bought, a truck doesn't need to be leased, and that money should to be applied toward the purchase.

Ken Massey, 20 Fairway Drive, said if the amendment passed, the Town could only pay \$83,000 for the vehicle.

Selectman Jasper said the MS-7 listed Vehicles and Equipment, which this is, and they would not be able to transfer money from the Highway budget for this purpose; they would have to reopen the operating budget and take \$15,000 out.

(Start Tape 5, Side A)

Vote on the amendment to decrease \$98,726 to \$83,726 failed by a show of hands.

Amendment by Fred Giuffrida, seconded by Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, to reduce the amount to \$0 until the Selectmen straighten out the funding.

Mr. Giuffrida said he has no faith they will ever see the \$15,000. The Board of Selectmen should either make an amendment, revise the budget, or bring it forward next year. Bob Bianchi, 12 Sycamore Street, said the idea of SB-2 was to give more people an opportunity to vote on the issues. To zero out articles takes away that chance.

Selectman Jasper said, in theory, there is an extra \$15,000. Last year was a severe winter. The Highway's appropriation was \$2.6 million, but the actual expense was \$2.7. They cannot get the budgets down any lower. If there is ever anything left over, it is used to offset the tax rate. To kill the purchase of a dump truck for a \$15,000 issue is not valid. It was left in there because you just don't know what kind of a winter it is going to be. This year, there were more storms in March than in February.

John Bednar said there is a distinction between what is paid by the Sewer Utility and what is paid by the taxpayers. He said this article does not show the proper distribution.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, said the purpose of today's meeting is to deliberate on and determine the final form of the warrant that goes to the voters on April 8th. Those present have the responsibility to amend, if they deem appropriate, and that includes reducing articles to zero. That's part of the process and why they are here. It's their duty.

Jim Wilkins, 112 Belknap, wondered how they could adequately take care of a new truck if they can't store the ones they already have. Leo Lessard said they will be able to store them in the new building.

Selectman Howard Dilworth opposed the amendment. There is still time in the process, after it is approved, to figure out how every last dime gets apportioned. The Board of Selectmen sets the Sewer rate.

Lisa Riley, 7 Jeanne Street, favored the amendment. She felt \$100,000 for a vehicle that is not a replacement vehicle is

excessive in light of \$950,000 being considered for a new garage.

Mr. Giuffrida said this is not a matter of apportionment, or of not knowing what the winter is going to be like. It has to do with \$15,000 in the budget that cannot be applied to the truck. Chairman Seabury said it's not a matter of going out and buying extra vehicles just to increase the fleet--it's simply needed and it can be used year-round. The Road Agent came up with a better, cheaper way of repairing roads with the Highway Department doing the work, utilizing a 10-wheeler. Taxpayers will save a lot of money over the years.

Fidele Bernasconi, 122 Bush Hill Road, moved the question on the amendment, then on the basic article. Moderator Keenan said it's his policy not to accept such a motion until everyone who wishes to has had a chance to speak.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, wanted further information on the road project.

Selectman Jasper said if the \$15,000 is taken out of the budget, and the article does not get voted in, they will really be in trouble. This truck holds 2x times as much as the 6-wheelers. For every trip the 10-wheeler takes, the 6-wheeler takes five. The 10-wheeler will save on labor costs, the most expensive budget item, and will pay for itself.

A point of inquiry was raised on the earlier motion to move the question. Moderator Keenan asked the body if they wanted to stop debate. The body indicated they did by a show of hands.

Vote on the Amendment to reduce Article 20 to zero failed by a show of hands.

Motion by Gary Francoeur, seconded by Bob Clegg, to move the issue to the Ballot (\$98,726 as stated) carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan stated that Article 20 will go to the Ballot, as written.

Article 21--Two Vehicles for Planning, Engineering and Zoning

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,000 to be used to purchase two vehicles for the use of the Planning, Engineering and Zoning Department?"(This article has been designated by the Board of Selectmen as a special warrant article.)(Recommended by the Selectmen.)(Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Motion by Selectman Charbonneau to send Article 21 to the Ballot, was seconded by Ken Massey.

Selectman Charbonneau said the current vehicles used by these departments are former police vehicles that have very high mileage and need constant repair, which means high maintenance costs.

John Drabinowicz's understanding was that one vehicle was going to be a 4-wheel drive truck and the other a car and wondered how that was going to be done with only \$24,000.

Selectman Charbonneau said by wise shopping.

Lisa Riley, 7 Jeanne Street, asked if these were replacement vehicles and they weren't adding additional ones. Selectman Charbonneau said replacements only; no additional ones.

Bill Arseneault, 3 Riverview Avenue, asked what happened to the practice of passing down used police vehicles to other departments. Selectman Dilworth said it was discontinued because of high maintenance costs. Selectman Madison said the vehicles have more value used as trade-ins for new police vehicles.

