

## HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

### Minutes of the June 15, 2021 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairman McGrath the meeting of June 15, 2021 at 6:59 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Selectman Morin
3. ATTENDANCE

Board of Selectmen: David Morin, Kara Roy, Marilyn McGrath, Brett Gagnon

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia - Town Administrator; Jill Laffin - Executive Assistant

Chairman McGrath explained, prior to the meeting starting tonight Mr. Malizia and the staff upstairs drew numbers randomly to select the order of the interviews. The order is going to be Mr. Guessferd, Richard Maddox, Rich Weissgarber, Jordan Ulery and Shawn Murray. That's the order we'll follow. So the first one is Mr. Guessferd...

At this point Selectman McGrath said before we get started so, first I know there's members of the public here do you want to allow public input before we get started? Mr. Malizia said it's up to the wishes of the Board. If the Board wishes to. Chairman McGrath said do you want to or do you want to wait til after we hear the applicants? Selectman Roy said I would think we'd do it now. Do it first or get it up front. Selectman Roy then said just so I understand what happened. Is your intent to have a vote tonight or are we just doing? Selectman Morin said I rather give us a week to review our notes and everything. That's my opinion. Selectman Roy said I agree. The Chairman said that would be my opinion as well. Selectman Roy said I just want to make sure.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Chairman McGrath invited anyone from the public with comment to come forward.

Ed Thompson, 22 Burns Hill Road

Good evening, evening. My name is Ed Thompson, I live at 22to Burns Hill Road. I think I know most of you. I really don't have any prepared statement tonight. I sent in some questions earlier today that I hope some of you touch on. I'm really thankful for what you do for the town. And I know you've got a big job ahead of you. My big concern for the candidates that you interview tonight are really to get the answers for what their vision is for the future of our town. I think we've all I've lived here twenty eight years and I've seen a lot of good and I've seen a lot what I don't consider good. And for me, I'm approaching that age, not like any of you, but I've got five years left to retire and I'm trying to decide whether I want to stay or not. So I'm really looking forward to answers from the people behind me of where they see the direction of the town going. And, you know, maybe it's maybe it's in a really good position that that we're going to be. And so I thank you for your time tonight.

Tony Lekas, 30 Barretts Hill Road

Hello, I'm Representative Tony Lekas here in support of Representative Ulery for the position, and again, I don't have anything prepared, but I've, you know, worked with him in the legislature for a number of years. You know, I think he certainly does a lot of work as diligent and thoughtful in the positions he takes and the decisions he makes. And, you know, I think he would be a good addition to the Board, you know, to try and help the town. Do the best I can. So that's pretty much what I have.

I think he he'd be good. And I've seen, you know, him in operation in the legislature for some years. And I think I think he'd be a great candidate for him. So thank you. Thank you. Thanks.

Alicia Lekas, 30 Barretts Hill Road

Representative Alicia Lekas, I live in 30 Barrett's Hill Road, been here it'll be 37 years next month. And so I've known Jordan for a long time as in government and whatever. And in fact, when I first ran, I asked him to be my mentor because I respected him so much. And all the decisions I've seen him make over the years has been really to help the people of Hudson. And so I think he would do an excellent job as a selectman because as he really does, put the people in the town first. Thanks.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Board of Selectmen Candidate Interviews

Chairman McGrath asked Mr. Guessferd to come forward. Mr. Guessferd asked are you looking for an initial statement? To which the Chairman replied, if you have one you'd like to give us, then sure. We haven't gone through this process before ourselves, so, I think I can speak for everyone here, we're all new to this particular process. Mr. Guessferd started off saying, my name is Bob Guessferd. I appreciate and thank you for inviting me here tonight to interview for the position of selectmen. I am a 31 year resident of the town, so I wasn't born and raised here. But Hudson is the place I've lived the longest in my life after being in the Air Force and traveling around a bit. I love this town and this is home. And so for me it comes down to, um, I've always lived a life of service in one form or another. I've spent the last five years on the Budget Committee and very much, very much like the ability and to be able to serve the citizens of the town to help to kind of shape were things, you know, maybe going but I'm here because exactly that. I want to have an impact. I want to be able to help this town move forward in the way that is best as far as our citizens, you know, would like it to be. That's basically it.

Chairman McGrath asked if the Board members had questions. Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said Thank you, Madam Chair, thank you for stepping up and volunteering for sure. And thank you for being first. I know it's probably the most nerve wracking one to go first. And as Madam Chair said, we're all new at this. So forgive me as well for stumbling through some questions here. I went over your application, your resume. You seem to have a solid background, you know, decent work experience, good education. So I have a couple of questions here. I'm going to see which one makes the most sense for you. You touched a little bit upon the town and where you want the town to go. What do you see as the biggest challenges in town? And how would you like to see the town approach those challenges? Can you give examples? Mr. Guessferd replied, Very good question. This the way I look at our town right now is that we are we're kind of at a crossroads, I think. And I believe there's a lot of things that are going on. I think I've been vocal about making it known that we don't seem to have a solid direction. Our school system, our school board seems to want to push in one direction our select board and the town, perhaps a different one. I see us kind of in kind of treading water. I'll say I'd like to be able to see the town move forward together and determine where, you know, what we want. I've said this before. Where do we want to be when we grow up? OK, ten years from now, I just don't I don't see a lot of long term planning. So my view is I'll say I'm not sure exactly where we'll be in ten years, but I'd really like to see a coherent, cohesive plan to moving forward with making sure that, you know, our infrastructure is improved, that that we are setting ourselves up for to be the town, a town that people the people want to move to and raise their families and come to work.

Selectman Gagnon followed up saying, Selectman Gagnon then said, and one more question, Madam Chair, and what do you do to understand a point of view that you least understand or think differently? You may fall on a certain topic one way out of the box, but do you strive to understand the opposite point of view? So you better construct your stance on a topic? Mr. Guessferd responded saying, there's no better way to do business. One of the things I do for a living is I negotiate contracts. And unless you understand the person across the table from you and what their motivations are and what their, what their, what their, their points are, you're not you're not going to be able to negotiate a deal or work toward a common, a common understanding. I'm not going to take my opinion and throw and shove it down people's throats. I am going to try to understand. I do research. I make sure that I understand what those other positions are, what the pros and cons are of those other positions, and strive to make sure that that whatever consensus is reached or whatever and is the closure of whatever issue it is, is, is handled in the best way possible. There's just again, there's no other way to look at these things. You can't just think that you're always right every time.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said you just brought up where we're going to be in 10 years. Being on the Budget Committee, you've seen the school side, you've seen the town side, you see where our differences are and why in a lot of cases. OK. And you stated that you want to see us work together. How would you do that? We've had plans in the past. We've always had bumpy roads with them and us because we need things, they need things. How would you change that?

Mr. Guessferd replied, It's a bit more and that's a great question, because it's easy to talk about it both, you know, in in your day to day activities with in running this town and and to talk or criticize being critical of it. Um, my view is that you have to move beyond I know there's been meetings. I know there's things that have occurred, but I just haven't seen the action that follows those meetings or those things. I still see that there's some division there and there are some motivations and some goals, I think, that are maybe different. What I've said recently is that, you know, there's some way that we have to have, you know, joint we'll call the meetings and go beyond that and come up with maybe a workshop where we sit down and decide what projects, what things are. Most important that we worked on a capital improvement plan a couple of years ago. And initially the school system, the School Board didn't have a lot of input on that. But then they brought some things to the table. When we think about this town and the capital projects and the things that we need to do, we need to jointly get behind each organization. If this if the school wants to do something, it shouldn't be a surprise to the Select Board or it shouldn't be something that that is looked at, at the last minute and a critical eye. It's got to be together. What I see like, for example, I'll give you a very good example. This past year, the voters sent a message that I don't think anybody, not many people expected that the Town budget was going to be disapproved by the voters. And I think the voters sent a message because they disapproved a number of things. So it's important to get together and decide what are those things that aren't going to put the taxpayer, the taxpayers pockets, you know, at risk and to try to read the tea leaves a little bit. But I mean, it's hard to. I mean, like I said, I don't think anybody saw that part of this coming that we had no issues when the Budget Committee, with the School, with the Town budget. But the taxpayers did. And we have to listen to them but stray a little bit from the question. But I think it's going to take constant reinforcement and action beyond just maybe having meetings. And again, I'm not privy to a lot of the details of those meetings, a lot of the things that have occurred. But we've got to go beyond that and we've got to actually come out of there with a joint plan for where we want to be. And I'll say in 10 years, what projects do we want to have approved and completed and how is that going to impact our town moving forward?

