



TOWN OF HUDSON

Town Clerk/Tax Collector



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Minutes of the Deliberative Session of February 12, 2022
Community Center, Lions Avenue
Hudson, New Hampshire 03051

1. OPENING

- **CALL TO ORDER BY THE MODERATOR**, the Honorable Paul Inderbitzen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
- **POSTING OF THE COLORS** by the Police Honor Guard.
- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** recited by Robert Guessferd.
- **THE NATIONAL ANTHEM** sung by the B Naturals.

2. REMARKS BY THE MODERATOR

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you to your Police Honor Guard, great job.

Ladies and gentlemen this is the Deliberative Session of the Hudson Town Meeting. You will acting as a legislative body to determine the final form of the Warrant Articles that will be voted on at the March 8th election. All the articles by law must be placed on the ballot.

The rules that we will follow are the Moderator's Rules which are in the handout that you received today when you checked in. If you have any questions about the rules, please all the articles by law must be placed on the ballot. The rules we will follow are the Moderators Rules, which are in the handout that you received today. When you checked in if you have any questions about the rules, please feel free to ask for clarification at any time. You can raise a point of order to do that. This body may also vote to establish rules that you deem necessary and you may also vote to overrule any decision of the Moderator. If you are new to the Deliberative Session, review those rules. I will go over them a little bit when we get to the end of my remarks here.

As the legislature, we will be discussing the Warrant Articles before us. Please be respectful of all comments and opinions as you would want your comments and opinions to be respected by everyone else. To keep personalities out of the (inaudible) the previous speaker, or the Selectmen member, or the Budget Committee member, or like I said, the previous speaker. All questions and comments are to be directed through the Moderator. There is no requirement that anyone has to answer a question but if a question comes up, they certainly can yield to the question posed.

If you are a registered voter of Hudson when you checked in, you received your red voter card. We will use this card for any votes that need to be taken. Do not lose it, you won't get another one. If after the meeting, there's a box in the back when you go out you can recycle those cards. Only registered voters of Hudson are allowed to participate in the discussion of the warrant. There are some non-members and staff members of the town present and some others - our town Attorney for example, who would be allowed to speak to answer questions to assist in the meeting.

Please turn your phones and pagers off or to silent mode so as not to interrupt the discussions. We'll take a few breaks. We have a long agenda. We'll take a break or so in between a couple of things as we get going. This meeting is being televised by the Hudson Cable and the HCTV. It will be available for viewing or streaming after today on HCTV. So anyone who's watching or doesn't get to see it can go back and look at it again. We appreciate the Hudson Cable Committee and their staff for all that they do in keeping the Hudson citizens informed. So a lot of work to set these things up.

At the end of this meeting, there will be two meetings to follow which won't affect me. The Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen will hold separate meetings to consider or reconsider their recommendations on the Warrant Articles. There's a screen in the back of the room which apparently last week people in the back couldn't see the screen up here. So we now have a new TV screen so if you're in the back there and you can't see over here, you can watch it on there as long as it's up and running. I believe it is.

As you know, last year the voters of Hudson voted to have elections in two places. Every registered voter will be receiving a mailing telling them where they will be voting in March and for all future elections. Ward One is all streets south of Ferry Street, Burnham Road, and Route 111 from Burnham Road out to the town line. They will vote here at the Community Center. Won't be any different than what you've always done in the past. Ward Two will be all addresses on Ferry Street and Burnham Road and to the north. Ward Two will vote at the Alvirne High School cafeteria. In your book is a list of streets of all the Wards. So if your street is in there, you can find where you will vote. You will also get that mailing so watch for it. The only correction in here is that Central Street - the inner part of Central Street votes in Ward One not Ward Two. We had to move the line and it didn't get corrected. Central Street from Burnham Road out will be in Ward Two but from Burnham Road into the bridge will be Ward One. So watch for that announcement in your mailbox in the next few weeks.

Let me just review the rules a little bit. They're in your book. Each Article will be read by the Moderator and then you will recognize a Selectman or Petitioner to present the Article. The operating budget will be presented by the Chair of the Budget Committee. After that, I will open the Article for questions, comments and amendments. The Articles on this Warrant by law must appear on the ballot for voting in March. You can change the numbers, the wording to clarify things if you wish, but you cannot remove any Warrant Article from the (inaudible). A motion to amend an Article would require a second and then I will deal with only one amendment at a time. It's too confusing to go amendments of amendments.

When there are no more amendments or questions on a particular article, I will declare the Article closed and it'll move to the ballot and we'll go on to the next article. Once an article has been closed for debate, it will take a Motion to Reconsider with a majority vote to bring the article up again. Under RSA 4010, the meeting after a warrant article is finalized, can make a Motion to Restrict Reconsideration. That restriction if it passes would mean that that article could not be brought up again later in the meeting. We'll deal with those as we need to. It can only happen after I've closed the article.

Now as I said, only registered voters may speak at the Deliberative Session and will use the voter cards for that purpose. Again, I want to stress the decorum of the speakers. Everyone has a right to be heard, and to speak, ask a question, or make an amendment, and everyone else should respect that. Okay. (inaudible) first, the other thing that people have to move the question would mean to cut off debate. So if the body has heard enough of the discussion and somebody wants to close the debate as long as there's been discussion on both sides, I will take a Motion to Move the Question. Anybody in line will be able to finish their comments and then we will take a vote to cut off debate. If that passes by two-thirds, I usually have a two-thirds and usually it's pretty clear, then we will automatically move on to the next item. There's an item in there if we want to do a secret ballot on an amendment and stuff we can talk about that if there is a request to do that.

That being said, we'll get to the Town Warrant. I'm going to do one thing different this year. The Warrant includes zoning amendments. We normally just pass over them because we can't do anything about them. They're not in the purview of this body to do anything with. However because at voting the last couple of years, a lot of people came up and said well what about the zoning. What are they? What do they do? So I am going to read the zoning amendments into the record and there'll be on the screen so that if anybody has a question or that they can contact the Planning Board. The Planner is in the back of the room with a zoning map. If you have questions about that during the breaks, you can ask him or you can go and seek information from the Planning Board. They are the ones that have control of zoning amendments and the petitions. They have already had public hearings on them. (inaudible) control over zoning amendments accept at the ballot in March.

So the Town of Hudson Warrant - the inhabitants of the Town of Hudson, the County of Hillsborough in the State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in town affairs are hereby notified that the two phases of the Annual Town Meeting will be held as follows:

3. Non Voters

Warrant Article 01

The inhabitants of the Town of Hudson in the County of Hillsborough in the State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in Town affairs are hereby notified that the two phases of the Annual Town Meeting will be held as follows:

First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative Session):

Date: February 12, 2022
 Time: 9:00 a.m.
 Location: Community Center, 12 Lions Avenue, Hudson

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Official Ballot Voting)

Date: March 8, 2022
 Time: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 Ward One Location: Hudson Community Center, 12 Lions Avenue, Hudson
 Ward Two Location: Alvirne High School Cafeteria, 200 Derry Street, Hudson

Warrant Article 02 Repeal Hudson Zoning Ordinance Article XIII – Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

To repeal, in its entirety, Hudson Zoning Ordinance Article XIII – Housing for Older Persons? This does not affect age-restricted developments that currently exist or have been approved. The effect of the repeal would be to remove incentives for future development of age-restricted developments.

(Approved by Planning Board 5-0)

Warrant Article 03 Amend Table of Minimum Dimensional Requirements - Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

To amend the Table of Minimum Dimensional Requirements to reduce the side-yard and rear-yard setbacks for accessory structures & features, such as sheds and pools in the Town Residential zone? This does not apply to garages. These neighborhoods are in the core of Town and have smaller lots than elsewhere in Town.

(Approved by Planning Board 5-0)

Warrant Article 04 Eliminate Requirement for Special Exceptions for Mixed-Use Buildings - Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

To amend §334-10 to eliminate the requirement for a special exception from the ZBA for mixed-use buildings with residential in the Business zone?

(Approved by Planning Board 5-0)

Warrant Article 05 Home Occupation Ordinance - Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

To amend §334-24 to change the home occupation ordinance to allow outdoor activity for daycares as required by state licensing of daycare operations?

(Approved by Planning Board 5-0)

Warrant Article 06 Amend Town Code 334 Permitted Principal Uses – Proposed by Petition

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 5 as proposed by petition for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Amend Town Code 334, Attachment 1, Table of Permitted Principal Uses to remove from permitted use under Industrial (I), General (G), and General-1 (G-1) zones Wholesale, warehouse, self-storage mini-warehouse, or distribution facility effective immediately following passage of this warrant article.

(Disapproved by Planning Board 7-0)

Warrant Article 07 Amend Article III, Building Height – Proposed by Petition

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 6 as proposed by petition for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Amend Article III, General Provisions 334-14 "Building Height" to add Subsection B with the purpose to protect the character of residential neighborhoods from industrial development, as follows: 334-14 B. Notwithstanding subsection A above, buildings that are between 38-feet and 50-feet in height shall be setback a minimum 400-feet from residential zones. This setback shall increase by 10-feet for buildings with a footprint of 100,000 square feet and additionally at a rate of 10 feet for every 100,000 feet thereafter. This is applicable at a fractional rate (ex: 190,000 square footprint imputes an additional 19 feet of setback).

(Disapproved by Planning Board 7-0)

Warrant Article 08 Amend 276-11.1B(12) (a)-(c) to Increase Building Setbacks – Proposed by Petition

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 7 as proposed by petition for the Administrative Requirements and Definitions as follows:

Amend 276-11.1B (12)(a)-(c) to increase all building setback distances to four-hundred feet (400) when a proposed commercial or industrial use in zones (General (G) General -1 (G-1) abuts or is across a HIGHWAY from a residential use or zoning district. The four-hundred-foot distance (400) is from the residential property line to any improved part of the commercial development. This shall also include all zoning districts other than General (G) and General-1 (G-1) that abut a residential use or zoning district and any improved part of the nonresidential development.

(Disapproved by Planning Board 6-1)

Moderator Inderbitzen

If you have any of those questions, please contact the Planning Board or a Planning Department if you have to get clarification on what they mean. Hopefully we won't have all those questions. People will find out what they need to know before they come to vote.