Vote on sending Article 21 to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 21 was sent to the Ballot, as written.

Recess--Moderator Keenan declared a recess at 2:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 2:12 p.m.

(Start Tape 5, Second Side)

Article 22--Equipment for Cable Broadcasting

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and

appropriate the sum of \$68,032, which shall be used to purchase equipment and necessary services to commence broadcasting of public meetings and other town functions?" (This article has been designated by the Selectmen as a special warrant article.) (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Selectman Howard Dilworth, Jr., moved this Article forward, seconded by Ken Masssey.

Selectman Dilworth said they were working with other towns on a franchise contract to have public access television to televise things like this meeting and other Town meetings. In order for them to expend money, there has to be an appropriation. The money for this will come from the franchise fee that the cable subscribers pay in their monthly cable bill, and not from the taxpayers. A lot of questions that came up today might already have been answered if there was cable access to Selectmen and Budget Committee meetings. Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, supported the concept but the article did not state this was not being paid by the taxpayers. Selectman Dilworth explained that the warrant articles have to be written in a language that complies with the RSA's. The Town gets about \$80,000 annually from the cable provider for franchise fees. Mr. Howes asked if any broadcast would take place prior to a new contract starting, which is about a year away. Selectman Dilworth said the current contract expires in November. Today's Town Meeting was scheduled for Channel 23, time and date to be announced. He anticipated other such items.

Sandy Amlaw, 39 Gowing Road, asked if someone had to be hired to operate the equipment being requested. Selectman Dilworth said there are no plans at the present time to hire new personnel. Typically, there is a part-time person who ends up coordinating all of this, such as in Pelham and Londonderry. Neville Davison, 54 Sullivan Road, favored providing wider access of Town business, but thought the article should be reworded to include the words, "equipment and/or services necessary to broadcast." Selectman Dilworth said the Cable Committee provided the wording, and people on that committee are knowledgeable in electronics. Coleman Kelly, Chairman of the Cable Committee, said the figure was generated from like facilities, with pricing by Great Northern Video, who provided systems to Pelham and Londonderry. Relative to specs, things such as life of the equipment, would be built into the contract. Mr. Davison asked if they were buying equipment or a service. Mr. Kelly said the Town would buy the equipment and operate it. The Town would provide a video feed to Americable, who would provide the Town with an upstream modulator to be translated to the channel designated for Hudson. Mr. Davison was in favor of this concept but questioned if they wanted to get into the business of purchasing this kind of equipment.

(Start Tape 5, Second Side)

Mr. Davison didn't think the question of whether they were buying services or equipment was answered, adding that maybe those who wrote it don't understand themselves. He didn't want to see them end up with a warrant article that says they can only purchase equipment when they might want to rent the service from somebody who does this routinely. Mr. Kelly said if they choose to rent the service, they would include the cost of the operators. He and Michael O'Keefe are donating their time to the Town. If this was done by a service, it would cost about \$40 an hour for a program director, \$20 an hour for camera operator, plus the equipment. Today's equipment has been borrowed. The equipment they want to purchase for the Town is a 3-camera set-up, in order to provide a quality feed to Americable.

Amendment by Neville Davison, seconded by John Knowles, to change the wording to, "equipment and necessary services."

Carl Howes asked if the \$68,032 was earmarked for specific equipment. Selectman Dilworth said yes. Mr. Howes opposed the amendment, unless a reasonable figure was attached to it. If services were going to be added to the equipment, the money was going to have to come from somewhere. John Knowles said it's not adding services. It provides the opportunity to use services in place of purchasing equipment.

Vote on amendment passed by a show of hands.

Richard Crandall, 12 Butternut Street, thought this article was a big waste of money.

Al Despres, 36 Cottonwood Drive, asked what channel the service would be broadcast on and the percentage of the population that had cable. Selectman Dilworth didn't know the percentage. He reiterated that this was being paid for only by the cable users, not all of the taxpayers.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, opposed this article, saying that voters in this country are spoiled. People in Africa walk 100 miles just to vote. If someone wants to see the Selectmen in action, they should attend the meetings. People should stop being lazy citizens.

Richard Patterson favored the article because the elderly, who aren't able to get to meetings, will have an opportunity to see Town business conducted via t.v. broadcasts. Cable subscribers pay for this, and being a subscriber is a matter of choice. People just don't usually attend meetings unless there is an item of particular interest to someone or a group. Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, supported the article. Getting information out to the voters is critical. He can't always attend meetings because he has two children to take care of. If someone paid for his sitter, he'd attend meetings.

Rudy Lessard, 115 Bush Hill Road, asked how much more a subscriber would have to pay for this service. Selectman Dilworth said nothing additional.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, said she's had to pay for babysitters for her two children. People should go out and vote. That's the process. People can't always attend meetings. It's the duty of the elected officials to find ways to bring people in--not offer t.v. service.