Selectman Morin then said, you actually answered part of my next question, so I appreciate that reference to the budget. We came in zero budget and the School Board and schools came in huge. So how do we fix that? Because the discrepancy I don't understand, because we understood what the Covid and everything that we were going to come in at zero, give the taxpayers a break. Schools came in with raises and things like that, and the budget ended up that way. So how do we fix that? Where do you see the problem lies? Mr. Guessferd replied saying Yeah, that's I mean, it's interesting because the Selectmen can't really tell the School Board how to how to run the school system but I think it occurs I don't think it's an easy fix in one year in. One, it takes time to come to a

process where, you know, we're actually listening to each other. But I don't I have to say, I'm not sure I have an easy fix for that. But I think the leaders of these, of these two organizations somehow have to come together and say this is what we're going to look at going forward. But there were things that, you know, weren't approved on that side as well. And the voters. I think this year, the School, the schools got a lot of, I'll say positive reinforcement because of everything that went on, it was so visible because of all the things that were happening with the schools. And I think that that enabled the citizens because, quite frankly, you all did a great job. You know, this year, the Town did a great job. It was almost transparent to the townspeople on what the Town was able to accomplish during this year. And, you know, setting up, you know, the, you know, the emergency response team and all of that. And, you know, but the schools tended this year to get a little bit more, I think I'll say caché, because of all the things that were happening with the students. I mean, it's hard to be in an environment like this put down. I guess I'll say that, you know, that organization for all that they went through and it was much more visible than what the town went through.

Mr. Guessferd continued saying, I'm hoping that going down in the future that we do have ability to perhaps influence that and to and a lot of it happens before the budget is put together. Is that collaboration or that communication has got to happen before then, you know, to try to see what are you doing? What are the things you're looking at this year? What are we looking at? And not and I don't know if anybody's doing this. I don't think they are. But I just think there has to be the openness is going to have to come out a little bit more and it's going to take it's going to take a lot of discussion. It's going to take a lot of building of trust, because I think there's also some trust issues between the organizations because of some of the, you know, things that have occurred in the past. I mean, we've been through a few budget cycles where there was some tension, you know, back and forth. So is there an easy fix? No, but I think it can be done over time.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said, I just have a couple of questions. Um, what do you think is your fiduciary responsibility as a member of the Board of Selectmen? Mr. Guessferd responded, that's a great question. I mean, bottom line, it comes down to making sure that every dollar we spend is spent in the best way and the most efficient way possible. It's, uh, it's not just looking at the big picture, but it's also looking at the small picture of all the things that are being done that the people in this Town deserve to know that their money is being spent well and for those things that are going to forward and make our town better.

Selectman Roy then said, Ok, um, so I want to talk a little bit about sort of hiring leadership positions, what minimum qualifications do you believe are department head in the Town? Mr. Guessferd replied, Should have one without having a lot of knowledge. I think given what I see and given, you know, given the level of, um, responsibility and financial compensation, um I mean, they obviously, you know, from an education perspective, they should have at least a bachelor's degree. In my mind at that point in their career, they should have at least gotten a bachelor's degree at a minimum, because there's a lot of things that come with that experience wise. I think they have to have had some level of, I'll say, supervisory experience. And is there a number of years or is there a number of different positions that, you know, they might have had? I don't necessarily think so. But I mean, they have to have demonstrated leadership in another capacity, whether it's an actual being, an actual manager or a supervisor or acting in that manner. As I myself know that I spent a lot of years in my job where I didn't have managerial experience, but I did a lot of mentoring and a lot of managerial type tasks. But it's awful tough to get promoted sometimes when you're getting told, well, you have to manage well, how can I manage if I don't get that promotion so. Or have that ability. But, you know, I also had other things that I did before that. So I think there's got to be some level of experience in managing, in managing people, or supervising. There's got to be at least a bachelor's degree required.

Selectman Roy said and then my last question is, do you think that filling those department positions should be limited to current Town employees? Mr. Guessferd asked, Could you say that again, please? Selectman Roy said, do you believe that in filling those permanent positions, it should be limited to current town employees? Mr. Guessferd replied, I don't think that that should be a hard and

fast rule, no, I think I think there are you know, there are a lot of folks out there that especially depends on the department, too. I would want, for example, the chairman of my IT department to have done this sort of supervisory work. Some, you know, whether it was here or somewhere else, I wouldn't want to limit it to 10 employees only until I have anybody else.

Chairman McGrath said, so I'm going to ask a couple of questions that Mr. Thompson submitted. I've picked two randomly, but I may go back to the others. OK, the first one is, what do you see as the biggest challenges in our town? And how would you like to see the town approach those challenges? Mr. Guessferd responded saying, I'll say there's a couple of things that I'm, and again, I don't want to keep beating the same horse here. But I think one of the biggest challenges is, is moving together as a Town and a School Board toward making sure that we are growing in the direction that is a, it's a joint direction, because when one organization is going this way and the other is going this way, a lot of times you end up here, and you don't end up forward. I do think right now we you know, we have and it's probably the what the 500 pound elephant in the room, you know, the Hillwood project is, I think, a big it's a big project in and of itself. And it's also kind of an example of those sorts of things that that face the Town. And, you know, when we were doing it, considering these sorts of things. And, um, you know, we need to make sure that, um, we're considering all the right, all the different aspects. And you mentioned earlier about, you know, if you're on one side of position or the other and really understand what because they're just like with many other things, there are many positives and negatives with a lot of these decisions that are being made and, you know, where do we want our town to develop? We want it to be more of a city or do we want it to be you know, do we want to continue to have that feel of that that town that we all you know, I'll say I grew up with, but the town I've known for the last 30 years, that's going to be a huge challenge. And how and if things move forward, how they move forward and how we best can utilize those decisions to make our town better.

Chairman McGrath then said, and then the other one that Mr. Thompson submitted was, most people in our community say that we have severe traffic problems. What do you think? How would you go about mitigating those concerns or change the situation? And I think that he speaks for a lot of people when he's talking about the traffic challenges. Mr. Guessferd responded saying, sure. And that's a tough one. I have to admit, I don't have a lot of experience. I have a lot of time in this town. And I do see that there are traffic issues. You know, we are going to have to find ways to. Now they've talked about widening Lowell Road more. I'm not sure how much more of that you can do at this point. I don't know. I'm not sure that in and of itself is going to, you know, alleviate especially if things move forward with other projects. The problem that we have with some of the other solutions is that there are other issues at play in terms of conservation, land and things like that. And I don't and I'll just have to admit that I don't I don't really have the answer right now, but I'll tell you what I mean. It's something that I know is near and dear to people's hearts, especially not just the people in this town, but the people that come through our Town. And we're concerned about that traffic coming through because there's not a lot of ways to get across that river right over to Nashua in that way. So I just I will have to admit that I know that it's something that I would have to want to dig into a lot more.