Article 09 Police Facility Expansion and Renovation

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,928,980 for the expansion and renovation of the Police facility and further authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue \$5,928,980 of bonds or notes for this project in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act, (RSA Chapter 33) and authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further raise and appropriate the additional sum of \$148,224.50 for the first year payment on the bond and authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other action necessary to carry out this vote or pass any other vote relative thereto.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0) Tax rate impact \$0.05 (3/5 ballot vote required)

ON THE QUESTIONMarilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

So I'm going to repeat some of what Paul just said just to make sure that it's clear. Warrant Article 9 seeks to appropriate \$5,928,980 for the expansion and renovation of the police station, which is located at One Constitution Drive. This Article would authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue up to \$5,928,980 in bonds or notes for this project. The first year payment on the proposed 20 year bond is estimated to be \$148,224.50. A 3/5 ballot vote is required to pass this Warrant Article. The first year tax rate impact for this project is five cents per \$1,000. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 5 to zero. The Budget Committee has recommended this Article 11 to zero. I'd like to introduce Captain Tad Dionne soon to be Chief Dionne to present this information for you.

Tad Dionne, Police Captain

Thank you. So good morning, everybody. On behalf of the Hudson Police Department, on behalf of my command staff, I would like the opportunity to thank you to present here on Article 9. I'd also like to say good morning to the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen as well.

The building expansion renovation plan is the number one capital improvement plan according to the Capital Improvements Plan Committee in Town of Hudson. The Board of Selectmen as you've already heard were unanimously in favor of this. The Budget Committee was unanimously in favor of this. We are out asking for 5,720 square foot addition and also a renovation of our existing building. The reason we're asking for this is because we have security concerns, we have safety concerns, and we have much needed spatial and storage concerns.

I'm sure many of the residents here are already aware this Article. It has come before you before. Last year Chief Avery spoke about it eloquently and at length. I may not hit the same points as him but I certainly want this opportunity to tell you why we need this expansion. Once again, I want to thank HCTV as well. They helped us get our message out. Two years ago, they produced a really good telling, excellent telling video tour of the Hudson Police Department. It's narrated by Captain Dave Cayot and Detective Rachelle Megowen. It can illustrate much better than I can our spatial needs and some of our concerns. So if we could roll that video briefly right now, that'd be great. Thank you.

Video was shown:

Rachelle Megowen, Detective

Welcome to the Hudson Police Department located at One Constitution Drive. I'm Master Patrol Officer Rachelle Megowen and I'm Captain David Cayot. We'd like to give you a virtual tour of our building. It was built in 1995. At the time, we had 31 sworn police officers and 16 civilian employees. It's a common belief that the building was under constructed at its inception due to budget limitations. As the building stands today, it is 14,000 square feet. As of December 2019, we have 52 sworn police officers and 20 civilian employees. That's an increase of 25 more employees which requires more equipment and vehicles. We have redesigned workspaces in attempt to accommodate spatial needs as the department has grown over the years. Chief William Avery requested an independent assessment of the current and anticipated spatial needs Municipal Resources Incorporated or "MRI" completed this assessment. The report can be located on our website under Department news for your viewing. This virtual tour will help you understand the immediate needs discussed in the MRI's report.

David Cayot, Police Captain

To the western rear of the building is our employee parking lot and entrance. In this aerial view, you can see the parking lot is not secured. Safety and security of our employees is paramount. There have been several incidents throughout the United States of police officers being attacked and killed as they are exiting their police departments. At the time of this recording, there was news of an officer in Arkansas who was ambushed and executed while waiting in his patrol car behind the police station. The community room or the Ann Seabury Conference Room is located to the right from our main lobby. Currently this room is used for any trainings hosted by HPD. Our citizen in youth academies are also held in this room. Some civic groups use this room in the evenings for meetings. During extreme weather, the community room is reserved as a cooling or warming safe station for those in need. Part of the proposed building expansion is to put a wall up which will construct three offices, two public interview rooms, and one polygraph room. A large portion of the Ann Seabury room will be kept as a community room for civic groups to meet as well as the weather safety stations.

Rachelle Megowen, Detective

The public interview room as you saw is located beyond the secure part of our building. As it operates now, our civilian employees are exposed to all hazards that may enter the building under false pretenses. By creating those offices in the community room, we will be protecting unsworn employees from potential dangers. The current public interview room will be transformed into a break room for the dispatchers. They currently do not have a place to eat or take a break. The nine dispatchers are not at liberty to leave the room due to emergency calls and radio traffic. They are oftentimes eating their meals in front of the public who are in the main lobby. An access way will be created to their new break room near the entrance of dispatch. They currently have three workstations, a private bathroom, and kitchenette.

The Records Division is the first office on the left from the main lobby. We would like to reposition the filing cabinet system to gain much needed space. A door will also be put in which will lead into the current administrative area. The evidence room is at maximum capacity for evidence storage. It is almost a full-time job for Detective Marcotte to purge evidence. We are proposing to put a second evidence room in the police department as part of the expansion.

Currently we have no space to work on complex computer investigations. Furthermore, these cases contain highly sensitive information and need to be segregated from the rest of the department. The

proposed addition will contain a secured computer lab where investigators and IT can effectively work on these types of investigations. Our forensic lab is a very small space and not adequate for processing evidence. Currently we have to store equipment in several locations because the lab does not have the space. The proposed crime lab will accommodate spatial needs as well as give evidence technicians a more efficient way to process and secure evidence. We are proposing two way evidence lockers be installed from the lab to the second evidence room.

David Cayot, Police Captain

Port writing room is a recent redesign change. The support services closet which you are about to see used to contain two workstations for officers. This new room contains five workstations and plenty of space for the officers to complete their reports.

Rachelle Megowen, Detective

As you can see, this closet is at maximum capacity. The current facility does not have sufficient storage to keep spare equipment and uniforms. The armory is small and leaves very little room for officers to work on department weapons. This room is also used by members of the Southern New Hampshire Special Operations Unit or SWAT team to store their equipment. Their equipment is kept in hockey type bags and needs to be ready in a moment's notice. The addition will have a storage room for the members of the SWAT team and their gear.

David Cayot, Police Captain

The break room is not large enough for HPD employees to eat their breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Oftentimes officers are forced to eat at their desks or use the roll call as an alternative meeting space.

Rachelle Megowen, Detective

This is the roll call room. Patrol officers begin and end their shift in this room. Roll call is a briefing that takes place three times a day. As you can see, there is not adequate space for officers to sit and write down information being shared from the Sergeant or Lieutenant. The information shared at roll call is oftentimes to keep our officers safe during their tour of duty. The proposed roll call room will not only give more space during roll calls, but it will act as the town's emergency operations center when activated as well.

The Support Services Division is responsible for all the recruitment, hiring, equipment, fleet maintenance, and training. The School Resource Officers also report to the Sergeant in this Division. Due to limited space in the building, the Victim Witness Advocate has a cubicle within this office. This poses many different issues as the Victim Witness Advocate needs to have private conversations with victims. Due to the nature of support services functions and responsibility, there is a constant flow of officers and civilian employees in and out of this office throughout the day.

In the current female locker room, again, there's not enough space. Every single locker is assigned. As you can see, the layout is not ideal. Employees must change into uniform on the wet tile floor while others are showering in the same area. The shower drain is only a few feet away from officer's lockers.

The Hudson Police Department's mission statement is to provide professional police service in partnership with the community through mutual respect and cooperation. We currently serve a

population of 25,000 residents and answer about 32,000 calls for service a year. Our commitment to superior customer service and fostering positive relationships is unwavering.

David Cayot, Police Captain

Please visit www.hudsonnh.gov/police for more information on the independent assessment and recommended changes to our building. Thank you for taking this tour with us.

Tad Dionne, Police Captain

So that's a very telling video. The men and women at the Hudson Police Department work extremely hard to provide this community with a measure of safety and security that we're all comfortable with working here and living here. We've consistently done this since 1995 at the building at One Constitution Drive. Just keep in mind that's before Columbine, was before 911, and it was certainly before the current climate that law enforcement is in today.

Our facility was not built for growth in 1995 and it's certainly not up to date for safety and security for a police facility in 2022. The original plan called for 24,000 square feet. 10,000 square feet of the original plan for that building was cut for budgetary restraints. That left us with 14,000 square feet - almost half of the building was cut out. In 1995 when we moved in - and I remember this - Chief Gendron said we're going to outgrow this building very quickly. By 1998 when he hired me as a police officer, he said we have outgrown the building. From then, we have consistently, consistently through a recycle of addition by subtraction, addition by subtraction, but it has diminishing returns and we're stuck within the same confines of those 14,000 square feet. We've been great stewards of the building. If you come in and you see it, you'll see it looks good, right? We've kept it well maintained. I hope that doesn't hurt us with when it comes to this Article. In fact, I hope that's a benefit when you approve this Article.

I'm going to touch on a couple of key points that already mentioned in the video. When you come into the lobby off to the right is the Ann Seabury community room. Within the confines of that existing room, we're adding three interview rooms. The purpose of that is for safety for the public and especially for safety of our civilian staff. It allows us a place to bring people into an interview room where we can handle their calls for service and they're not coming into the main body of the building where our civilian staff operate.

We'll also address an issue for well-being of our dispatchers, but also the safety of the police officers. The dispatchers, as you saw in the video, have no place to have a break or anything. So we'll be taking the existing public interview room and that'll be a break room directly accessible from the dispatch center. The expansion will certainly address the situation we have with the female locker room. It will provide us with many more lockers, it will be up to date, and it won't be the conditions that that one is in.

Again, for the safety of the offices, we're going to establish a much larger evidence lab. The evidence lab that we have today is not appropriate for today's policing. We use a lot of chemicals in that lab and it's not up to date with ventilation. The newer system or the newer lab that we envision in the expansion will address that issue. It'll also address the evidence room problem. That is not a sustainable issue that we're dealing with right now. It's not sustainable that every single day we have to try to empty some of that room out to add new evidence. This expansion will address that situation.

As you heard, Municipal Resources Inc. or MRI did our spatial needs assessment a couple of years ago. I'm here to tell you in 2011 they did a safety and security assessment for us as well. I still have it. There were many deficiencies in that assessment with our Police Department currently. There is still an issue today. They still have not been addressed. The renovation part of this will certainly address many of those areas that we're talking about. It will secure our rear lot. It will address the issue of safer prisoner entry into the building. It will protect our cruises from the elements. It that will protect our cruises from nefarious activity. It will protect our employees and town property from nefarious activity.

As we already discussed, the building is 27 years old. The renovation will also address some of the existing systems in the building. The building is used 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year. It's stressed and some of the systems in the building are starting to fail. So at this point, I've touched on a few reasons of many more why we need this facility. But why we're quite deficient in space and storage as you can see on the video, what's alarming is the areas that we're at with safety and security. It's crucial to provide the men and women of our Police Department with a safe and secure facility so they can conduct the business of providing our community with well-being and safety.