Vote to send Article 22, as amended, to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 22 would go to the ballot, as amended. (Amended portion of text is underlined.)

Article 23--Elderly Property Tax Exemption

By Selectmen. "Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Hudson, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$45,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$60,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$75,000? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayers must have a net income of not more than \$22,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$29,000; own net assets not in excess of \$100,000 excluding the value of the person's residence. This article shall take effect for the 1998 property tax year."

Motion to forward Article 23 to the Ballot by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Charbonneau.

Selectman Jasper said the Legislature leveled the playing field and changed the statute to include Social Security in this, so the Town needed to change the income limits. The Board felt going from 10 and 12 to 20 and 27 was reasonable and fair. As a result of the current exemptions, the tax rate is 35¢ per 1,000. He cautioned against raising the limits, saying Hudson was already among the highest in the state.

Kevin McGuire, 148 Robinson Road, said the amendment is too wordy and complicated. In its entirety, the article should read, "Shall we modify the state-mandated elderly exemption and property tax in the Town of Hudson to be 100%." Motion was seconded by John Sederquist, 104 Old Derry Road. Mr. McGuire said the elderly deserve this; they have paid their dues and deserve some breaks. The wording discriminates against age and net income is not clearly defined.

Mr. Keenan said the wording is consistent with RSA's and cannot be altered. Selectman Jasper agreed--the language is statutory. If the Town does not adopt new income limits, they will stay at 10 and 12, with Social Security included. If they change the language, it won't be valid. Only the amounts can be changed.

Mr. McGuire said other towns, such as Pelham, offer 100% exemptions to the elderly.

Moderator Keenan asked for a legal clarification. Attorney Ratigan said the amendment changes the wording of the article. RSA 72:39 b (c) specifies the wording. You can't change the language or the age groups--only the dollar figures. The Moderator asked if the amendment was legal. Attorney Ratigan said it is not.

Amendment by Gary Francoeur, 23 Woodcrest Drive, seconded by Lars Christiansen, to raise the net income to not more than \$22,000; if married, a combined net income of less than \$29,000. Mr. Francoeur said if the levels were left at 20,000 and 27,000 some residents, who currently get the exemption, would get less. He didn't think that was fair and the amendment is on their behalf.

Ken Massey, 20 Fairway Drive, favored the amendment, but when one group gets an abatement, the rest of the residents pick up the tax differential. He asked for a clarification of "5 years residence." Selectman Jasper said it can be any five years throughout one's lifetime. Mr. Massey asked for a definition of "net income." Jim Michaud, Assessor, said it's income from all sources, excluding death benefits under life insurance; income from the sale of assets; and income from any business venture. It is not the bottom line on the federal income tax return. Net income, in effect, is gross income. Mr. Massey asked what "net assets" were. Mr. Michaud said assets, minus liabilities on those assets, excluding the value of your primary residence.

John Sederquist, Old Derry Road, said a lot of elderly people are in wheelchairs, and wheelchairs may cost \$50,000. When they go to a gas station, they pay extra money for gas. The elderly and disabled pay for many extra things. Selectman Jasper opposed the amendment. When the Board held a public hearing, there was only one speaker that thought the income levels should be higher. That person said they worked part time because they wanted to, and they wanted to continue working part time and get the exemption. This article is for people who really need the help. A lot of young families in Town do not make \$29,000. He thinks 27 is a generous number; 29 is quite high. In Pelham it's 100% after the age of 75. They need to be fair to the elderly, but it's not fair to everyone else who is working.
(Start Tape 6, Side A)

Vote on the amendment to change the net incomes to not more than \$22,000 and \$29,000 passed by secret ballot: Yes-72; No-63; 1 vote was voided because it was torn in half and didn't have a number.

Motion by Laurie Libitz, 7 Roy Drive, seconded by Ken Massey, to change the Order of the Day and take up Article 27 failed by the voters standing to indicate their intention.

Amendment by Kevin McGuire, Robinson Road, to eliminate the word "net," relative to income. Moderator Keenan asked Attorney Ratigan if that was a valid motion. He stated that it was not a legal motion and could not accept it.

Vote on forwarding Article 13 to the Ballot, as amended, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 13, as amended, is forwarded to the Ballot. (Amended portion of text is underlined.)

Article 24--Totally and Permanently Disabled Property Tax Exemption

By Selectmen. "Shall we adopt an exemption for the totally and permanently disabled? The exemption, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers shall be \$45,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years and own and occupy the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by a spouse, they must have been married for at least five years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$22,000, or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$29,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$100,000 excluding the value of the residence."

Motion by Selectman Jasper to submit Article 24 to the Ballot, seconded by John Drabinowicz.