Selectman McGrath said I jotted down a couple of things. As you were talking and making your presentation, are you familiar with the master plan or the capital improvements plan that was being reviewed and discussed. There were multiple meetings. Mr. Guessferd replied yes. Selectman McGrath Did you attend any of those? Mr. Guessferd responded, yes.

Selectman McGrath said, then my last question, and this is going to be for all of you, is do you have any relationships at all with any members of the Board of Selectmen? Mr. Guessferd asked can you define relationships Chairman McGrath said well, friendship. I don't mean a romance, but, you know, a friendship. Anything that you would feel that you might have a conflict of interest between you and another Board member. Mr. Guessferd replied No, I, I tend to be a pretty friendly person. And I would say I'm probably I don't want to say this in a negative way, but I you know, you and I probably have the least contact of other people of the Selectmen here. I mean, I've I have some common

background with Selectman Roy. I I've been friends with Mr. Morin for a long time. And I say friends, acquaintances, I'll say. And I've been acquaintances with Mr. Gagnon as well. So I don't think there's anything with the four of you that would cause me to think I had a conflict of interest of any kind whatsoever.

Chairman McGrath said Thank you. That's all that I have four questions, at least at this time. Anybody else have anything? Seeing no further questions from the Board Chairman McGrath thanked Mr. Guessferd for coming in to interview.

Chairman McGrath asked Mr. Richard Maddox to come forward. Mr. Maddox said my name is Richard Maddox, I live at 323 Fox Run with my wife Eloise, and we've lived here for 33 years. I do want to say that I probably guess the one person in the room that has been through this process before. I uttered those famous words, it's tied two to two, let's take Coutu. And that's how we got to that point, because the Board was deadlocked between two other candidates. So I have been through this. And you have a challenge before you. I got a call from a couple of people saying that, Selectman Coutu had resigned and I might want to take a look at it, and I looked at it and looked at it and looked at it. Having been here before. I submitted my application, I did not do a resume because I've been in the fire protection business for 40 years and I've done a little bit of everything. I didn't think you wanted to see four pages of this job, this job with this company. I've worked for only three companies, but when three different groups and they've been bought and sold so many times, the names change repeatedly, but I put the important thing on my application, I was a member of the Planning Board for 15 years and a member of this Board of Selectmen for 12 years and also in our NRPC for 10 years. So I have a certain amount of experience with the land use side and the challenges that face you four on a given Tuesday night. I said to myself, I have some skills that I can hopefully help the Board with, and that's why I put my name in. I can tell you that I went through the first Green Meadows adventure with the two million square feet of retail space, which was, again, a challenge. As well as we went through the probably the toughest economic times in the last 30 years, 40 years. And we managed to not only provide the services, but we never laid anybody off. We just want people around. We didn't fill positions, but we did what we had to do to keep the tax rate to where it should be. So. I really just said I have some skill sets that the Board could possibly use, I put in my name and I can hopefully help them with my town. I'm ready for the questions!

Selectman Roy was recognized and said where do you see Hudson in 10 years? Mr. Maddox replied, I see Hudson continuing to grow as far as population. I see it as an attractive location is right over the border, it is well managed, the tax rate is reasonable. And I really hate to say this, but the housing pricing, even though it is exorbitant, we think, compared to many other communities, it is a bargain. So I think we're going to continue to see growth. I think we're going to continue to see people who want to come to live here. So we're going to have to do some planning as far as land use, as far as our infrastructure. And I think I'm going to answer your question earlier about what do I see as one of our major disconnects is the loss of the Hudson Litchfield news. I think without some method of communicating to every household it is tough to get the message out of what you're trying to do, whether it be the School Board or the Selectmen there needs to be some method in which you can get what we're trying to do out to the general populace. I've always used the 5, 10, 70 rule. Five percent are adamant on either side, 10 percent aligned with them and the 70 percent in the middle don't know or care. So it's those people you need to get involved, educated, ask the questions whether you do some sort of survey regularly, whether you do a charrette with, you know, trying to see how people feel about development and the way the Town is going, you know, a great place. Unfortunately, it's not going to happen again this year is the Old Home Days is for the Selectmen to have a booth there to say we have some questions, could you help us out? So, again, just getting some input from the people that you only see on Election Day, get some input from the people that are in that 70 percent. They're you know, they like living here, but they don't really want to get involved.

Chairman McGrath said, I need to make a correction. I believe we are going to have Old Home Days. Mr. Maddox said, Oh, good! Chairman McGrath said I'm not I'm not positive about that. But I know

that there's been discussion about it. The Town Administrator said, they put in an application last week. I sent it to Mr. Malley and they turned it in for everybody to go through the process. The Chairman said so that will likely happen. Mr. Maddox said, and that's good news.

Selectman Roy said just one more question. How would you increase the collaboration between the scout, the Town and the School District? Mr. Maddox replied saying, I think you need to get the citizens behind that project. Until they want that to happen. The School Board wants to do what they need to do to educate. They believe that what they're spending is the right amount. The Selectmen have their agenda, I think, until they get more input from the citizens to say we want X it is going to be a challenge to get the two, I mean, you can teach an alligator in an elephant to dance, but it ain't fast and it ain't cheap. You need to have that ability to have some crosstalk between, I think, some sort of and I know we did it in the past and I'm sure you've done it meetings with the School Board. But again, they are their focus is on the education process. And if it costs more money, that's what they tend to go with. So, again, I think that communication is the real key to see people wanting to have us do X, Y or Z needs to push from US citizens.

Selectman Morin was recognized and he said, Mr. Maddox, you've talked about the Hudson Litchfield News. You're absolutely right that that's been a big, big problem in Town since it went out of business. Today we have social media, we have email, we have websites. We have the Hudson cable TV. You said 70 percent of the people don't care. I would agree with you. With everything that we're doing, with all the technology we have, we can't get to these people. How else can we do it? Mr. Maddox replied saying, I think the cable television is underutilized. I think that we should look at Almost like a and I don't a news program, if you would, that the Town kind of put out there, whether it's just a screenshot that says there's these meetings, this is what happened, here's the police log, whatever it may be, so that people can see a place to go to. If you go to Facebook, you don't know where you're getting that, because that's where I heard that the Old Home Days was going to be canceled. Somebody on Facebook put it there. So you need something official from the Town. I don't think enough people do Twitter to make it viable. Maybe you do have a dedicated homepage for the Facebook, but does enough people go to it? Are enough joining it? Do they see a need to? So I think it's going to be a case of trial and error to see what may or may not work. Selectman Morin said I believe that Facebook, unfortunately, is where most people are getting their information. Have you seen Selectman Roy's show? Mr. Maddox replied, No. Selectman Morin asked, have you seen the newscast that HCTV does every week? Mr. Maddox replied, no. Selectman Morin replied, OK, that's being done. Mr. Maddox said, oh good! Then then hopefully we can build on that to be able to say. You know, like I watched one of your last meetings and I guess you went into non-public for a while, but you just kind of reappeared on the screen, maybe there's a scroll for 30 seconds in between those two breaks that says go to this location, though, the link that you have for the HCTV and say, see this information in more advertising, a more public service announcements for the lack of a better term for these shows that are available.