If you have any additional concerns about your building, we'd like you to come to our open house. If you have any additional concerns about it, if you want a tour, we have an open house February 23rd from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. where we're going to be given tours of the building. I implore you to come out if you have any more questions about it. If you just want to see the building, if you want to see what we're working on, come on out to our open house. Our staff will be there to give you tours from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. If you can't make the open house, call me. My information is up there. Give me a call, send me an e-mail, whatever. I'll make sure we get you a tour at your convenience at your schedule. If you have any questions that you're not sure about this, give me a call whenever you want. Give me a call, leave me a message. If I don't answer, I'll get back to you and we can discuss any of your concerns. If you don't plan on voting for this, give me a call and I'll try to explain it a little bit better than I could do right here at this point as to why we need this.

I can only tell you, it's an honor to serve this community. I'm privileged to serve this community. The safety, and the security, and the storage is what we need to continue to provide excellent services for Hudson. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you, Captain.

Tad Dionne, Police Captain

Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

You might want to just stay here in case there are questions. I'm now going to open Warrant Article 9 the police facility expands to questions, comments, or amendments. Bonding wording cannot be changed by State law. So that wouldn't be (inaudible) however if you have a question, we're going to fix the mic. Please go to the mic. We'll open it for questions, comments, and concerns, argument. State your name and address when you do come.

Debra Putnam

Debra Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. Homeowner since 1986. I'm speaking in support of this Warrant Article. I feel that the bringing the facility up to the standards needed by the officers and employees to optimally do their jobs for the citizens in this town is not a luxury. It's a necessity. Simply put.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you Mr. Moderator. Shawn Jasper, 83 Old Derry Road. I rise in support of the Article but I do have questions - two simple questions, I hope, for the Board of Selectmen. Particularly in the past, I believe, that the length of the bond has been part of the Article. So I'm curious as to what is anticipated here. We do have a dollar amount for the first year of payment. So I just wonder how long you're looking at bonding this for and what you're anticipating the interest rate will be for that bond.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question on the bonding. Anyone yield to that? Oh, 20 years is what they're looking at. I'm told the interest rate right now on the 20 year bond is 2 ½ percent. That could change but that's what they're looking at when you prepare this information. Anyone else to speak on Warrant Article 9?

Holly Wagner

Hello. My name is Holly Wagner. I live at 14 Tessier Street here in Hudson. I am totally in favor of this. To me, this shouldn't even be a question. It shouldn't even be a vote to put it on. Everybody here takes the extra money and goes to Dunkin Donuts, goes out to dinner, and yet you want us to vote for our safety, the safety of our children, and the safety of this community so that you can have a better facility to help protect us and to do the neat work that you need inside that building is really a no brainer. I'm sorry it didn't get through last year but hopefully this year it can get through. I appreciate all the work that you guys do. Thank you for keeping us safe back there and hopefully this community can give you guys what you need. Sorry it isn't more.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further questions? If not, we will close the discussion on Warrant Article 9 and moves to the ballot.

Before I read Warrant Article 10, I will ask the Chairperson of the Selectmen. I did this last week and I forgot again to introduce the members of the Board of Selectmen - Chairperson McGrath.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman of Board of Selectmen

So to my right is Bob Guessferd. He's our newest member to the Board. Dave Morin is next to him. Kara Roy is next to Dave and Brett Gagnon is next to Kara.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We also have Administrator Malizia, our Finance Director Lisa Labrie, and over there is our Town Clerk Roger Ordway. Sorry. I always want to say Orford I don't know why. And now I will also recognize Chairperson Weissgarber of the Budget Committee to introduce the members of the Budget Committee.

Richard Weissgarber

Good morning, Rich Weissgarber, Chairman on the Budget Committee, 21 Flying Rock Road. So to my left is Vice-Chairman Cole, Mr. Shawn Murray, Mr. Normand Martin, Miss Kathy Leary, Miss Grace Hopkins, Mr. Urrutia who is the Clerk, Mr. Ted Trost is the Alternate Clerk, Vice- Chairman Lamothe is the School Board. Rep., and we have Mr. Bob Clegg, and then Selectman Gagnon is the primary, and Selectman Guessferd has actually, you know, helped out on the Budget Committee this year quite a bit as the alternate.

Warrant Article 10 General Fund Operating Budget

Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$32,081,041? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$31,586,809 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action 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.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-3) Tax rate impact \$6.85

ON THE QUESTIONRichard Weissgarber, Chairman, Budget Committee

Warrant Article 10, the FY23 town general fund operating budget. The Board of Selectmen directed department heads to submit operating budgets with up to a 1.5 increase, exclusive of labor and benefits costs. Other major items or new initiatives were to be addressed separately for the Board's consideration either as a request outside the department's budget, or in the form of a warrant article, and there were several.

The Board reviewed each major item and adjusted the department's budget for those that were deemed essential for this current year to a department's operation. The Board voted to send the Budget Committee the general fund operating budget of \$32,098,523, the sewer fund operating budget of \$2,138,465, and the water fund operating budget of \$4,622,588. The Board also approved the general fund default budget in the amount of \$31,586,809 and the water fund default budget in the amount of \$4,184,025.

After reviewing the general fund operating budget, the Budget Committee is recommending a general fund operating budget of \$32,081,041. The projected tax rate for the general fund is \$6.85 per \$1,000, which is a 33 cent increase from FY22. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 3 to zero. The Budget Committee has recommended this Article 8 to 3. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We'll now open Article 10 to questions, comments, amendments. Yes, ma'am. Your name please.

Barbara Blue

Barbara Blue, 11 Barbara Lane. I'd like to make a motion. Back in December, the Budget Committee made a motion to reduce the Selectmen's salaries from \$3,200 to \$1,200 per person per year and this equates to a \$10,000 reduction in the \$30 million budget which is approximately three hundredths of a percent. Although I absolutely respect the Budget Committee and the grueling responsibility they have, I personally believe it was an unwarranted adjustment. First although that we're not talking about a sustainable salary here. Keeping the stipend at a reasonable amount is only respectful for the amount of time these individuals invest. What is reasonable amount you may ask? Let's look at a few of the comparisons. The Trustees of the trust...

Moderator Inderbitzen

Miss Blue. Your amendment is to add what?

Barbara Blue

To increase the budget line 4199-5050-11900 from \$6,000 to \$16,000.

MOTION BY BARBARA BLUE TO INCREASE LINE ITEM 4199-5050-119 FROM \$6,000 TO \$16,000

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

So you want to raise it by \$10,000?

Barbara Blue

Right.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That item. Is there a second? Who is that back there? Mr. Coutu.

MOTION SECONDED BY ROGER COUTU

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. We're now going to speak just on the amendment to increase the budget by \$10,000 in the line item listed for the Selectmen. Miss Blue go ahead. Now you can talk to your amendment.

Barbara Blue

Okay. That trustees of the funds bookkeeper is paid \$700 per year. The Supervisors of the Checklist is paid \$1,000 per year, the Town Treasurer is paid \$7,000 per year, and their notes in the town budget there's some elected positions received \$9 an hour, and let's also review the average time commitment for a Selectman per month. Two Board of Selectmen meetings averaging six hours a month, for liaison

assignment meetings averaging eight hours a month, additional liaison assignments averaging two hours a month, answering town e-mails averaging eight hours a month, and town event volunteering averaging one hour month, and this totals 26 hours a month or 312 hours a year.

Secondly, Selectmen are responsible for overseeing the town budget, town department and head activities, infrastructure repairs and upgrades, master planning initiatives and guidances, town legal issues, and court cases, payroll for town employees, hiring and firing for town departments, reviewing and responding to residents' concerns, health and safety of the community, disbursement of federal and State funds, coordination of many town events and activities, union contract reviews and negotiations, and future minded planning for the town in general. The individuals suited for these roles should be well educated, logical, and patient. They have to be good public speakers, able to deal with stress, and have the ability to command complicated situations as they arise all while holding down a full time job and attending to their personal lives.

Lastly like many, I'm very concerned about the lack of new and young local faces in local politics. Although this stipend certainly won't make or break someone's life, I find it important to offer a respectable stipend to attract new and young people to these positions. As it is, it can be a thankless job being the face of over 20,000 residents and the customer death service to any and all issues that arise. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We are talking about amendment number one to add \$10,000 to the line item for the Selectmen. Anyone wish to speak on the amendment? Yes, Sir.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'm still Shawn Jasper and I still live at 83 Old Derry Road. I rise in support of the amendment having served on the Board of Selectmen for 17 years. I know that no one does this for the money but it is a time consuming job. When you look at a budget now that good lord, I can't remember probably when I was first elected to the Budget Committee in 1980. We were probably at \$5,000 for the town budget and I think at that time the Selectmen were receiving probably \$3,200 back then. So certainly if this is just putting it back to where it was, that's still not a lot of money comparative to what the town thought our Selectmen were worth, you know, over 40 years ago.

So I would highly encourage this body to adopt the amendment and to give some recognition to the Selectmen. Whether we agree or disagree with the Board of Selectmen or not, we need to recognize that they work for us very diligently. It isn't just weekly meetings. It's a constant. So I would, again, urge the support and thank you for what you do.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Anyone else to speak on the amendment? Yes, ma'am.

Kate Messner

Kate Messner, 10 Third Street. I rise in support of the amendment as well. I think the Select Board does a great job. I think they do a very difficult job and I think it should be restored to the former level. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Kevin Walsh

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane. I rise in support of the amendment as well. The question I have is the ability for the Budget Committee to recommend a change in the compensation for an elected official. We have history here of presenting separate warrant articles if we want to change the compensation whether it be the Board of Selectmen, or School Board members, or even our Tax Collector/Town Clerk. So for the Budget Committee to take specifically out of the line item 5110-119 this amount of funds to me is something that kind of goes beyond what their ability to do in terms of recommending a budget. So I would just look at that as a comment that, you know, that's the Budget Committee's prerogative to make a recommendation but I think it's up to the legislative body, us as voters, to not do this as being hidden in the operating budget itself. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion on amendment number one to increase by \$10,000 the line item for the Board of Selectmen? Yes, Ma'am.

Jen Rousseau

Jen Rousseau, 123. Wason Road. I also rise in support of adding the \$10,000 back and everything I agree with that's been said already. Only thing I would add just as, you know, young volunteers want to do jobs like this. It's nearly impossible for a family to support, you know, all the meetings all the time and the sacrifice that it takes from their partners. So I think adding that \$10,000 in is at a minimum and I think we should look seriously at increasing it beyond that to support other very talented and younger people to get into these positions of volunteership.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you very much. Anyone else to discuss the amendment to Warrant Article #10? Yes, Sir.