Selectman Jasper said this exemption is being proposed for the first time. When the Legislature decided to include Social Security in the elderly exemptions, no one visited this statute. This one excludes certain income, including Social Security. Jim Michaud, Assessor, said the net income excludes Social Security. Other than that, the definition for net income is the same as for the elderly. Moderator Keenan asked if this includes Veterans disability. Mr. Michaud said no, the Veterans disability is a \$1,400 credit.

Amendment by Barbie Clark, 125 Belknap, to change the amounts to the same as the elderly exemptions, seconded by John Sederquist, Old Derry Road. Ms. Clark said her husband is a paraplegic and they only have her part-time income. She could work more than 22 hours a week, but then her income exceeds \$12,000 for a married couple.

The written amendment submitted by Ms. Clark read:
"Amendment to Article 24 is to change \$40,000 to \$45,000;
change \$10,000 to \$22,000; change \$12,000 to \$29,000;
change \$50,000 to \$100,000."

Ms. Clark said she and her husband are in their 30's and they have a 1st-grader. With the income levels so low, she can't better herself by putting in extra hours. A family of three can't survive on that income. Neither she nor her son have health insurance. If she can increase her hours to 30, she's entitled to health benefits through her company.

John Sederquist agreed with the amendment. He has been totally disabled for 15 years and will be paralyzed within six months. He will have to buy a van, which he doesn't have the money for. He's had a very hard time for the past 10 years to pay his property taxes. He becomes paralyzed two, three times a week and his wife takes care of him, but she will have to go out and work before long. If the amendment isn't adopted, they will lose their house. Disabled people have to pay more than working people--more at the gas pumps and more to make a home handicapped accessible. The amounts in this article should be the same as for the elderly.

Bill Arseneault asked if the 35% impact on the tax rate Selectman Jasper mentioned earlier included all the exemptions. Selectman Jasper said the 35% is only for elderly exemptions. They don't know what this article will add to the tax rate. Yielding to the question, Mr. Michaud didn't see it impacting the tax rate a whole lot. There are 250 that currently qualify for the elderly exemption and he didn't think there would be that many totally and permanently disabled--but he didn't know. He didn't estimate it would be a significant cost impact.

Bob Bianchi, 12 Sycamore Street, favored the amendment and article. This was something they could do to help physically challenged people and it wouldn't cost all that much more money. It's the right thing to do.

Selectman Jasper opposed the amendment. He said when the Board looked at this, the discussion focused on the elderly exemption. He didn't have a problem equaling this article with the elderly, but that's not what they were doing. If this is passed, the income for the totally and permanently disabled will be at a higher rate. The Social Security has to be backed out to make them equal. There is already a \$1,400 tax credit for disabled veterans. This does not achieve parity.

Kevin McGuire, Robinson Road, said a minuscule number of parcels, 276 out of 7,943, are affected by this type of exemption. Selectman Jasper asked where the figures came from. Mr. McGuire said from the state, provided by the Assessor. Mr. Michaud said the figures were on the MS-1 that's filed with the state when the tax rate is set in October. Carl Howes asked the Moderator for a clarification of the amendment. The Moderator said the amendment changes \$40,000 to \$45,000; \$10,000 to \$22,000; \$12,000 to \$29,000; and \$50,000 to \$100,000.

There was a request for a secret ballot. Moderator Keenan said he needed five signatures. He announced that there would be a secret ballot on this issue and stated he would not vote unless it was to break a tie.

(Start Tape 6, Second Side)

Bill Arseneault favored the amendment since the Assessor felt there would be no significant impact to the taxpayer. He asked if they could move on to Article 25 while the ballots were

being counted. The Moderator put the question to the body. By a show of hands, the body indicated they were in favor.

(Announcement of results of the secret ballot took place following the vote on Article 25. 80 were in favor and 49 were opposed. Moderator Keenan announced that the amended Article 24 was forwarded to the Ballot.)

Article 25--Library Trustees Acceptance of Gifts

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson accept the provisions of RSA 202-A:4-d providing that any town at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the public library trustees to accept gifts of personal property, other than money, which may be offered to the library for any public purpose, provided, however, that no acceptance of personal property by the library trustees shall be deemed to bind the town or the library trustees to raise, appropriate or expend any public funds for the operation, maintenance, repair or replacement of such personal property?"

Motion by Selectman Jasper to forward Article 25 to the Ballot, seconded by Paul Sharon.

Amendment by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Madison, to replace the text of Article 25. (Entire text of RSA 202-A:4-c was replaced with RSA 202-A:4-d [as shown above])

Selectman Jasper said section (c) was erroneously included in the warrant and it should have been (d).

Vote on the amendment carried by a show of hands.