Selectman Morin then said in your opinion, you said the tone is going to continue to grow. So what do you see the goal and objectives the tone should be working towards? Mr. Maddox replied, to make it as pleasant as possible to get from point A to point B, to be able to have a place where you can feel safe at home, so where you can feel that you have a town government that is working towards communication, security and some sort of Input from their citizens.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said, Thank you, Madam Chair. Um. With your background and our NRPC, I also know Hudson Con Comm. and Select Board. What's your stance on how to balance land use to help with future success. Balance of conservation, development, you know, a business. How do you see that playing out over the next couple of years? Mr. Maddox responded, it really comes down to all of those groups submitting things for the warrant that they can explain. You know, I will tell you that whenever I see on the ballot approved by the Planning Board, I vote for it because I know those people and I know the hard work they put in. I think we need to do a better job of tightening up some of those loopholes. You know, I can remember when I first got on the Planning

Board, there was a developer that had these lots that literally wrapped around other units so they could have road frontage and it took a couple of years to get that cleaned up. So now we have a number of house lots that that are interesting, to say the least. Unfortunately, the Town isn't as quick to respond as some applicants engineers. You know, I'm sure you're having issues with sewer allocations and how that's going to play out. I understand now you have a much greater amount than we did the last time I heard the number. But there's still going to be a need to be able to see how that controls growth. Taking our land use boards and having them meet twice a year to be able to say what to what is the ZBA seeing that the Planning Board could correct through our zoning? Those type of communication. Again, back to that communication issue.

Selectman Gagnon said, Ok, and one more, Madam Chair. So there may be instances where the Board is divided on a particular issue or decision to be made. Do you believe it's important to maintain professionalism and refrain from disrespect and personal attacks? Please share any personal experiences to help us understand your commitment to professionalism. Mr. Maddox replied saying, I had the pleasure of being the chairman three times during my 12 year stint. And the toughest person I had to keep in line was myself, because, as you know, once you go, it's tough to get it back. I think that all the. Anyone that has served on this Board comes in with a passion to be the best they can for this community and sometimes those things clash with another member. I have been on a board with a number of personalities. You have to be able to say, I disagree on this issue, but on the very next one, I'm going to vote with that person because it's the right thing to do. So you really have to take this as a never ending negotiation. The there's no left side, right side. It is purely what is best for Hudson. So you have to maintain the decorum you need so that you all will work together as a unit.

Chairman McGrath said, OK, so I'm going to go back to Mr. Thompson's list of questions. What type of jobs do you want to see come to our Town in the future? Mr. Maddox replied, all kinds of jobs, we need plumbers in this state. Manufacturing is not a bad thing, you know, to say all office workers or whatever, it doesn't make any sense. You want a well-rounded community that can sit down and discuss their issues because they have different viewpoints. If everybody was just an office worker, they probably just want everything to be air conditioned or, you know, great parking. We need to have a group of people that live here that appreciate that and want to be part of our community. I know when I first moved here 33 years ago, it was more of a transient. People were kind of testing the waters from Massachusetts coming to Hudson right over the border. So a lot of those came and went. I think you're seeing a much more stable group of people within the Town, but I don't see us wanting to have any particular type of worker. I think that, again, manufacturing. You need to have that, somebody has to make the stuff that we're going to buy and just say we just want to have, again people that sit in cubicles, I don't see that as an advantage. So I would want to see us try to do something again with we have a great resource at Alvrine with the trade school. I think that should be, you know, something that we talk to the School Board about expanding my company would hire electricians by the dozens, we just can't get people to come in and want to do the work. So again, I think we need to find the ability to keep both balance of commercial, industrial and even farmland.

Chairman McGrath then said Next question is, if you received if you received a one million dollar grant to use for the Town any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why? Mr. Maddox replied, I think it goes back to our communications. I would probably put a couple of those boards as you come into Hudson that says Go to Selectman Roy's show It's on at 7:30 tonight. Some of that, but also better communication, upgrading as much as we can, our infrastructure as far as IT and getting that to be able to be multiplatform. And I'm sure it is. But to be able to expand that, to get that message out, that this is a great community and be able to make the 70% aware of what is going on,

Chairman McGrath then said those are the only questions that I'm taking for Mr. Thompson, for you. Just a couple of informational things for me. I think all of the Board members know and certainly not the audience knows that we're going to be having a joint Board of Selectmen and School Board meeting on the 18th of August. So that's in the planning phase. This is a matter of fact, I think we all



got emails today. And then Selectman Morin and I have talked briefly and not in any great detail about bringing before this Board, a monthly newsletter to send out to the residents as an informational thing. So that's in the thought process. We haven't presented it to this Board. And, of course, as a member of the Board and as each member knows or should know, that this is a Board and it's made up of all of the members and the decisions that are made are jointly made. So that's all that I have.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said so it's not so much a question as a comment. If you have the opportunity, you should tour the CTI. It's amazing. They just opened it, what, a couple of weeks ago? And I think that I think that you're correct, that that's a good opportunity to have some trades come out of there that can contribute to the Hudson.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said, I have one more. And I missed Mr. Guessferd, so you lucked out. I had it written down and I missed it, so I'm going to start with you when you've been there, done that. So with the amount of people we have turned out at town meeting and then for town vote, do you think it's time to change our form of government? Mr. Maddox replied, No, I think the town form of government is appropriate. I don't think we want to be a city. I'm sure that there are those that think it would be a great idea, but I think you lose that feel, you know, I guess some cities in the state of New Hampshire that have half the population. I think Lebanon is one of them. You just get a different vibe, I think. Being a Board of five people elected by those citizens, you know what they're looking for? I think once you get into a city, you fall into the mayor and the council and all of that stuff. I think it's what you have can certainly be improved. But it's a great form of government.

Chairman McGrath asked, anyone else? At which point Mr. Maddox said, you didn't ask me the question. I thought you were asking everyone the question about relationships. Chairman McGrath said, oh, I'm sorry. Do you have a relationship with any of the members of this Board? No, but I once wore Captain Morin's hat once. Selectman Morin said I tried to kill him. Mr. Maddox said you try to kill me twice. Selectman Morin said, I remember once. Mr. Maddox continued saying, I am a hands on person. I got to see it, got to try it. I'm probably the only selectman that's done a tour in a snowplow. And I took the four hour trip around his route and I got to tell you, it was the longest two days of my life. That is one difficult job. The people you have plowing our streets, and I travel all over Massachusetts and New Hampshire primarily, you know, when you're back in Hudson, they do a great job on our roads. I'm probably the only one that went down inside the sewer pumping station. And again, the quality and the attentiveness. I've been in facilities where it was half the age and there's all kinds of stuff mounted on the wall that's no longer used, the wires are hanging out. None of that in this facility that nobody sees. So, again, we have great people that work here. And the Fire Department was nice enough to let me go up the ladder, but I had to wear the hat. So it was the only real. And again, Captain Morin and now Selectman Morin, I know him. But again, great respect for the years he put in at the fire department having to deal with selectmen that wanted to do right alongside. He got stuck with me most of the time. Chairman McGrath said, Thank you very much.

Chairman McGrath welcomed Rich Weissgarber and asked him to tell the Board a little about himself. Mr. Weissgarber said, I'm Rich Weissgarber, I live at 21, Flying Rock Road, married with three older boys. I been with the Department of Defense for about 36 years. 20 of it was active duty Military. I have had many unique jobs while with the Air Force. I haven't been in Hudson very long, probably about four years. I see that as a strength. I see it as you know, It allows me to be unbiased, I think, and kind of look at things through a lens from that perspective and to collaborate and communicate and work with others in that manner. So, you know, over the 36 years have been fortunate enough to take a lot of formal leadership training, management, and supervisor. I'm one of the key leaders over a branch of About 350 people, so I run into a lot of challenges, difficult situations and love rewarding people. Love serving, love what I do, and I just I want to carry that over to the Board of Selectmen and keep an open mind. I collect I, I do my research, collect the data and formulate a decision based on that. And I want to, you know, I'm a good listener and I want to I want

to listen to the residents and not just the Board of Selectmen on matters and to make a decision. So that's really why I'm here. That's me in a nutshell. I don't want to bore you for another three hours. Chairman McGrath said, you have an impressive background, to be sure. Mr. Weissbarger replied, we all do, ma'am to be honest with you.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said two questions for you, sir, and thank you for volunteering. And did your background is impressive. I read over your application as well. So have you read the existing master plan? A two part question here? Mr. Weissgarber replied, No, I have not. I have not read the master plan. I read the capital improvement plan. Selectman Gagnon then said, Ok, and have you participated in any of the new master planning sessions that was happening before the Hudson Logistics Center took over? Mr. Weissgarber replied no.