Shawn Murray

Good morning. Shawn Murray, 55 Kienia Road. I am the person that made the recommendation to reduce the Selectmen's budget and it was plain and simple for me. Back earlier this year, there was a vacancy in the Board of Selectmen. The process for filling that goes to the Board of Selectmen themselves. They went through an application period, did interviews, and could not come to agreement amongst the Board to see the proper candidate, and this resulted in the town having to go to Superior Court to have a Superior Court Judge appoint a replacement for the Selectman. The Board of Selectmen are accountable to the taxpayers and we expended taxpayer funds because the Board could not come to consensus of a Selectman candidate and I think they should be held accountable for that. That is the reason why the motion was made to reduce the budget.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you further discussion on amendment number one? If not, you're ready to vote. The amendment

is to add \$10,000 to the Selectmen number.

Roger Coutu

I'm sorry Sir. I rise - first I made the second - didn't expect that someone would step forward and make an amendment to the budget but I'm glad it was done. As you know, members of the Board, members of the Budget Committee, and the general public, I served 13 years on the Board of Selectmen. The person who made the amendment eloquently explained the details and the work that's involved in being a member of the Board of Selectmen. I can attest that all of that is true and I can also attest to the fact that it is a little more involved than the numbers that were presented.

I've gone to backyard meetings where I've spent six to eight hours with 10 to 20 people on several occasions. I answered e-mails several times during the day, made phone calls every single day, attended various meetings, various functions, tried to do my best to incorporate and reshape my life. At the time I was first appointed, I owned a business, then I retired, but I was able to fit into my schedule all that was necessary to do the best I could as a member of the Board of Selectmen.

I know there are members of the Board of Selectmen who have said publicly, they don't do it for the money and none of us ever do it for the money. We do it because we care about our town. Why would somebody want to leave their family and go to a meeting - and I'm talking other than a Board of Selectmen - and conduct town business on various other boards and commissions. They do it because they love this city, their town. I love Hudson and I still love Hudson. I know every single member of the Board of Selectmen cares about this town and I would suggest to the members of the Board of Selectmen that to vote against this recommendation is really voting against the budget you originally proposed. So I would hope that you feel deserving of the salary which you have been getting every single year and now has been reduced in this budget.

The money that we're being paid comes to \$8 a day. That's what they're making now and they want to reduce that down to \$3.6, \$3.40 a day. I'm telling you that car expenses for gas back and forth to meetings and in many cases like myself, many times I was fortunate and went to meetings out of town with the Town Administrator and we'd use a town vehicle. But many times I went to Concord and did things on my own and expended my own gas, never put in for reimbursement, paid the tolls, whatever. Selectmen have a very difficult job and democracy at the time - because this was presented as an argument, and I hope I didn't have to get into this, because a Board of Selectmen couldn't come to a decision on an appointment to fill the position which I left is democracy in action. The vote was 2 to 2. There was nothing that was going to happen that was going to change that vote. It was obvious. So you proceed to the next step and that's the procedure that occurred. That is not a punishable offense. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Mr. Clegg further discussion on the amendment?

Robert Clegg

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Robert Clegg, 39 Trigate Road, and I want to clear up a couple of things. One, this didn't require us to go before the body with a warrant article because the Selectmen are the ones who decided how much they got paid. They never asked the body. It was never a warrant article to begin with.

I want to clear up about volunteerism. You volunteer because you want to be part of the government that treats you fairly or unfairly, whatever it is. If you want to talk about people being unpaid, ask Mr. Ulery who's a current State Rep. how many hours he spends every week for \$100 a year before taxes, which comes out to about \$81 a year when you pay the taxes. But he's a volunteer and he goes up. I have been up there since '94 and when I was up there, I kept my job only I work nights so I could serve the public. Again for \$81 a year because I believe that in order to have fair government, you have to participate. The fact that I hear that we need to pay people to volunteer in order to get volunteers, that's not what we are. We're a republic. We're not a democracy. We're a republic and I find it offensive that people stand here and think it isn't. I was one of the people that went for the position of Selectman and halfway through I realized I was being part of something I shouldn't be because we were allowing the judicial branch of government to choose who was going to be a member of the legislative branch. That's not the way it's supposed to be. It's supposed to be you and me deciding who's going to represent us in a republic, not some judge.

When I was part of the Council and I was part of the Selectmen, we didn't get 32, or 35, whatever it is, we didn't get that. We spent a lot of time. There were 15 of us and it took us hours because we always split between 8 and 7. It took forever to get anything done, which is why we're back to five Selectmen. If you really want a history, go look at what happened when there was three Selectmen and they couldn't get along. Then we were five Selectmen and we couldn't get along. Then we were 15 Councilors and we couldn't get along. But we didn't demand \$3,500 for our "volunteer efforts", and I want to stress "VOLUNTEER". If you want to add money in the budget, add it to the people who are employees. Give them a better insurance package, give them something to keep them because those are the ones that keep everything running. When you're a volunteer in the legislative branch, that's what you do, and you try to do the best you can, and you get to decide whether or not we did a good job when we have to run for re-election.

So I'm not voting for this now. I think it's time that everybody earn the same amount of money. And if I could, I'd make the motion that we pay them exactly what we pay State Reps. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion? Sir. We have a motion who made that? Mr. Trost moves the question.

MOTION BY TED TROST TO MOVE THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

Is there a second? Then I will take first the member who hasn't spoken before and then we'll move question. Nope. Okay.

SECONDED BY NORMAND MARTIN

Moderator Inderbitzen

That is to cut off debate on discussion of the amendment and then we will vote the amendment. We're going to use our voter cards. If you are in favor of cutting off debate and voting on the amendment, please raise your voter cards. Those opposed to cutting off debate. The ayes have it. It passes.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY BARBARA BLUE TO INCREASE LINE ITEM 4199-5050-119 FROM \$6,000 TO \$16,000

Moderator Inderbitzen

We're now voting on the amendment to add the \$10,000. I'll ask the Finance Director you have the correct line item that was mentioned because I didn't write it down for the \$10,000. You know what that line item is? That's not one we have to - yes, the motion was made to a specific line item and I want to make sure we get that as part of the. As long as you know it, that's all. I don't know if we have to say it again. We know where it's all supposed to do.

Lisa Labrie, Finance Director

5110-119.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. We're adding \$10,000 to that account. If you are in favor of the amendment of adding the \$10,000 please raise your voter cards. Thank you. Those opposed raise your cards. The ayes have it. The amendment passes.

MOTION CARRIED

Moderator Inderbitzen

We are back on Article 10 as amended. So we have to change that to \$32,091,041. Any further discussion on Article 10 as amended? Yes, Sir.

Shawn Jasper

I just have a question for whomever would yield. Are there new employees within this budget and if there are, what are the positions? Where departments are they in?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question of the Board? Anyone wish to yield to that? Are there new positions in this budget?

Selectman Roy

There was one part-time position proposed for a bus driver for the Senior Center and I believe the dollar amount was \$31,000 but I will yield to the Town Administrator for the exact dollar amount.

Moderator Inderbitzen

\$31,206 – part-time bus driver for the Senior Center. Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article #10 the operating budget as amended. If not, I will close the discussion on Warrant Article #10 and it goes to the ballot.

Let's do two more - the sewer and water and then take a break if that's okay with everybody.

Article 11 Sewer Fund Operating Budget

Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$2,138,465? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$2,108,825 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action 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.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0) Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'll recognize Selectboard member Gagnon to present the sewer fund operating budget.

Selectman Gagnon

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'm here to represent Article 11. Warrant Article 11 looks to raise and appropriate \$2,138,465 for the operation of the town sewer utility. The sewer utility is a fund that is funded by sewer user fees and charges. There are no changes to the sewer rates for Fiscal Year 2023. The default budget for the sewer utility is \$2,108,825 should this article fail to pass? The sewer fund is a special revenue fund and all costs are paid by the sewer users and not the property taxpayers. There is no tax rate impact for this warrant article. The Board of Selectmen have recommended this 5 to zero and the Budget Committee has recommended this 11 to zero.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I will now open Article #11 sewer fund operating budget two questions, comments or amendments. Anyone wish to discuss the sewer budget? Seeing none, we'll close the discussion on Article 11 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 12 Water Fund Operating Budget

Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$4,622,588? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$4,184,025 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action 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.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'll recognize Selectwoman McGrath to present Article 12.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Water fund operating budget Warrant Article 12 raises and appropriates \$4,622,588 for the operation of the town's water utility. The water utility is funded by water users, user fees, and charges. There are no changes to the water rates for Fiscal Year 2023. The default budget for the water utility is \$4,184,025 should this article fail to pass. The water fund is a special revenue fund and all costs are paid by the water users and not the general taxpayer. There is no tax rate impact for this warrant article. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this article 5 to zero. The Budget Committee has recommended this Article 11 to zero.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We'll now open Article 12 the water fund operating budget to questions, comments, concerns. Yes, Sir.

ON THE QUESTION

Roger Coutu

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Roger Coutu, 7 - I forgot my address, honestly.

Moderator Inderbitzen

I do that all the time Mr. Coutu.

Roger Coutu

And I say my wife has problems. Only one question, Mr. Moderator. I noticed a significant increase in the water fund - almost \$500,000. Could someone explain to me why this increase is necessitated in this upcoming fiscal year?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question of the Board on the water fund budget? Town Administrators Malizia will yield.

Roger Coutu

My address is 7 Pondview Drive. Flashback.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

So the town would be purchasing more water from Pennichuck due to increased demand in the town. So we've budgeted that additional water we're purchasing from Pennichuck.

Roger Coutu

Can I ask the condition of our existing wells in Litchfield?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

One of the wells has a PFAS – it's exceeding the PFAS standard. So right now it is not online. The other well is online so that's why we had to purchase more water from Pennichuck.

Roger Coutu

Okay, thank you. That answers it. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #12? Yes, Ma'am.

Debra Putnam

Debra Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. I stand in support of the water fund operating budget proposed amount of \$4,622,588. The supply of water to our community is absolutely necessary for our community to prosper and grow. Simply put.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 12? Seeing none, we'll close discussion on Warrant Article 12 moves to the ballot.

Everyone want to take a little break? Is that okay?

MOTION BY ROGER COUTU, SECONDED BY STEVE MALIZIA, TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION ON ARTICLES 9 THROUGH 12

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

The motion by Mr. Coutu is to restrict reconsideration on Articles 9 through 12. That means they cannot be brought up again at this meeting at a later time. Does everyone understand that? If you are in favor of restricting reconsideration, please raise your voter cards. Thank you. Those opposed. The ayes have it. It is restricted.