Bill Arseneault expressed some concerns about this amendment. Lisa Riley noted that he was looking at the old language. The amended version was for gifts of personal property, other than money. It addressed something like a donation of old books or computers. Whenever donations are accepted, a public hearing is held prior to acceptance.

Vote on the motion to forward Article 25 to the Ballot, as amended, carried by a show of hands. (Entire text of RSA 202-A:4-c was replaced with RSA 202-A:4-d)

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 25, as amended, was sent to the Ballot.

Recess--Moderator Keenan called a brief recess at 3:35; meeting resumed at 3:37.

Announcement of results of the Article 24 Secret Ballot: Yes--80; No--49.

Vote on forwarding Article 24, as amended, to the Ballot, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 24, as amended, was sent to the Ballot.

Request for change in the Order of the Day by Joe Wozniak to take up Article 27 prior to Article 26. The Moderator put the question to the body. By a show of hands, the request was defeated.

Article 26--Electioneering Activity at Town Meeting

Motion to forward Article 26 to the Ballot was seconded by Selectman Madison.

By Selectmen. "Shall the Town of Hudson authorize the Board of Selectmen to make bylaws regulating the distribution of campaign materials or electioneering within set distances of the polling place?"

Selectman Jasper said the Town does not have an ordinance regulating people's actions in the hall. There is a state law that allows for a 10' alley 10' in front of the doors. Although everyone has been cooperative, it's time to have an ordinance which will enable them to protect the voters from harassment.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, said the article was nebulous. Having voted in Hudson for quite some time, he has never seen a problem. People who hold election signs are across the street from Lions Hall. He urged defeat of the article. Bill Arseneault agreed with the previous speaker. Laws tend to restrict people's freedoms.

Terry McLlarky, 2 Charbonneau Street, said he's worked at the elections for the past several years and is pleased they were able to run things as well as they have. There was one incident, however, when a presidential candidate pulled his bus to within 10' of the door which made it difficult for voters to get into the building. It would be good if they had the authority to enforce the rules. This article does not cost anything, but it will ensure the voters to vote in peace.

Bob Bianchi, 12 Sycamore Street, said the title specifies "Town Meeting." He was told that the polls are considered "Town Meeting."

John Drabinowicz was concerned with the nebulous, broad language, saying it gets into free speech issues. It gives the Selectmen the same broad-based power the Council used to have, without the checks and balances of a Council. He didn't think it was proper or right. If there is a specific problem, that should be fixed. He urged defeat of the article.

Selectman Jasper regretted that people were so suspicious of their motives but the cat is now out of the bag and everyone knows they don't have the authority to do what they were doing. To date, the Moderators have controlled the activity through bravado. He didn't think voting on the 8th would be a problem, but did think there might be at elections where people come in from out of town. When people have a problem, they don't want to have to wait a year to get it fixed.

They're not an evil bunch of dictators who are trying to take away politicians' rights to have contact with the voters.

Janie Delano, 18 Blueberry Lane, said no one thinks they are evil politicians, but she was opposed to the article. She has worked the elections since 1978 and the only incident she can remember is the one with the big bus. Someone shook Mr. Forbes' hand, told him he was blocking the entrance, and he took off.

John Knowles had grave reservations about the article. He was not opposed to restrictions on certain types of activities, but this article says the Selectmen can do whatever they want with regard to electioneering. He finds this unconscionably broad. He'd like to see a specific list of things the Selectmen want, and if it takes a year, the world won't fall apart.

Bruce Nichols, Putnam Road, asked if they could defeat an article, or if they could just amend the wording. He didn't want the wishes of the body thwarted because of a procedural issue.

Mr. Keenan said the article can be forwarded as written, or as amended. The voters at the election on April 8th will decide whether or not the article is adopted.

(Moderator Keenan stepped down and turned the gavel over to Mr. McLlarky. Mr. Keenan said he wanted to explain how he feels about this issue and what his role has been in bringing this article forward.)

Selectman Dilworth said he was one of the individuals who met the big bus and suggested that they move across the street--which was done on pure bravado, not by any authority. There was another individual, who happened to be on the Ballot, running for national office, who was opening the door to the Lions Hall so people could go in and vote. Selectman Dilworth suggested to him to go across the street, where everyone else was. That, too, was done by bravado. This article will allow them to enforce certain activities, making sure that people stay across the street. It's to make everyone play by the rules.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, said in response to a previous Selectman's statement, it is the Selectmen themselves who let the cat out of the bag by bringing this forward.

Amendment by Carl Howes, to strike the word "make" and replace it with "draft," and at the end of the article, add the words, "to be submitted to Town Meeting in 1998," seconded by John Drabinowicz.

Michael Keenan said he appreciated the fact that the Selectmen thought enough of his request to bring it forward as a warrant article. State law only provides for a 10' aisle--"and if you think you will not be accosted by political rivalries on both sides of that 10' aisle, you better think again!" He wants

an ordinance that would keep sign-carrying and other political activity, across the street. If there are no guidelines to control the politicking, there will be problems.