Selectman Gagnon then said, OK, so move on to the next question. Do you believe that residents have the responsibility to seek out public available information on town topics? Or should town leadership do a better job proactively providing information on multiple platforms? Mr. Weissgarber replied, so both. I think that's a double edged sword. I think residents have the right under, you know, Freedom of Information Act type requests and they can always come in and talk to, I've always been able to come into the Town Hall and talk to the Town Administrator and director to get information as a private resident. Never had an issue with that. I've learned a lot by doing that. But I do think that The Town, you know, part of its services and part of its communication to the resident. As we were, we seem to be stuck as to how we can communicate things to the residents in an effective way. And media is not necessarily getting it done. So ideas of how we could do that, um, maybe I don't know if I don't know if the selectmen have ever thought about having, like a an unfunded intern or something or interns from the school that could go out and give the residents can newsletter or something or a pamphlet. A lot of people still do that. There's. That physical copy of the information, we do it and the government as well to some folks just don't use electronics. So I think we you come up with an alternative way to push that information out. And we have interns on base that go out and do that. They push information like that through newsletters and such. And it's a great way to get to people that aren't getting on the media.

Selectman Roy was recognized and asked so what do you think is Hudson's biggest challenges? Mr. Weissgarber replied saying, I think so, the gentleman talked about vision. And it kind of resonated with me because, you know, I always think about a formal vision mission, goals objective. Because you can measure them, you can create milestones, I think that one of the biggest challenges is that we Lack a unified roadmap. So we do have a capital improvement plan. To me, that's a powerful document that we need to leverage more, not only to inform budgetary decisions and to prioritize matter, but to answer to the state and federal governments potentially when they want when they give you money and they want to understand how you spent the money. But I do think that when we're talking about the School and the Town and we talk about communication and collaboration and there's a gap there. I think that we should have a unified strategic plan and Chairman McGrath talked about getting together in August and that's awesome is maybe think about actually putting something in writing. I know the school had a Strat plan, but actually coming together like we did with a capital improvement plan with a representatives from basically the Board of Selectmen, the School. The Planning Board, a resident member, I believe, and Budget Committee, has built a strong plan like that and have milestones in it for, you know, and prioritize the different goals. Like for me, goal number one is. Safety, security and health and welfare of the residents, that's and so we create objectives that support that. Maybe we have a goal to reduce paper usage by 20% and within three years or so. Maybe we have a goal to robust the Senior Center, because to me that's a critical item in the town, the programs within the senior center. So to answer your question, to me, it's lack of a unified strategic plan.

Selectman Roy then said my final question is, what do you think is your fiduciary responsibility to the Board as a member of the Board of Selectmen? Mr. Weissgarber replied, It's to remain an unbiased objective, you know, an objective member of the Board and take input from everyone on the Board

and the residents and to be a good listener and to ultimately make that decision based on as much information as possible in an objective manner.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said serving on the Budget Committee, as I had asked earlier, you've seen the School side, you've seen the Town side. You know where the differences are. How would you bring both sides together to work together? Mr. Weissgarber replied, Again, I would get everybody at the table and I keep talking about the capital improvement plan. But I really think that that plan, which is only done every four or five years, should be the catalyst to start prioritizing the projects that the Town needs. And I think that that plan needs more publicity to the public of its power and what it was meant for, because I've only been on there a short time, but it always seems like there's a separate drive-bys with the budgets and never a unified, you know, story. So really, that's what I would do, I would I would want to use that as a way to prioritize those big projects, you could potentially do them in the same fiscal year. But we would have to talk about that and understand, you know, the cause and effect of doing that and whether or not it's a good idea to do that. Because right now, I don't think we know. We don't know what the cost is today versus the cost tomorrow and waiting. And we just again, we the School comes in and the Town comes and we listen. We asked questions about the budget, but we have to have something more strategic. I mean, you're the strategic leaders of the Town and you're not tactical. You don't do tactical level work. So we have to have some more of a strategic thought process on how we're going to unify things and do projects in that way and to fall back on something that has informed us together.

Selectman Morin then asked how would you get that 70% we talked about earlier, involved? Mr. Weissgarber answered saying, so, again, I would, I would get folks, myself included, we should do a newsletter and start maybe putting it in businesses are going around and putting it in mailboxes, if that's allowed, I'm really not sure, but. That I don't think the electronic means is working. I think we need, If we're not going to have a newspaper and I read that newspaper when it was around and I liked that, I enjoyed reading it, is that we should create something that's much lower cost, that we can inform the public with a physical document because that seems like the majority of the population that's the way that they get their news. Today, anyway.

Selectman Morin then asked one last one, do you think we need to change the form of government for the Town? Mr. Weissgarber said No. to be honest with you, I enjoy the non-partisan, you know, collaboration and stuff. I think when you start going to other forms of government, you may start getting into partisan politics. And I think this is a great way to manage and govern the town. Plus, I wouldn't be sitting here if it was partisan as a federal employee.

Seeing no further questions from the Board, the Chairman said OK, so I'm going to go back to Mr. Thompson's list. I'm going to select one question because I have to save one, one remaining one for either Mr. Ulery or Mr. Murray. OK, so how do you plan to involve residents in the decision making process on issues in our Town? Mr. Weissgarber replied we have, well, outside of the electronic means, we have Town Halls. That's a great way to inform people, you know, actually have, you know, invite them to a town hall meeting, maybe at the Community Center, have several of them, go door to door. You know, we our Town is not we're still making the transition from analog to digital on a lot of things. I mean, I think we've come a long way. And even with the Comm system that we have for the first responders and stuff, which I think is great, we still live in a very Hands-On world in our Town. And so we cannot rely on, you know, the digital means to get the message across. If voter turnout has anything to do with how we're publicizing things, I really think that we should... we haven't made that jump yet. And so I do think, you know, driving around and knocking on doors and having the town halls would be a good way to get the word out.

Selectman McGrath then said, I have one final question. And this one isn't is it an easy one to broach, but it's necessary. Your wife works upstairs in the Selectman Office. And how would you handle any kind of conflict that might arise? Um, Steve is her supervisor. We, the Board of Selectmen, have impact on her salary. So I think it's important to bring it out so that people know that we're trying to be as transparent as we can be. Mr. Weissgarber replied, Sure, I would make a go

work at Wal-Mart. No, I'm just kidding. Chairman McGrath laughed and said, we don't want that either. Mr. Weissgarber then said, nothing against Wal-Mart. To be honest with you, I would have no problem, you know, recusing myself or abstaining. I mean, that's really a simple answer. I would I would just step away and, you know. The Chairman replied, thank you for that, because it's important that people would know that you would actually recuse yourself, we're going to be faced with that in the not too distant future. Thank you very much.