MOTION CARRIED

Moderator Inderbitzen

And we'll take a 10 minute recess.

...Oh, I'm sorry, 24th. It's in my notes, but they're at the end. Thank you. February 24th they've asked me to moderate it which I'm always - well, you know, glad to do for them. They set the rules. These aren't my rules anymore. They're their rules so I can follow someone else's rules. It'll be at 6:30 p.m. here in the Community Center and it will be televised. We'll have that so thank you.

Let's get back into order.

Article 13 Hudson Support Staff Local 1801 Union Contract

Ratification of a contract negotiated between the Town of Hudson Board of Selectmen and the Hudson Support Staff, AFSCME Local 1801 Union for Wage & Benefit Increases. Shall the Town of Hudson vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Hudson Board of Selectmen and the Hudson Support Staff Local 1801 which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits:

Year	Amount
7/1/22 – 6/30/23	\$57,781
7/1/23 – 6/30/24	\$54,893
7/1/24 – 6/30/25	\$56,505

and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$57,781 for the Fiscal Year 2023, said sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those paid in the prior fiscal year?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 10-0)
 Tax Rate Impact \$.02 cents

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'll recognize Selectman Morin.

David Morin, Selectman

Warrant Article 13 proposes a three-year contract for the members of the Hudson Support Union AFSCME Local 1801. This group of people is probably the group that most of us in this room and most of us in this town talk to. They're the ones that basically help solve all the problems when you have questions on your tax bills, things of that nature, the HCTV, and we know the work that they do. This group covers 23 employees. The Association includes the Assistant Town Clerk, Town Collectors, Administrative Aides, Senior Accounting Clerk, Utility Clerks, Custodians, HCTV Production Coordinators, Inspectional Service personnel, and Human Service Specialist.

The contract provides a 2% cost of living adjustment in year one. 3% in years two and three. Eligible employees will receive a step on their anniversary date. The contract also includes a step scale adjustment in the first year. The minimum step on the salary scale has been deleted and one additional step has been added to the end of the pay scale.

A footwear allowance has been increased by \$25 per year for four eligible employees. The contract will run from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025. The Warrant Article would add two cents to the tax rate in the

first year and would add four cents to the tax rate over years two and three. The Board of Selectmen approved it 5 to 0. The Budget Committee 10 to 0. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We'll now open Warrant Article 13 to questions, comments, concerns. Anyone wish to (inaudible) the Hudson Support Staff Union Contract? Yes, Sir.

Shawn Murray

Shawn Murray, 55 Kienia Road. I just want to rise in support of this. We see many collective bargaining agreements come through the Budget Committee and this one in particular is very reasonable. Probably support people that are most underpaid from a scale wise and anything we can do to keep them and retain them as employees is a good thing for the town. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Anyone else to address the Hudson Support Staff Union Contract? If not, we will close the discussion on Warrant Article 13. It moves to the ballot.

Article 14 Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 which will be added to the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in March 2008?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 10-1)
Tax Rate Impact \$.01 cents

Chairman McGrath

Warrant Article 14 seeks to appropriate \$25,000 to put funding into the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund. This capital reserve fund was established in 2008 for the purpose of conducting future property revaluations. This capital reserve fund currently has a balance of \$278,404. New Hampshire municipalities are required to reassess property a minimum of once every five years. Hudson's last town-wide property reassessment was in 2017. The town is conducting a reassessment in Fiscal Year 2022 and plans to withdraw \$175,000 from the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund leaving a balance in the fund of approximately \$103,000 before this addition. The tax rate impact for this Warrant Article is one cent per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this article 5 to 0. The Budget Committee has recommended this article 10 to 1.

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Now open Article 14 Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund two questions, comments, concerns, amendments. Seeing none, let's close the discussion on Warrant Article 14. It goes to the ballot. Mr. Bernard. I didn't see your hand up in the back.

Leo Bernard

I'm sorry. Leo Bernard, 3 Bungalow Ave. I notice here that the Budget Committee voted 10 to 11 but only last article, Article 13 it says 10 to 0. Is there a member - I don't understand. It should be 10 to 1 or 11. It should be 11 or because they're saying 10 to 1 for this one but the last one was 10 to 0.

Moderator Inderbitzen

But that might have been that a member wasn't present.

Leo Bernard

But all the articles are read at the same time to everybody. So I'm just wondering how that happened? Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

The Administrator will yield to the question.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

On Article 13 which was the labor contract, a member recused themselves and did not participate in the vote. That's why it's recorded is 10 to 0.

Leo Bernard

Okay. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. Are we now done with Warrant Article 14? Ma'am.

Holly Wagner

Holly Wagner, 14 Tessier Street here in Hudson. For the property that you're going to be renovating, which property is it?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Oh, this is a revaluation.

Holly Wagner

Revaluation?

Moderator Inderbitzen

This is for determining the value of the town for tax purposes.

Holly Wagner

Okay and what are you revaluating? Like what buildings?

Moderator Inderbitzen

That would be someone over here who could tell us about what the revaluation involves. Chairperson McGrath?

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

It would be every property in the town is going to be re-evaluated. By law, we have to do that every five years.

Holly Wagner

Okay. Do you consider the police station part of your town to re-evaluate? Is it...

Unknown Speaker

It's tax exempt.

Moderator Inderbitzen

No. Town properties are tax exempt.

Holly Wagner

You have a surplus of how much money in the that you just stated?

Moderator Inderbitzen

The money in the fund?

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Oh in the re-evaluation fund? Currently has a balance of \$50,000. Wait a minute, I'm looking at something - I turned the paper over. The Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$278,404. I'll read the paragraph again just so it's clear for everybody.

Holly Wagner

Yup and then you're going to use how much this year?

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

New Hampshire municipalities are required to reassess property a minimum of once every five years. Hudson's last town wide property reassessment was in 2017. The town is conducting a reassessment in this current year, in Fiscal Year 2022, and plans to withdraw \$175,000 from the property reevaluation

fund balance leaving a balance in the fund of approximately \$133,000 before this addition. So it would add the \$25,000. It would put it back into the fund balance.

Holly Wagner

So you basically do a re-evaluation every five years you'd say?

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Every five years it's required.

Holly Wagner

So if you don't get the \$25,000 this year, you could get it next year and...

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

It would reduce it. The purpose of the fund balance is so that it's not such an impact on the taxpayer. So instead of raising all of the money at once and it would be a big hit on the tax rate.

Holly Wagner

Yeah I'm just trying to figure out how to help the cheapskates in Hudson so if we didn't give \$25,000 this year because you have a bunch of money, that maybe we can give it to like other places that need because they won't vote. So we didn't vote for this and maybe something else. I'm just trying to figure it out because everybody votes no to everything. So since you had \$100,000...

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Well this is like putting money in a savings account for yourself.

Holly Wagner

Yeah, I get it but that's why I was just checking to see how much money you had left.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That's all it can be used for.

Holly Wagner

So yeah, I know, I know. I just wanted to check to see how much money.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir Mr. Jasper.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you. So I'm going to assume that this is a statistical reevaluation because of the low cost. If and maybe Mr. Malizia can nod his head. This is not a boots on the ground, somebody knocking on every door.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

There will be some sort of knocking on doors, but typically...

Shawn Jasper

But this is not your typical we're going to.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

(inaudible)

Shawn Jasper

Right. So that's why this is relatively inexpensive is because it's not a full revaluation where every house is measured and every property is looked at. A full re-evaluation which will be necessary at some point will probably cost well over a \$1 million by the time we get there but certainly a lot more than we have in the fund. So it's necessary to grow this fund balance every year so that when we get to the point where it may be ordered that we need to do a full boots on the ground re-evaluation that we will not have to impact the tax rate to the degree I would expect we'll never have enough money in this fund to pay for a full boots on the ground re-evaluation but we should be putting money away. So even though you might look at this and say, "Oh, we don't need to put any money in," yes we do because we need to be looking to the future when we have to do that. So unless somebody on the Board wants to say I'm wrong. I do believe that is the factual case and that's why I would support this and encourage us to continue to put money away each year.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Are done with Warrant Article 14? Yes, Ma'am.

Debra Putnam

I just want to speak in support of it. Debra Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. Here since '86. My property, I believe, was one of the ones that was the small percentage that was done as boots on the ground last year. I had people with their credentials come to my front door and they took measurements of the property, and verified this, and verified that, and everything else and I thought it was related to the, shall we say small sampling, you know, that would be done of an actual home instead of all being done through a computer evaluation.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That's all ongoing now in this Fiscal Year not next year Fiscal Year.

Debra Putnam

Exactly, yeah.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion Article 14? Seeing none, now I'm really going to close Article 14 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 15 Fire Apparatus Refurbishment/Repair Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 which will be added to the Fire Apparatus Repair/Refurbishment Capital Reserve Fund previously established in March 2008?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)
Tax Rate Impact \$.01 cents

Kara Roy, Selectwoman

Warrant Article 15 seeks to appropriate \$25,000 to put funding into the Fire Apparatus Refurbishment and Repair Capital Reserve Fund. The capital reserve fund was established in 2008 for the purpose of refurbishing and repairing fire apparatus. The Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$134,674. The tax impact for this Article is one cent per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen recommended this article 5 to 0 and the Budget Committee has recommended this Article 11 to 0.

So if I could just add, it is imperative that our town facilities and our town equipment be serviceable and operational and capital reserve funds generally make that possible without going to having to go to the taxpayers for large amounts of money at one time. It's like a savings account to replace your roof, or your car, or whatever. So I fully support this Warrant Article and I hope everybody else does too. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I now open Warrant Article 15 Fire Apparatus Refurbishment Repair Capital Reserve Fund to questions, comments, amendments. Anyone wish to address Warrant Article 15? Seeing none. Are we sure now? I'll close Warrant Article 15 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 16 VacCon Truck Replacement Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 which will be added to the VacCon Truck Replacement Capital Reserve Fund as previously established in March 2006. \$15,000 of this sum will come from General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance and \$15,000 from the Sewer Fund?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)
Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

David Morin, Selectman

Good morning again. Warrant Article 16 seeks to appropriate \$30,000 to be put into funding into the

VacCon Truck Replacement Capital Reserve Fund. \$15,000 of this will be appropriated from the sewer fund and \$15,000 will come from the general fund. This Capital Reserve Fund was established in 2006 for the purpose of replacing the VacCon truck. The VacCon truck is used to clean up the town's sewer system. It is also used to clean out the town's storm drainage system.

The Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$53,286. Expenditures from this fund require the approval of the voters at Town Meeting. The tax impact for this Warrant Article is less than one cent per 1,000. Board of Selectmen recommended this 5 to 0. The Budget Committee recommended this 11 to 0. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I'll now open Article 16 to questions, comments, concerns, amendments. Anyone wish to address for Warrant Article 16? Seeing none, I'll close the discussion on Warrant Article 16 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 17 Energy Efficiency Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 which will be added to the Energy Efficiency Capital Reserve Fund previously established in March 2020?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 10-1)
Tax Rate Impact \$.01 cents

Brett Gagnon, Selectman

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Warrant Article 17 seeks and appropriates \$25,000 to putting into the Energy Efficiency Capital Reserve Fund. This Capital Reserve Fund was established in 2020 for the purpose of assessing, designating, and implementing energy efficiency projects in town buildings and properties. This Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$28,430. The tax impact for this Warrant Article is one cent per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this 5 to 0. The Budget Committee has recommended this 10 to 1. As the Sustainability Committee liaison, I am in full support of this effort. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We'll now open Article 17 to questions, comments, amendments. Anyone wish to address Warrant Article 17? If not, we'll close the discussion on Warrant Article 17 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 18 Police Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 which will be added to the Police Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established March 9, 2021?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)
Tax Rate Impact \$.03 cents

ON THE QUESTION

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Warrant Article 18 seeks to appropriate \$100,000 to put funding into the Police Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. This Capital Reserve Fund was established in March 2021 for the purpose of purchasing new and replacement tasers, bulletproof shields, and body cameras for the Police Department. This Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$50,000. The tax impact for this Warrant Article is three cents per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 5 to 0. The Budget Committee has recommended this Article 11 to 0.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Let's open Warrant Article 18 to comments, questions, or amendments. Anyone wish to address Warrant Article 18? Yes, Sir.

Kevin Walsh

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane. Capital reserve funds are tremendously important to the town in terms of putting money aside for future use. There's a lot of moving parts that are happening in the community today. We're talking about re-evaluation, we're talking about tax rates going up, etc. What I would like to do is make an amendment to this Article Mr. Moderator that the Article will change to appropriate the sum of up to \$100,000 from the June 30th unassigned fund balance to be added to the Police Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established in March 9, 2021.

MOTION BY KEVIN WALSH, SECONDED BY SHAWN MURRAY, TO AMEND WARRANT ARTICLE 18 TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF UP TO \$100,000 FROM THE JUNE 30TH UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO BE ADDED TO THE POLICE SAFETY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED IN MARCH 9, 2021

Moderator Inderbitzen

Seconded - there's a motion to put in the words "up go...?"

Kevin Walsh

Up to \$100,000 from the June 30th unassigned fund balance.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Ahh from the unassigned fund balance.

Kevin Walsh

Correct.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Adding those words in it would be very similar to the wording on 16. Okay. Seconded by Mr. Murray. So we are on an amendment to insert the words “up to \$100,000 - some to come from the general fund unassigned fund balance of June 30, 2022.” Is that correct?

Kevin Walsh

Yes. If you'd like to add them. To be clear, the general fund unassigned balance.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Let's put that up there so everybody can see it. Is that your amendment Mr. Walsh?

Kevin Walsh

Yes, yes, Mr. Moderator. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay, so we're adding the words “up to \$100,000 from the unassigned fund balance of June 30, 2022”, which will be added to the Police Safety Capital Reserve Fund. We are now to speak to your amendment.

Kevin Walsh

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. The current fund balance that we have today use about \$6.3 million. You take the \$600,000 that's put into the operating to offset tax rate. That leaves us with about \$5.7 million. So I'm looking to do is take basically 2% of that balance and apply that to this particular Warrant Article. That still leaves us with about 7% of a target. I know the target that DRA usually says is about between 5% and 10% should be your unassigned fund balance on a yearly basis. So we're about 7% now but revenues are running ahead of plan. So I think we'll be in pretty good shape. I think this would be a way to mitigate just a little bit of the tax impact that we're going to be seeing in our tax bills going forward. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. On the amendment. Mr. Weissgarber.

Richard Weissgarber

Rich Weissgarber, 21 Flying Rock Road. So I just had a quick question in regards to the amendment. Does that reduce the tax rate impact to zero?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Yes. That would be the tax impact would be changed to zero when it goes to the ballot if this passes.

Richard Weissgarber

And would we need to change the words to vote - if we're not voting to raise and appropriate anymore,

right? We're basically just going to use...

Moderator Inderbitzen

No. We're still raising and appropriating. We're just saying where it's coming from.

Richard Weissgarber

Okay.

Moderator Inderbitzen

It's not coming from the taxes. It's coming from the unassigned fund balance.

Richard Weissgarber

Okay, thank you.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Just a quick question. So is this going to be a total of \$100,000 that's going to be into the budget for the police their capital reserve fund or is it going to be \$150,000? Adding an additional \$100,000 over what you're requesting? I just want a clarification. I'm not sure, somebody.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Do we have someone to clarify that?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

So it would be \$100,000 added to the reserve fund coming from the surplus.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Yes. It would be up to the \$100,000 if there's enough in there. It would come from the surplus. It's not an additional \$100,000.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Okay. If I didn't know, I'm assuming that maybe the fellas in blue in the back of the room might not know that, you know, exactly what they're getting. So I just wanted to be clear.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion? Miss Hopkins.

Grace Hopkins

Grace Hopkins, 22 Pastor Drive. I thought I heard a gentleman say that the anticipated unassigned fund

balance is \$6 million, which surprises me a little bit because we're in a default budget. So I just wanted confirmation on that.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question on the - right now the estimated unassigned fund balance for the...

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

Right now the fund balance is \$6.3 million.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Right now it's \$6.3 million.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

(inaudible)

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. The Selectmen have assigned \$600,000 of that to tax purposes. Of course, the year isn't over yet so we don't know what it will actually be until we get closer to June. Any further discussion on the amendment? Basically, it's saying you're not going to do it from taxes you're going to do it from the unassigned fund balance. Yes, Ma'am.

Debra Putnam

Debra Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. My question would be for the police. Is that will the funds be available when they need them or will the fact that it will be tied to waiting for a determination of a fund balance for a fiscal year tie their hands in any way? Because the important thing is that the police are able to purchase the equipment they need when they need it. Not six months later, or eight months later when we know what the fiscal balance is and whether we can afford to appropriate funds from the fiscal balance and still maintain the required fiscal balance as set?

Moderator Inderbitzen

I can answer that. Anything we do here today, nothing can be spent until July 1 of this summer. It's for the next Fiscal Year not the current Fiscal Year. I believe this capital reserve fund is the agents to expand is the Board of Selectmen. So they can dip into that fund right now if they need to for whatever purposes it is. Yes, Ma'am on the amendment.

Carrie Harrington

Hi, my name is Carrie Harrington, 48. Orchard Park Lane, Hudson. I'm unclear on the balance. I've heard Selectman McGrath ask it but I still am unclear. So I heard that there was \$50,000 and when it was first written I thought we were adding another 100, which is fine by me. So I don't know if it's are we having 50 and then when this wording is saying the sum of up to 100. So could somebody just say

okay instead of 50 you're just going to get 60? Or are we saying we're going to have a balance of 100 or are we have a balance of 150?

Secondly, I would just like to ask the police officers, you know, I'm for all of the things that are in that bill - the tasers and all the other things like what is it that they need? Do they need \$100,000 or what if somebody just said the sum of up to 100 then they only get 60. I don't understand.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Well it depends on what's left in there. At the end of the year, certain amount of money is left in the budget and a Selectman can move that. This would say up to 100 because if there's not \$100,000, they wouldn't be able to move \$100,000. Right now it looks like we won't have a problem. But they could do that. But that's why you put it up to you don't always just say take it out of surplus because there may not be surplus. I think that \$50,000 that was incorrect. We're still dealing with \$100,000 whether to put it into the Capital Reserve Fund or not. The funding is only thing that's the change of where it's coming from. It's not from taxes now, it's from surplus at the end of this Fiscal Year that we're in now.

Carrie Harrington

Okay. I understand there was two changes made and I understand saying from the unassigned fund balance, but I'm questioning the sum of up to 100. I liked the way the Article was written before where it said \$100,000. There was no like up to so I'm not in favor.

Moderator Inderbitzen

And that would come from taxes. If you still wanted that to be there, then you would vote against the amendment.

Carrie Harrington

Well, but there was two changes. So I...

Moderator Inderbitzen

No there was all one change. It was up to and from the unassigned fund balance. Those are the two changes.

Carrie Harrington

No there were two changes. Can we read the original the way it's written right now? It says it doesn't say the sum of up to.

Moderator Inderbitzen

No, it says the sum of \$100,000 will be added to the Police Safety Capital Reserve Fund.

Carrie Harrington

Exactly. So you've changed two things here, which I...

Moderator Inderbitzen

Right. You've added the words to take it from...

Carrie Harrington

I didn't add any words.

Moderator Inderbitzen

No, no, no. The motion, the amendment added the words to where it's going to come from.

Carrie Harrington

It changed to - I'm sorry, Sir. It's changed two things am I wrong? It's changed two things.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Let's Select McGrath...

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Let me write this again just so that we're all clear, because you're right it's kind of convoluted at the moment.

Carrie Harrington

Yes.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

So Warrant Article 18, which is what we're talking about, seeks to appropriate \$100,000 to put funding into the Police Safety Equipment Capital Reserve. I won't read the explanation of what it's for.

Carrie Harrington

No, that's fine. I understand the explanation.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

This Capital Reserve Fund currently has a fund balance of \$50,000. So adding the 100 would give them - they'd have \$150,000 into that account.

Carrie Harrington

Right.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

I believe, Mr. Walsh you were just talking about where the funding was going to come from. The \$100,000 was going to be coming from the fund balance opposed to having the taxpayers pay an additional.

Carrie Harrington

In my opinion, there's two spots that have been changed and I can say I would vote for one of those changes, but not the other I would. So I'm afraid that we're voting one vote with two changes. So I would amend that we vote two votes for each of the changes and not collectively because I can say okay, I can support the unassigned fund balance. So instead of coming from the taxpayers, I can support it coming from the unassigned but I still want to give them \$100,000 and that would equal \$150,000.

Now I still would like to hear from the Police Department if that's what their intentions are. I think somebody else had asked that question too. So if they wouldn't mind coming up in talking about do they need \$100,000 or do they need \$150,000?

Moderator Inderbitzen

They have 50 already.

Carrie Harrington

I know but Selectman McGrath just said the way the Warrant is written at the moment without this wording change is what it would add another \$100,000 and they would have \$150,000.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Correct.

Carrie Harrington

So I...