Fred Giuffrida was in favor of the amendment because it asks the Selectmen to come up with separate verbiage to accomplish non-interference of the voting process by political candidates. Without that, Selectmen would be given the authority and power to move signs to the near side of the street, although he didn't think that was their intent.

(Moderator Keenan resumed his position at the podium.)

John Knowles favored the amendment and encouraged the Selectmen to make this a priority during the next year.

Selectman Charbonneau said everyone has respected the requests made by the Moderators at the polls. She supports the article and the amendment and didn't think they should decide something on one incident. Her support of this is her right.

Joe Wozniak moved the question. Selectman Jasper said he had an amendment he wanted to make. Moderator Keenan asked the body if they wanted to hear the amendment. By a show of hands, the body indicated they did.

Amendment to the Amendment by Selectman Jasper to strike the article in its entirety and insert, "Shall the Town of Hudson authorize the Board of Selectmen to make bylaws regulating the distance of campaign materials or electioneering within set distances of the polling place?" Second by Brad Seabury.

Selectman Jasper said this wording is as narrow as they can get. If this passes on the 8th, it wouldn't become effective until next year and it's strictly distances and it only mirrors what is already being done.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, opposed the amendment and felt the Selectmen could bring forth an ordinance next year. Before they legislate this, they should have specific distances. John Drabinowicz opposed the amendment because it's overly broad. The Selectmen can choose any distances they want-- including Town limits.

(Start Tape 7, Side A)

Chairman Seabury checked with the Town Attorney, who said the Board of Selectmen can handle this at a regular meeting; it doesn't need Town Meeting approval.

Mr. Wilkins asked if the police could maintain public order.

Moderator Keenan said he'd hate to see police standing outside of the election hall, like in dictatorship countries. He believed what the Selectmen were trying to do was noble and was a matter of trust.

Richard Patterson asked if they should be discussing Selectman Jasper's amendment because a motion had been made to move the question on the first amendment, but the Moderator hadn't asked for a second. The Moderator said the will of the body must prevail and that's why he allowed Selectman Jasper's amendment to the amendment.

Janie Delano asked about the Selectmen's ability to act on an ordinance at their meeting. She said if the Selectmen don't care what the voters think, she takes that as a threat. Moderator Keenan said this article can't be voted up or down today, that only the wording can be changed. Ms. Delano asked if this article is moot if the Selectmen can act on an ordinance under their own authority. Moderator Keenan said the Selectman were seeking guidance from the public.

Selectman Jasper said the Board cannot pass this ordinance. RSA 31:41 c Electioneering says, "Towns (voters at Town Meeting) shall have the powers to make bylaws regulating distribution of campaign materials or electioneering or any activity which affects the safety, welfare and rights of the voter at any election. Such power shall not extend to the display of printed or written matter attached to any legally parked motor vehicle, nor shall such power extend to activities conducted wholly on private property so as not to interfere with people approaching or entering a polling place." All they did was take the verbiage from the statute to regulate electioneering. They have no hidden agenda. They just want to hold orderly elections. His amendment is clear--it addresses only the distances.

Gary Francoeur said the Selectmen don't have the right to act on this themselves because "the Town" refers to the voters, not the Selectmen. The first amendment means the Selectmen would have to come back to the voters with a draft ordinance. If Selectman Jasper's amendment passes, the voters cede their control to the Selectmen.

John Knowles moved the amendment. By a show of hands,

motion passed.

Vote on the Amendment to the Amendment carried voters standing to signify their intentions: Yes-63; No-43.

Moderator Keenan announced that the amendment to the amendment passed and they were back to Article 26, as amended: "Shall the Town of Hudson authorize the Board of Selectmen to make bylaws regulating the distance of campaign materials or electioneering within set distances of the polling place."

Vote on forwarding Article 26, as amended, to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 26, as amended, was forwarded to the Ballot. (Amended portion of the text is underlined.)

Article 27--Birch Street/Lowell Road Traffic Signal

By Petition. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000) for the purpose of installing a 3-way traffic signal at the intersection of Lowell Road and Birch Street?" (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Joe Wozniak moved to forward Article 27 to the Ballot, seconded by Selectman Dilworth.