Chairman McGrath then welcomed Mr. Ulery. Mr. Ulery said my name is Jordan Ulery. I live down the street here on Baker Street and I've lived here since 1972. My kids went to school for grade school and then we sent them over to Bishop Guertin. I serve in the New Hampshire legislature on the Ways and Means Committee. There I get to understand where revenues are and where they come from and how they develop. I also understand how the Town fits into the overall function of the state since we're Dillon Rule State and there's a subordinate to operation there. Since I graduated from St. Anselm College, I went into EMS because I think the monks over there, when there were a lot of them, matter of fact, my classmate is now the abbot. It kind of put a thing in my mind about being of service to people. So I went into EMS. I was one of the first and was in the first class and graduated with first class paramedic school from New Hampshire Technical Institute. The former director of FEMA emergency services for the State of New Hampshire was also in my class. Chris Pope. After that injured my back pretty seriously. And then I went into doing private investigation work as a private investigator. I like to watch asphalt grow, but did a lot of antifraud investigations for insurance companies. Matter of fact, I was able to send one attorney to the Board of Bar Review because he was holding the cane, the crutch that neck brace had an image of the patient of his client or his client got in and climbed in the car. He brought them to the doctor's appointment with him. I didn't go over very well with the bar. Since then, I've done a few things of my own with a very small business that deals with lack of a better term, collections, but that's not the entire thing, that in service of process, I've served on the Planning Board for many years. Mr. Maddox was instrumental in convincing me to put my name in for that and have had some input in the state and most those other things. I'm also familiar with the EMS system here in Town, unfortunately. But that's basically who I am. I'm pretty outspoken, but at the same time I'm able to understand other people's points of view. Even if I don't disagree with them, I understand them and try and come up to some sort of compromise. I'd be glad to take any questions anyone has.

Selectman Roy was recognized and asked, so where do you see Hudson in 10 years? Mr. Ulery replied, Oh, that's kind of hard to say, but Hudson is a border community unless all the border communities, even tiny Towns like Rindge, are developing very rapidly with an increase in population that is coming from other states. Massachusetts to a degree, but even further away, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, moving up here to escape the high taxation that they have. And that's the generally accepted term. That's what the demographers tell us every two years. But the state house, I see Hudson continuing to grow, but we already have in place some pretty good zoning where we've isolated most of the areas for industrial growth. We need to have a mix. You can't wind up like, wow, I shouldn't say, but like a community town with no industry whatsoever because that just makes the tax burden so high that people aren't going to be willing to put their kids in school. They're not willing to come here and live. But at the same time, we offer services and programs, I mean, there are staff here in Town is tremendous. I mean, the Town comment is something people drive all around to come and see at Christmas time because we spend a couple of days putting stuff up and that comes out of the taxpayers' dollars. But everyone enjoys it. The roads are well maintained. We don't have potholes like a certain city to the west of us. They maintain the roads well and there's a schedule that's set up to pave the roads that need to be paid in a timely fashion. Hudson does things right. Thus far, the educational system in town is first and not first class. It's one of the reasons I work to get funding through and we got that through and now you've got a pretty nice school there.

Selectman Roy then asked, so how would you attract younger families to Hudson? Mr. Ulery answered, well, we're going to have to get rid of the four hundred and five hundred thousand dollar

homes. I shouldn't say get rid of, but reduce them and back in, you wouldn't remember, but I remember the first house that my father had was a small ranch, two bedrooms. My brother and I were in one room. Mom and dad were in the other room. One bathroom shared what they call a starter home. We have no starter home developments here because people are willing to pay for a one acre lot and five bedrooms and three baths and a two car garage. So some development and encouragement of development of the smaller starter homes would be one way to start doing that. That would be one way to get younger people to come into Town. Our access to the highway is good, regardless of which way you go over the river. Our access to BAE is very good so long as you don't have to be at work at nine o'clock. But if they allow you there at nine thirty, that's fine. That's. Those are several areas that could be looked at.

Selectman Roy then said, one

And one final question, do you believe the Board of Selectmen should be informed when a police officer is put on the Laurie. I can't hear you. Do you believe the Board of Selectmen should be informed when a police officer is put on the Laurie list? Mr. Ulery replied, No, I do believe the law should be made public and available to the defense attorney. But the Laurie also has people with a question of credibility that may or may not relate to his performance of his job as a policeman. It may relate to an omission by accident rather than an omission of fact on purpose. That list has got a reputation as being a list of individuals that are quote unquote liars, when in fact it has other individuals on there that have faced disciplinary questions by the by the chief. If the officer staff of the police department has a problem, they have recourse within their contract is how to deal with it. Within the department. I don't see the select board get involved in it until such time as it becomes necessary to get to discharge an individual, even if it goes through arbitration and then goes into further actions

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said Thank you, Madam Chair. Just one question. So you have a lot of roles when you're on the Planning Board, your part legislator. So thank you for volunteering there and you're applying to be selectman. How would you either balance all those roles or would you have to give up one legally? How would you what would you do with all that if you got the position? Mr. Ulery replied saying, Thank you. With the Select Board meets once or twice a week plus the month plus the various committee meetings, those are done at night. Most of the work at the state house is done during the day. I'm also on Hillsborough County Executive Board, which is the overseer board for the operations of Hillsborough County. We, the commissioners, decide what to spend and we tell them whether they can or can't. And then we put it to the entire 121 members of the delegation to see whether or not the tax rates are going to go up and we'll know on the 23rd. But look, right now, tax rates are not going to go up on the county level at least. But there's ample room to balance these, these things. It's not like, you know, I've got plenty of time because I'm semi-retired right now.

Selectman Morin was recognized and asked where you are part of it the other part of the government and some of the actions that take place up there, you know, kind of relate to what takes place down here sometimes. How are you going to take the problem solving that you've learned up here and use here so we work together with the schools? Mr. Ulery answered that's an interesting thing. I'll give you an example. Generally, there's a split on taxes in ways and means, one particular party. Doesn't have a strong objection to new taxes and the other party has a strong objection to new taxes without cause, and yet within that committee, 90% of our bills come out unanimous because we work on them to get a response to get answer. Recently, a bill came over from the Senate, its 101, Senate bill, 101 which raised the minimum threshold of filing for BPT or business profits tax. They wanted to raise it to 75,000. Now, there was some objection. So I put in an amendment to raise it to 100,000, but we got it worked with on the committee, bring it back down to ninety two thousand, which was a reasonable rate based upon inflation from the time that it was originally set at 50,000. So you work with people when you make them under, I shouldn't say make, but when both sides understand what the problems are. And what a logical resolution is that requires, however, work on both sides, not just one side, but from both sides to accomplish a common goal. And when you sit down with someone, you can have a discussion and give all sorts of answers and give all sorts of reasons, reasons why

and why not. But unless there's a common goal and that is known in advance on any negotiation, whether it's a contract negotiation or it's a military deal or it's working with one of the agencies, what happens is you have to have a common set or one side or the other is going to have to put their foot down and then you're going to wind up with a split decision coming out of your process. I'm very happy to hear that the Select Board is setting up our meeting with the School Department. It's certainly well done. Our time needed to do that to determine what is needed, particularly what the enrollment situation that's happening throughout the state and in Hudson. What's enrollment in the schools, whether money is being well spent, whether additional funds can be done, and whether or not there are areas within the School budget that could be trimmed a little bit by combining them perhaps with Town operations that would spread out the work over instead of being limited to working in one place and working over a larger area so that you have a better balance and maybe you need 15 guys to set up for graduation just off the top of my head, where you can have the entire town staff available as opposed to just a few people that are there, get it done quicker, more efficiently and safer for all parties involved things.

Selectman Morin then asked again, you at the state level, we've heard a lot tonight, communication to our residents getting the information out. Big problem. With your experience up there is there anything you can bring here from Mr. Ulery replied, there's Constant Contact. We've got old home days coming up. Hopefully it's planning on it, but there would be nothing wrong with asking residents if they would like to receive a weekly monthly email from the Towns from the Town Select Board, talking about things going on in the town and newsletter on an email format, have them sign up for it. That way they were opting in. If they don't want to, they can always unsubscribe. But you get the information directly into the household by using that format. We have a Facebook site. I don't think we have a website, though, that would need to be advertised out where people could research things in and get paper work more easily than negotiating through a Facebook page after page. It's on this page. I have to go back to this page to to get the information. That's one way to do it. And with Old Home Days coming up, as I mentioned, I'd do it like the two political parties doing put a tent up there and say, got a question. Marilyn McGrath is going to be there on Saturday afternoon from two to five or two to four or two to three, whatever. Yeah, I know it gets hot on Saturday's in August. But at the same time, put yourselves out there, answer questions, give a response. If you're going to be a select person, if you're going to be a state representative, answer the questions that are asked or at least give your idea and be willing to listen.