Moderator Inderbitzen

The reason you add the words "up to" is because sometimes there's not enough money at the end of the year to add that money. Right, we have \$5.7 million, so it will come.

Carrie Harrington

Yeah, so why do we have to say the "sum of up to"?

Moderator Inderbitzen

It's kind of a wording thing that because the DRA will look at this and they'll make a determination. We'll have enough money but.

Carrie Harrington

I'm still concerned about the fact that there are two changes here and I agree with one of them and I don't agree with the other. I don't know how other people think but.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

So \$100,000 if we take it from where Mr. Walsh is suggesting - say the title of that account again?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

Unassigned fund balance.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Yeah. The taxes have already been paid on that. So that money is already there. It's just moving it from one pot to another.

Carrie Harrington

Yeah, I know. Who gets to decide up to 100? Somebody could just say now, and I don't know who those somebody is...

Moderator Inderbitzen

The Board of Selectmen make that determination.

Carrie Harrington

Right so we say we vote to amend this, and then it comes to a vote, and it gets accepted, now the Selectmen can say okay well, you know what, you're only going to get \$10,000 extra dollars and now you only have \$60,000 when you could have had \$150,000.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Well then you would vote against the amendment. That would take it back to the beginning.

Carrie Harrington

But why do I have to vote against the amendment when I agree with the unassigned fund? We have \$6 million.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That's what the amendment says. That's what we're talking about.

Carrie Harrington

Can we vote for both changes? Why do we have to vote once? I want to vote for both. Why can't I vote for both?

Shawn Jasper

Mr. Moderator would you accept a motion to clear this up? We're getting into running debate and I think there's a simple solution if you'd allow an amendment.

Moderator Inderbitzen

An amendment to an amendment? Oh geez.

Shawn Jasper

Very simple. Otherwise, we're gonna go on forever. Just to remove the words "up to".

Carrie Harrington

Yes, yes.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Mr. Walsh is that acceptable for your original amendment to remove the words "up to" and just add it to from undersigned and is the seconder Mr. Murray? Okay.

Shawn Murray

Yes Mr. Moderator.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Motion by the motioner and the seconder of remove the words "up to". Then we now have \$100,000 from the unassigned fund balance of June 30. On the amendment? Yes, Sir.

MOTION BY KEVIN WALSH, SECONED BY SHAWN MURRAY, TO AMEND WARRANT ARTICLE 18 TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$100,000 FROM THE JUNE 30TH UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO BE ADDED TO THE POLICE SAFETY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED IN MARCH 9, 2021

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

My name is Xenophon Vurgaropoulos from 5 Muldoon Drive.

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'm sorry. Again, could I have your name?

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

You can just call me "Xen". I know it's a little wild. I approve the change and support the change of removing the "up to" because I believe that the safety of the police, and firefighters, and all of our service people that work for us and help us should not come secondhand. They should be supported and funded upfront and not as an afterthought.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Would you give the Clerk - do you need spelling on that name? Yes, could you just give the Clerk the spelling? Thank you. I face that all the time with my name, too. So further discussion on the amendment?

Craig Putnam

Craig Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. I certainly support the friendly amendment to remove the words “up to”. I still am concerned, however, and I understand why it was worded that way because you don't know exactly how much is going to be in that unassigned fund balance it at the time if I'm understanding things correctly. I think the problem still persists, however, in that if there's not \$100,000 in the unassigned balance, then the police would not be getting the \$100,000.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That assigned balance currently sits at over \$5 million.

Craig Putnam

Okay.

Moderator Inderbitzen

It's not really an issue.

Craig Putnam

My concern is that the police know how much they have to work with. That's the big issue and if that's resolved that with this amendment that they know how much they're going to get and when they're going to get it, then I'm fine with it. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you.

Shawn Jasper

I rise in favor. I'm going to attempt to clear up a little of the confusion which unfortunately, Mr. Moderator, I think you added to because there is the surplus at the end of the year from 2020 and you kept referring to that which is totally different than the unassigned fund balance. If we were anticipating as the School District does because they don't have a fund balance, that's why it's always up to from the surplus. This is not this. This is we know we have \$6.3 million in the bank. They're gonna take \$600,000 for the budget. There is virtually nothing that can happen between now in February and July 1st to drain that fund. If that happens, we've got bigger problems than \$100,000 going to this capital reserve fund.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Mr. Jasper you could have jinxed us.

On the amendment, we're adding the words of where the money's coming from the unassigned fund balance and my apologies if I mentioned surplus. I shouldn't have done that. I get confused myself. Are you ready for the vote? If you are in favor of the amendment, please raise your voter card. Thank you. Those opposed to the amendment. Thank you. The ayes have it. The amendment passes.

MOTION CARRIED

Moderator Inderbitzen

We now have article 18, as amended. Just the source of the funds. Is there any further discussion on Article 18? Yes, Ma'am.

Kate Messner

Kate Messner, 10 Third Street. If there's no tax impact, don't we want to take off that last?

Moderator Inderbitzen

That'll all be adjusted when we print the ballot. That'll be do that. Yes, Sir. Anyone else on Article 18? Then we'll close the discussion on Article 18 and it goes to the ballot as amended. Yes, Sir.

MOTION BY ROGER COUTU, SECONDED BY LEO BERNARD, TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES 13 TO 18

Moderator Inderbitzen

The vote here is we're restricting reconsideration. Those items could not be brought up again at this meeting 13 to 18. If you're in favor of restricting reconsideration, please raise your cards. Those opposed? The ayes have it. It is restricted.

MOTION CARRIED

Article 19 Establish Capital Reserve Fund for Generator Replacement and Repair

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of replacing or repairing emergency generators and associated equipment at Town facilities and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 to be placed in this fund? \$10,000 of this sum will come from the General Fund, \$10,000 will come from the Sewer Fund and \$10,000 will come from the Water Fund. The Board of Selectmen will be the Agents to Expend.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)
Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

Kara Roy, Selectwoman

Warrant Article 19 seeks to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of replacing and repairing

emergency power generators. Warrant Article seeks to appropriate \$30,000 for the initial appropriation into the Capital Reserve Fund and as the Moderators stated, its \$10,000 from the general fund, \$10,000 from the sewer fund, and \$10,000 from the water fund. There are currently 21 Emergency generators equally split between town buildings, sewer pump stations, and water booster stations, and wells. The Board of Selectmen would be designated as the agents to expand for this fund. The tax impact for this Warrant Article is less than one cent per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 5 to 0. The Budget Committee has recommended this Article 11 to 0.

If I might add, emergency generators are an essential part of the emergency operations of this town. We have some generators that are well past the life cycle. And, again, this helps us save up to replace those generators in a more prudent manner so that we don't have to ask for a ton of money all at once. I support this Article and I, again, I hope you do too.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I'll open it to questions, comments, or concerns, or amendments from the meeting. Anyone wish to address Warrant Article 19 the capital reserve establishment for a generator replacement repair. If not, we will close Article 19 and it goes to the ballot.

Article 20 the Benson Park Renovation Capital Reserve Fund. This is the las capital reserve fund we have. Unfortunately the State says now you have to put each one on as a separate article. You can't put it in the budget.

Article 20 Benson Park Renovation Capital Reserve Fund Funding

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 which will be added to the Benson Park Renovation Capital Reserve Fund previously established March 1998?

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-2)
Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

David Morin, Selectman

Warrant Article 20 seeks to appropriate \$10,000 to be put into funding into the Bensons Park Renovation Capital Reserve Fund. This Capital Reserve Fund was established in 1998 for the purpose of purchasing and renovating the Bensons Park property. The Capital Reserve Fund currently has a balance of \$110,893. The tax impact for this Warrant Article is less than one cent per 1,000. The Board of Selectmen recommended 5 to 0. Budget Committee 9 to 2. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Now open Article 20 questions, comments, amendments, concerns. Anyone wish to address Warrant Article 20 to add \$10,000 to the Benson Park Capital Reserve Fund? If not, yes Ma'am.

Carrie Harrington

Carrie Harrington, 48 Orchard Park Lane. What's the \$100,000 going to be used for? I go the other \$100,000. Sorry. The \$10,000.

Moderator Inderbitzen

We're only adding 10.

Carrie Harrington

I know, sorry.

David Morin, Selectman

I can tell you the biggest project right now is the covered bridge. It is pretty close to falling down and the cost estimates that they've gotten so far between \$40,000 and \$60,000 just to replace that bridge. So they want to make sure that they put funding back into this in case of future project comes up that they're going to need funding for.

Carrie Harrington

I'm in favor for this by the way, but I didn't know if you needed more money. Okay, thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 20 Benson Park Capital Reserve Fund?

Shawn Jasper

Thank you. Selectman Morin just caused me to get up here because I'm questioning the most important thing - the roof on Hazelton Barn on the south side looks like it is about to have a gaping hole in it, which if we do not repair that very soon we will end up with a much bigger structural issues and we have an obligation to maintain that. So I think it would be easier to close a bridge than to repair that building if the roof starts to go because I know it's leaking.

David Morin, Selectman

I could tell you there hasn't been any discussion in that Mr. Jasper, but I will make sure it comes up at the next meeting. Thank you.

Shawn Jasper

I keep bringing it up to people because it's quite visible. We had done repairs temporary a long time ago but if you look at the at the south side of that, it's quite concerning.

David Morin, Selectman

We'll look into it. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 20? Seeing none, we'll close the discussion on Warrant Article 20.

Article 21 Revised Property Tax Exemption for the Elderly

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for elderly exemptions from property tax, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$121,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$144,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$173,000? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive 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 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$45,000 or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$55,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$160,000 excluding the value of the residence. (If approved this article shall take effect for the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year.)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0-1)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION**Bob Guessferd, Selectman**

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Good morning. Warrant Article 21 seeks to revise the elderly exemption amounts for those property owners who meet the qualifications. Forgive me, but I'm going to be reiterating some of what you just heard from the Moderator. Property owners must be at least 65 years old, and been a New Hampshire resident for at least three consecutive years, and own the real estate individually or jointly. This Article raises the exemption amount from \$105,000 to \$121,000 for qualified taxpayers 65 years old, up to 75 years old, and raises the exemption amount from \$125,000 to \$144,000 for qualified taxpayers 75 years old, up to 80 years old, and raises the exemption amount from \$150,000 to \$173,000 for qualified taxpayers 80 years of age and older.

The annual net income and net asset levels that we just heard remain the same. Only the exemption amounts have changed. The exemption amounts were last increased in 2007. If approved, the new exemption amounts take effect with the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year. There is no tax impact for this Warrant Article and the Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 3-0-1.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Let's open up Article 21 to questions, comments, concerns on the property tax exemption. The wording here I believe is by the law. So we can't really do much to it. We haven't updated our exemptions for a while. If anyone has any questions about this and how it works, now is the time to see if you have any questions. We have three of these coming up. So yes, Sir.