Mr. Wozniak used an overhead projector to help explain his position on petitioned Article 27, which was signed by over 100 residents. He said the stretch of road from Birch Street to County Road, and even further south, is a dangerous stretch of road. Monday - Friday, over 27, 000 vehicles travel this corridor, of which more than 80% exceed the speed limit. The average number of accidents occurring in the Winnhaven to Atwood area (15 per year) is indicative of failure. There are too many cars traveling at higher speeds and a lack of proper traffic control and not because people are too impatient. There are about 350 residences behind T-Bones and several restaurants, banks and businesses on this stretch. A three-way traffic signal at Birch and Lowell will improve the present situation by providing sufficient gaps in the traffic flow which will give vehicles at Roosevelt, South County, Atwood and the northern most egress of Fox Hollow some relief. This signal will have sufficient electronics built into it to be able to be synchronized with the other signals. This article will add a one-time cost of 6 on the tax rate. He said this is a necessity, not a frivolous expenditure.

Moderator Keenan asked Richard Gendron, Chief of Police and member of the Highway Safety Committee, for his input. Chief Gendron said Winnhaven to Executive Drive is a problem area. They are experiencing the same problems on Lowell Road they did on Route 111 prior to its reconstruction. He supported this article, adding that he provided some of the data. He felt that other intersections on Lowell Road should to be signalized, too.

Ken Cantara, 18 Andrews Avenue, supported the article, but was concerned about the amount of curb cuts in that area and hoped the possibility of eliminating some of those curb cuts could to be addressed at some point in the future. He said he was concerned with the handout (provided by Mr. Wozniak) relative to this article, which blocks off County Road at the north end. He asked if this was a handout that was left over from the last time this issue went before the voters. Mr. Wozniak said, relative to curb cuts, laying out of roads are in the domain of the Selectmen and Planning Board. Sooner or later, those concerns will have to be addressed. The handout was from 1993, a diagram created by Vanesse Hangen. Mr. Wozniak said he didn't want to block out everything and he left that there because a lot of the petitioners strongly recommended that eventually County Road become one-way. James Wilkins, Belknap Road, said this was solving a problem on the west side of Lowell Road at the expense of everyone that lives on the east side. In effect, they made Belknap one way and he asked what the plans were for west-bound traffic on Belknap to get to Lowell Road. Mr. Wozniak said that his handout was part of an overall plan that was discussed at the 1994 Town Meeting and all of it wasn't applicable for this

meeting. He wanted to save on his use of White Out and, consequently, didn't block out everything on that handout. A lot of people on Atwood would like to see that happen, however.

Amendment by Selectman Dilworth to add the words, "either Lowell Road and Winnhaven Drive or Lowell Road and Birch Street," seconded by Cliff Steele.

Selectman Dilworth said that when this petitioned article came before the Board of Selectmen for a recommendation, he stated that he was not sure as to whether a light should go at Birch Street or Winnhaven Drive. Curb cuts are a serious problem, and a four-way intersection has been proposed for that area. A light at either intersection will allow for a break in the traffic flow so people can make a left hand turn onto Lowell Road.

Carl Howes asked where Winnhaven was. He was told it was at Stevie P's. Amendment to the Amendment by Carl Howes to strike Birch Street from the language. There was no second. Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane, asked if this project qualified for CAP fees and, if so, how much was available.

(Start Tape 7, Second Side)

Town Planner Mike Reynolds said if impact fee monies were used for this project, which is part of a larger corridor picture, the public sector cost would be \$39,000 and the private would be \$26,000.

Gene Anderson, 165 Highland Street, said he drives that road every day and it is dangerous. He asked about accident rates for the Winnhaven intersection. Mr. Wozniak said the accident data included Winnhaven. Mr. Anderson wondered if traffic engineers recommended a place for the signal to go. He asked if the signalization included the necessary emergency vehicle controls. He was told that it does.

Al Despres, 36 Cottonwood Drive, said he uses both Winnhaven and Birch numerous times a day and supports the article. He spent his life in the Air Force flying jets and Lowell Road is a hazard like his career never was.

Leonard Smith, 3 Leslie Street, opposed the amendment, calling it a tactic by Mr. Dilworth to kill the article like last year. People got confused on which road to put the signal. Winnhaven doesn't tie into an overall plan.

Richard Patterson, 95-A Wason Road, opposed the amendment. The position of the light should be at Birch Street. When the light sequences to stop traffic on Lowell Road, it will also produce a gap to make it easier to egress from the north end of County Road onto Lowell Road.

Marie Sullivan, 12-B Street, opposed the amendment, adding that she exits County Road numerous times a day.

Arlene Creeden, 45 Cottonwood Drive, moved the amendment.

Vote--the amendment was defeated by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan stated that a request was made for a secret ballot and there were five signatures collected.

Vote--Motion carried by a vote of 69 in favor to 26 opposed, and 4 were voided.

Motion by Joe Wozniak to restrict reconsideration of Article 27, seconded by Bill Arseneault, carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 27 moves to the Ballot, as written.

Article 28--Animal Shelter

By Petition. "Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be used toward the building and/or equipping of an animal shelter, this sum to be added to the approximately \$90,000 that has already been raised?" (Recommended by the Selectmen.) (Not recommended by the Budget Committee.)