Chairman McGrath asked if there was any additional questions. Selectman Morin said two more if you don't mind and said, Traffic. Mr. Ulery replied I think Mr. Gagnon may not like this answer too. A lot of things have changed since the EPA advisory on the route to the bypass. Many things have changed and there are now new techniques of essentially causeway construction over wetlands, which have minimal impact. With the new infrastructure plans and the money that's being spent by the federal government, Hudson if it contacts its state or federal delegation may be able to get some earmarked funds for that without impacting, seriously, the wetlands. I believe that a bypass can be built. As you guys know, the majority of the traffic on Lowell Road during rush hour isn't Hudson residents. It's people going to Wyndham. It's people going to Salem who work down on the Waltham side of 128. And it's easier to come across here than it is to drive all the way down to 95 and follow 128 in two and a half mile an hour traffic. It's easier to drive at three mile an hour traffic down Route three, but that's one of the problems, not one of the problems? That's one of the things about New Hampshire is approximately a third of our workforce works in Massachusetts and the other third works either in Maine or Vermont, and the remainder are right here. So we have to make some considerable consideration for people who are traveling back and forth to work. And as we said earlier, there's only a few ways across that river. And one of the ways and that's already planned for land is already secured by the state, would be to put in segmentally, the bypass. But at the same time, the bypass has to take into consideration the substantial wetlands, particularly in the south end of town. That's one way to address the traffic. The other the other way would be a stop sign doesn't mean you roll through it. It means stop. Selectman Morin said get us 50 more police officers. We can take care. Mr. Ulery replied, I don't think 50 more would be necessary. 25 is OK. Selectman Morin said, OK, I'll hold you to that.

Selectman Morin then asked, the change of government question. Do you believe the town? Mr. Ulery replied, No town government is fine. It's closer to the people, more responsible.

Chairman McGrath then said, okay, I have two. I'm going to go with again with Mr. Thompson's list. I've already asked this question once, but I think it would be appropriate for you. Thank you. Will you serve on the Planning Board? Most people in our community say that we have severe traffic problems. What do you think? How would you go about mitigating those concerns or change the situation? Mr. Ulery replied, I already addressed that, ma'am, with the growth of...Chairman McGrath said, I want to say again. I want you to repeat it.

Mr. Ulery said I would I would push as hard as possible to get that circumferential done so long as it doesn't impose upon the wetlands. There is a place, I think there's a meeting ground that can be met there where we can actually divert some of the traffic that isn't going to Hudson. It's going to Windham. It's going to Salem, it's going to Londonderry. Or we can divert some of that traffic around the northern portion of Lowell Road. We could, I suppose, put a two lane road all the way up to Central Street that would require a huge expenditure on the part of the town taking property and it wouldn't do much good. Quite honestly. Town ordinance is restricting truck size traffic I think are due for the next town meeting to be approved. I think that would be a good thing as well to reduce some of the, uh, truck size traffic that goes in there. But because Hudson's location, because we have the southernmost bridge over the Merrimack in New Hampshire, we're going to get traffic. We could say, you know, everyone who put up a sign and saying, if you live in Windham, go north to Manchester, cut across 293 and then come down. Try that, it not gonna work. So we need to be reasonable about it and seek a way to divert the traffic around Hudson. It's not even going to stop in Hudson.

Chairman McGrath then said Ok, and then the last question, and it's the one that Mr. Maddox reminded me about is the relationship to any member on the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Ulery responded saying, well, I've served with you on the Planning Board and I've served with Mr. Morin on the Planning Board. I know, Brett, from standing outside, we've had several conversations at campaigning. I don't know Ms. Roy very well at all other than I think you're an attorney. Is that correct? I don't think I've done any work for your office. Selectman Roy said you did once. Mr. Ulery replied I did? OK, Senior.

Chairman McGrath then said, and last but not least, certainly not least is with Mr. Murray. Mr. Murray started by saying, good evening. I'm Shawn Murray. I'm a resident of Hudson since 2001. And I was a municipal employee, your fire chief for 13 years and semi-retired back in 2013. And I'm also currently on the Budget Committee, most recently serving as chairman last year. And I think I've been on the Board since maybe around 2017. I want to thank you for the opportunity to put in for the open selectmen seat. My goal in doing so is I'd like to continue my service to constituents or, you know, our taxpayers, but at a different level or in a different venue. I've certainly enjoyed being on the Budget Committee. I think we've made some significant progress with both school and town budgets in the way that we approach them and that we view them now rather than going through hundreds of pages. I believe I've come up with a system where we can actually look at summaries and get just as much good information out of it as going page to page. But with that, I'll open it up for questions for you.

Selectman Roy said so anyway, so I'm going to preface this with you and I already had a conversation, so I got a feel about where you think the Town is going and everything. So I want to sort of get a feel for you in a different aspect. Have you ever held a position that you weren't as successful as you wanted to be? Mr. Murray asked in a, well, like an elected position or any position? Yes, absolutely. When I retired from the Town of Hudson, I became the Director of the Massachusetts Fire Academy, responsible for over 300 people. And there was an organizational misstep, if you will. In other words, I was reporting to three different people, and in such a large organization, it just never worked out. And this was, this was an excellent job, had a lot of

responsibility. And I really started my career, my fire service career in the training aspect. But after about eight months, it wasn't a good fit and I left.

Selectman Roy then asked, Ok, um. What did you learn from that? Mr. Murray responded saying, Well, I certainly learned that, you know, you try and do the best that you can in anything that you go and do, but you also shouldn't stay in a position that isn't working out for you. You have to. Yeah. You know, you have to move on if you need to. And and, you know, in a way, it ties in with when you're dealing with issues on a board of selectmen to there has to be compromise or, you know, you have to look at issues and from many different angles and be willing to be open enough to change your mind, if that's what comes out of it. You know, if you learn new information or anything like that,

Selectman Roy then said, just one more question. So traditionally, I guess at a Town Meeting, the deliberative session, there's a re-vote on on warrant articles. Do you believe that that should continue without new information from citizens? Mr. Murray replied, I do. But I of course, I'm going to, you know, preface that with I think there is a gray area within the law and in the way that it reads. As a matter of fact, I know there is, because in that particular situation, we got advice, different advice from two different attorneys. The Town's attorney and School Boards was a similar interpretation. But, yeah, I believe it should because and I'll give you a fine example. If you'll recall, in this last town meeting, there was a resident who was looking to or that town was going to discontinue her road and part of it. And on the surface, it seemed like it was a no brainer, you know, that that that's what she wanted and was going to happen. But through the deliberative session and listening to different people in this woman, I became convinced that I supported her position over the Towns closing the road. And that's because she provided with some compelling information, you know, along that whole top. Selectman Roy then said, Right, but I guess my question was, without that kind of information, should there be a revote? Mr. Murray replied, well, you know, information doesn't only come from the deliberative session, you know, there is a gap. You have your public hearing, the Town's public hearing, and then you go to a deliberative session and there's a couple of week period there. And we continue to get information throughout or sometimes you've asked for information and it doesn't come to you and people have a right to, you know, make their decision based on that. It's the same as we sit on the Budget Committee. OK, I can tell you throughout the whole budget process, if I get two or three calls from our taxpayers, I consider that a good year. And so what happens is, will we're left at having to take whatever information we have and make our best decision that we can without a lot of input.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and he said, Thank you, Madam Chair. One question and you're on the Budget Committee. I think this may fit you, but it's a little difficult. We always say we the Town different boards always talk about keeping the tax rate low. What initiatives do you believe are so important that they should that they can and they should adjust the tax rate up? So put differently, is there something that is so vital to this Town that you think a tax rate increase is absolutely valid for you? Mr. Murray responded saying, Well, I think essential services is one of them. Public safety, you know, police, fire highway. Those are those are the three major areas of the Town that the taxpayer gets the most services out of. So if there's a true justification, then I think that would be one area that you would if there is a demonstrated need through the presentation that we receive, you know, from Department Heads or, you know, on a School Board side this past budget year, the Committee learned a lot. And we really get into depth of special education and what the costs, the hidden costs of special education are. And in a way, you know, it justifies to a point why special education is so expensive, because of what they're required to do, because of federal laws and all of those types of things.