Selectman Dilworth moved to forward Article 28 to the Ballot, seconded by Gary Rodgers.

Amendment by Angela Hurschman, 20 Greeley Street, to add "to proceed with the planning and building of an animal shelter," seconded by John Knowles. Moderator Keenan said

the existing funds are in the control of the Trustees and the only way they could release it would be by specific wording, based on Town Meeting vote.

After a brief side-bar, Moderator Keenan said there were differing legal conflicts and the voters would decide the issue. This issue has been kicked around for many years and is not new to anyone. By a vote, the body can direct the Trustees of the Trust Funds to release the funds to be expended for a specific purpose. The issue is brought forward with no warning that such an amendment was coming forth. The essence of the word amendment is to change. They've already entertained motions that completely change articles. He feels that the amendment is valid, as long as it is presented in writing. If a representative of the Selectmen feels that it is not, it should be brought forward so the body can decide.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, asked if there was any statutory language required to enact this legally and, if so, if it could be included in the amendment. Attorney Ratigan said the amendment wasn't valid. All that the voters have been warned about, via the posting of the warrant, is that there is a proposal to appropriate and raise a certain amount of money to put in a capital reserve fund. People have not been put on notice that there is going to be discussion about actually spending the money. That will have to come back at another meeting when there has been a duly posted warrant article discussing expenditure. His opinion was they couldn't do this today. Mr. Howes said that didn't make sense to him in light of RSA 40:13. They were there to set the final form of the warrant, which then goes to a public hearing, and then before the voters, with a great deal of warning on April 8th. Attorney Ratigan said it stems from what the purpose is. While Town Meeting can vote up or down the amount of dollars to be expended, a new purpose can't be introduced that hasn't been posted on the warrant. To expend monies for a warrant article that previously was just sending them to a capital reserve fund is a new purpose.

Moderator Keenan said his opinion was that the amendment was valid, while the Selectmen and Attorney did not think it was. He asked the body to decide. Bill Arseneault asked if the question was whether or not the body had the right to amend the article. Moderator thought they could, but a legal opinion said otherwise. Mr. Arseneault said it was the intent of the State Legislature that this body act as legislative body. In that context, he feels that they can amend, defeat, reject or modify the articles and that the amendment was perfectly legitimate. Ms. Hurschman withdrew her amendment.

Janie Delano said she was opposed to an animal shelter in Hudson as the present arrangement with Pelham works out well and the Town doesn't have to pay for the upkeep of a building, utilities etc.

Gary Rodgers, 16 Mountain View, asked how much money was actually in the account. Selectman Dilworth said the Finance Director advised him that there currently is \$107,000 in the account.

Amendment by Fred Giuffrida to reduce the amount to \$0, seconded by Phil Parker. Mr. Giuffrida said a few years ago, he argued strongly in favor of putting aside \$15,000 annually. It's time now for a plan to come forward because it may cost less than what they already have.

Carl Howes, 2 Glen View Drive, supported the amendment, saying they shouldn't throw more money at this until they have a plan.

Kevin McGuire, Robinson Road, opposed the amendment because the money is still needed. Citizens have donated over \$50,000 and placed them in trust with the Town. The intention was to rebuild the animal shelter, ever since the old one was destroyed because of the circumferential highway. The Town has grown tremendously and there's no indication they won't continue. There is an Animal Shelter Committee that is preparing a plan to build a cost-effective shelter. Joseph Wozniak opposed the amendment because it was contrary to the spirit of SB-2, which is to increase participation by providing voters an opportunity to participate. To nullify a petitioned article by reducing it to zero will make a sham of the entire process.

John Knowles said this isn't just a question of building an animal shelter, it's figuring out how it will be operated once

it's there. If there is a request to the Town for \$50,000-\$60,000 to operate it, it is not going to happen. They will end up with a building that won't be used. The whole thing has got to be planned out. To date, they haven't seen any numbers from the committee. There's probably already enough money appropriated to build a shelter. He opposed the amendment for this year.

(Start Tape 8, Side A)

Fidele Bernasconi said Angela Hurschman has raised over \$55,000 for this shelter that the Town has taken in trust. It's not the time to slap her around and say the Town doesn't want to continue. It should be sent to the voters for them to decide. It shouldn't be zeroed out. Volunteers shouldn't be kicked around.

Terry McLlarky moved the question.

Vote on the Amendment to appropriate \$0 failed by a show of hands.

Vote on the motion to send Article 28 to the Ballot carried by a show of hands.

Moderator Keenan announced that Article 28 is moved to the Ballot, as written.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Town Meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m. on a motion by Bruce Nichols, seconded by John Knowles, that carried.

Recorded and Transcribed by Priscilla Boisvert
Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

Cecile Nichols
Town Clerk/Tax Collector
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