Selectman Gagnon said, thank you, sir. And one more question, Madam Chair, what's your stance on how to balance land use? I've asked this previously. You know, the balance between, you know, industrial, commercial, conservation, you know, housing. How do you how do you plan on balancing something or being a part of a group that tries to balance that?



Mr. Murray replied, you've heard and I've heard already tonight, you know, from everyone else that I think lacking a vision or strategic plan and not finding a way. I think we as a town, we have our different boards. You have your Board of Selectmen, you have your Conservation Committee, and you have your Planning Board. But no one ever gets together as a big group and has a discussion. Now, the Board of Selectmen can appoint the Planning Board, OK? And that's an important position for them to have. But do they really ever have a general conversation? Now, where does the Town want to go as far as growth, you know, or what should we consider and all that comes out of long term strategic planning, creating a vision of, look, this is what we envision in the future. This is what we want for industrial. This is what we want for business. This is what we want for housing. But it has to be collaborative amongst all those types. As far as conservation goes, that has to be a balance to I think even more so if there's a long term plan and it shows, you know, how you build in recreation, land or preserve in that type of property, then I think it's very valid. Thank you. As a matter of fact, I work in a community just over the mass border who buys hundreds and thousands of acres of property to save as conservation land because it fits the community. You know, there are farming community and they invest in it, you know, so that's the balance I see that's needed.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said I heard from everyone tonight, in my opinion, the biggest problems that we need to tackle up front is the working together and getting the residents involved. Everybody has said the same thing that we lack on both of those things. You've been working for the Town for many years and now on the Budget Committee. First, how would you take care of the working together problem with the School Board and you just brought up getting together with Planning and all that. So how would you take care of that? Mr. Murray replied, well, I can tell you, back when I was fire chief, we had sat in on meetings with the School District and really were just looking for low hanging fruit. OK, copy paper. Back then, they were using the highway department. And so we were meeting, I think we met two or three times and had a meeting said, yeah, we should do this. This is what we spend for, you know, copy papers, what we spend for computers and all of that. And then it stopped. And so I've seen it not work over the years, but I think it's from a lack of really following through with it. And when you meet with a joint board, you know, set some goals and some follow ups. Yeah. You know, a prime, one positive thing I see is having the School Board sit on the Selectmen meetings and having the Selectmen sit on the School Board. That certainly opens up communications. But I think it's a long term hard effort that you're going to have to take to make sure you keep following through.

Selectman Morin then said, the second one would be communication with the residents. I mean, we've heard numerous different options that we can take. You have anything to add to that other than what's being discussed tonight? Mr. Murray responded, Yeah, I'd like to think a little broader, OK, or globally. And, you know, the Town of Hudson essentially is an 89 million dollar corporation and this Board is the board of directors. The only difference in a corporation and this Board is you're not out to make money, OK? You're out to manage the revenue and the finances of the Town. And I think what happens is while we try to communicate with the public as much as we can, it's too fractured. OK, the Board trying to put out a message and communicate. You have departments and department heads that communicate with the public in her own way. And there's nothing that is consistent or there's not there's again, no real plan on what we should be communicating to the public and how we do it. My thought would be to invest in a full time position for a marketing public information type position that would coordinate all departments, all forms of communications and be the spokesman for the Town through the Board of Selectmen. And we've seen it done at the School District. You know, they created that communications position. You know, what's ironic and sometimes hard to understand is when you see the Schools budget at 85 million and then I said thirty million. They're servicing a couple thousand students and we're service and, you know, 25,000 residents. And believe me, I fully support education. I have two kids that went through the schools that have been very successful in life. But when you look at that perspective there, there's got to be ways we can, you know, collaborate and try and make improvements in the way the Town runs.

Selectman Morin then said just the last question I got, a change in government, Mr. Murray replied saying, so I don't know if the Town needs to change the government, but I would suggest this again. I would suggest that, you know, the Town consider entering into some long term strategic planning, identify a vision, and where the Town wants to go. And as part of that strategic planning, just as a check, you know, on the Town itself, perhaps they ought to put together the Charter Commission and with citizens and groups of people and take a look of whether it's warranted or not. And you don't always it doesn't always mean you're going to change the form of government. You can still have a board of selectmen or governing body. Typically, what might change is the role of the town administrator who switches over to a town manager. And then they take on different responsibilities, which leaves more time for the Board of Directors to do long term strategic planning.

Chairman McGrath said OK, so I'm going to go back to my Mr. Thompson list, and this is the only question that hasn't been asked on this list. Back in 2017 there was a zoning change amendment to increase Zone one, max building height that was largely snuck under the voters noses since the specifics of land use amendments aren't discussed at the annual town hall meeting. If you could change one thing in our zoning code, what would it be and why? Mr. Murray replied saying, That there would be mandated public hearings on that, you know, on those types of issues and that it must be fully presented at the time deliberative session, just like all the other articles are done. The Chairman then said, Ok, so I'm just going to add a comment to that, because those types of decisions, when it's a zoning change, it has to be discussed. And I think that the Zoning Board discusses it, but it ultimately gets before the Planning Board and the Planning Board votes to put it on the warrant for the voters to vote on. So there is public hearings about that. So just so that it's clear that it's not done in the dark of night, it's not done, you know, in secret meetings, it is done. But a lot of times people aren't listening or they're not interested in watching Planning Board meetings. And so it gets it gets discussed at that point. Mr. Murray then said And again, and I would suggest that, you know, there's another fine example of utilizing someone, as, you know, uh, marketing or communications person that would be able to make sure that gets out. Chairman McGrath said, and again, another point of clarification is that the Town Planner usually attends the deliberative sessions with a poster board that's, you know, on display explaining what the zoning changes are. So it's not done in secret, but people have that thought.

The Chairman then said, And then the last question, and it's the same as everybody else. Do you have any relationships with any of the Board members? Mr. Murray responded saying, I don't, except to say, you know, I worked with Selectman Morin and Mr. Malizia I've known you over the years through my, you know, position as fire chief. And Kara, you know, I've known for the last couple of years.

Chairman McGrath asked, Ok, thank you. So I'm going to just open this. Mr. Malizia, do you have any questions for any of the candidates that you'd like to pose?

The Town Administrator responded saying, no. I just want to make sure that everybody understands this position, this appointment is until the next election, just for the public out there. This position is to go to March. Coincidentally Selectman Coutu's term was ending in March. So this will be a full term when somebody runs. But just so folks know, out there in TV land, this is just an appointment until March.

Chairman McGrath added it's a temporary appointment. She then asked the candidates, do any of you have any questions for us that you'd like to ask at this point? No. OK, I guess we can call it a night.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. by Selectman Roy by Selectman Gagnon. Carried 4-0.

Recorded by HCTV and transcribed by Jill Laffin, Executive Assistant.

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Marilyn E. McGrath, Chairman

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David Morin, Selectman

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Kara Roy, Selectman

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Brett Gagnon, Selectman

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