James Crowley

I'm James Crowley of 4 Fairway Drive. I can't say I have a question but I'd like to make a comment if I'm allowed?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Go right ahead.

James Crowley

I believe most people feel we should be compassionate in any way we can to these special Hudson citizens. Honestly, it might be possible to abuse the proposed tax exemption qualification conditions. However, I think the benefit to the people who need this tax exemption far outweighs any possible abuse scenarios. I think this should be supported.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 21. Yes, Sir. Mr. Jasper.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you, Mr. Moderator and I hate to seem to be taking up too much time but I think there are questions here that the Board should ask or should answer should give the information on because this is not money that doesn't impact the tax rate. Although technically speaking, perhaps. But what everybody has to realize is that for every dollar of exemption, that money is transferred to everyone else. I'm not saying this isn't a good Warrant Article. I'm simply saying that with these three Articles, the taxpayers of the Town of Hudson need to know how much money is being exempted now, and in the future, and what that will do to their tax bill because somebody has to still pay that bill. That's everyone who is not part of these exemptions. And then at least if we have the full information before us, we can make an informed decision. Right now we don't have the information that we should have to be able to make this fully informed. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Anyone is to yield to that? Question was what is the full impact of the exemption?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

Approximately 1/10 of one cent

Moderator Inderbitzen

Oh. Approximately 1/10 of one cent based on the current exemptions.

Shawn Jasper

I appreciate that would be how much this would change the exemption, but we don't know the baseline and we don't know the total value of the property that is exempted currently or we anticipate would be exempted. For instance, is it \$15 million worth of property exemption and currently costing us this amount raising it just by that? And it's no comment Terry at all on whether it should happen or not just that I believe there should be more transparency than what we're seeing right now. That's all.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Selectman Guessferd would yield.

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

We will, you know, the previous speaker - we will certainly look into that and make sure that we get those numbers together. Is there any other comments that we want to make from the Administrator or the Finance? I think we're okay for now, right? Okay. All right, but make you make good points.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am.

Rita Banatwala

Rita Banatwala, 29 Fairway Drive. Not to run it into the ground, but basically to support the question that was being asked. What we need to know is what is the population? How much money are we going to be deferring to other taxpayers? And that goes to everything. I mean .01% or whatever doesn't cut it. We need to know the population breakdown. What percentage of our population is in that range?

Moderator Inderbitzen

It's either a percentage of the population or it's a dollar amount. What is the dollar?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

There are 223 people.

Moderator Inderbitzen

There are 223 people that qualify for the exemption right now. Thank you. Yes, Ma'am.

Karen Emerson

Karen Emerson, 3 Sousa Boulevard. I was just curious if there was more language and I apologize if this is in the documentation and I just haven't read it. Is this primary residences or do you have to have a contingent how much time is spent there or in case people are part time?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Selectman Guessferd will yield.

Karen Emerson

Those who qualify may eliminate you know what I mean. I just wasn't clear if there was more language in there.

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Yes, there is. It's for primary residences only.

Karen Emerson

Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Further discussion Warrant Article 21. Seeing none, we'll close and send to the ballot Warrant Article 21.

Article 22 Revised Property Tax Exemption for the Disabled

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:37-b, Exemption for the Disabled from property tax, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be \$121,000? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 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 to each other for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$45,000 or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$55,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$160,000 excluding the value of the residence. (If approved this article shall take effect for the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year.)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Warrant Article 22 seeks to revise the disabled exception amount for those property owners who meet the qualifications. As an aside, there are 42 people who meet that exemption right now. Property owners must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years and own and occupy the real estate individually or jointly. This Article raises the exemption amount from \$105,000 to \$121,000 for qualified taxpayers. The annual net income and net asset levels remain the same. Only the exemption has changed. The exemption amount was last increased in 2007. If approved, the new exemption amount takes effect with the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year. There is no tax impact for this Warrant Article and the Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 4 to 0.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you, let's open Article 22 - revised property tax exemption for the disabled to questions or comments. Very similar to the last one. Yes, Ma'am.

Holly Wagner

Holly Wagner, 14 Tessier Street in Hudson. Not to get too personal but what do you define as disabled? Because disabled could also include the blind? Is it of these 42 people included in the elderly?

Moderator Inderbitzen

The Statute...

Holly Wagner

They're totally separate.

Moderator Inderbitzen

The Statute defines disabled.

Holly Wagner

They're the same people?

Moderator Inderbitzen

The State law determines the disabled.

Holly Wagner

Okay so that can be anybody. Anyone suffers from anxiety?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Nope. It's defined in the Statute as to what's allowed as considered as the disability.

Holly Wagner

Okay, I'm just clarifying because elderly, they should get a break. They work hard. They deserve to kick back. But some people who are disabled, sometimes it's all, you know, how people think but that's the only question I have. There's 42 people currently disabled.

Moderator Inderbitzen

That are eligible for this exemption.

Holly Wagner

Okay and they've been getting a break and they continually want the break. Correct?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Correct.

Holly Wagner

Okay, that's all I'm asking.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

Xenophon Vurgaropulos, 5 Muldoon Drive. She kind of stole my question. What would be the definition of disabled but I understand the Statute defines it. What I don't see here, which might be outlined in a larger version of this Article is, how does the definition include disabled veterans and how do we work them into this because they deserve a break to?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Does it included veterans? It's anyone who's disabled. It doesn't make a difference whether they're a veteran or not.

Unidentified Male Speaker

Just so you know - I'm sorry, Mr. Moderator. There is a separate exemption for disabled veterans.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Sorry. I didn't mean to step on toes. Yes, Sir.

Ron Brown

Ron Brown, 5 Hickory Street. The question I have or I guess the requests I have is similar to what the previous speaker asked for the previous Article to get a little bit clearer definition. When I do the math roughly, you get 42 people that are getting \$15,000. That's going to put about \$600,000 tax deferment to everybody else. Previous one ends up being about \$4.4 million okay when you do the math. This is where we the other taxpayers have to understand what that burden is going to become and there's nothing here. It just says zero and that's not true. Right? I mean it's not increasing anybody's new tax, but it's deferring it and like you said, it has to come from somewhere. So we really need that and we need it before the vote.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Someone want to respond?

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

It's \$7,000 (inaudible)

Moderator Inderbitzen

You have to remember, it's only a reduction in their evaluation. They still pay taxes on the rest of their evaluation. They're not getting a free ride. It's that you could take your reduces your valuation of your property by that \$121,000 and then you pay taxes on that. So it's not like they're not paying the taxes, they're just getting a break for the disability.

Unidentified Male Speaker

An increase is literally – well I'd say the \$16,000 of exemption, which is for the first one, it was less than 1/10 of 1% or 1/10 of one penny. These are even far less than that, but certainly understand the

question and I'm sure that we have numbers that, you know, that we can look at. But right now, I don't think we have them at our fingertips do we?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. Yes further discussion? Miss Hopkins.

Grace Hopkins

Grace Hopkins, 22 Pasture Drive. I've seen some confusion in the past on this topic. There are exemptions in place now. These Warrant Articles are only to change the values a little bit. So when you look at the \$121,000, they're already getting quite a bit of that today. So just wanted to clarify that. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

The State sets the top limit as to what you can give for an exemption, but the town has to vote to do that. Anyone else on Article 22? I think the Selectmen have the direction to put some numbers out there before March in terms of what we actually are spending. They can do that at one of their meetings.

Anyone else on Article 22? If not, we'll close Article 22 and goes to the ballot.

Article 23 Revised Property Tax Exemption for the Blind

Shall the Town of Hudson vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:37, Exemption for the Blind to allow an inhabitant who is legally blind as determined by the blind services program, to be exempt year on the assessed value, for property tax purposes, of his or her residential real estate to the value of \$121,000? (If approved this article shall take effect for the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year.)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0)
Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Thank you, again, Mr. Moderator. Warrant Article 23 seeks to revise the blind exemption amount for those property owners who meet the qualifications. This Article raises the exemption amount from \$105,000 to \$121,000 for qualified taxpayers. An increase of \$16,000 over the current exemption. The exemption amount was last increased in 2007 and there are 17 people that qualify for this exemption currently.

If approved, the new exemption amount takes effect with the final property tax bill of the 2022 property tax year. There is very little tax impact for this Warrant Article. The Board of Selectmen has recommended this Article 4 to 0.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I'll open Article 23 revised property tax exemption for the blind to questions, comments, concerns? Seeing none. Mr. Walsh.

Kevin Walsh

Thank you Mr. Moderator. Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane. These last three Articles have talked about town-wide valuation and making the adjustment to the town-wide valuation value of the property that we have. The Department of Revenue Administration looks at two numbers. There's the town-wide valuation, including utilities and not including utilities for tax purposes. So when they look at this if we take these exemptions and we approve them, which number does that impact the one without utilities that they use for tax basis or the other. I'm just?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question of the Board? Anybody have a response to that one? Mr. Malizia will yield.

Steve Malizia, Town Administrator

The Department of Revenue looks at the total tax rate and then they take out the utilities for the other rates. So this would be in both sides. It's not taken out of one of the other. It's equal on both. The only difference between the tax rate is the utility because utilities pay a reduced statewide tax property rate.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am.

Carrie Harrington

Carrie Harrington, 48 Orchard Park Lane. I'm for this so it's not about that. I just had a clarifying question. The inhabitant - so you just have to be an inhabitant. You could be a child that's blind and your parents own the house so the parents get the exemption, right?

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'm not sure of that. You have to be a property owner. It's for the property owner not for their children.

Carrie Harrington

Okay because the other ones were written as property owner and this one it says "inhabitant".

Moderator Inderbitzen

It's just the language, but it's the way the State puts it out there.

Carrie Harrington

Okay, thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Further discussion on Warrant Article #23? Seeing none, we'll close Article 23 to discussion and send it to the ballot.

MOTION BY ROGER COUTU, SECONDED BY LEO BERNARD, TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES 19 THROUGH 23

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

This is to prevent them from being brought up again at this meeting. If you're in favor of restricting reconsideration of Articles 19 to 23, please raise your voting cards. Thank you. Those opposed. The ayes have it. It is restricted. Those are restricted.

MOTION CARRIED

Article 24 Change in Polling Hours

Polling hours in the Town of Hudson are now 7:00 AM to 8:00PM. Shall we place a question on the state election ballot to change polling hours so that polls shall open at 7:00 AM and close at 7:00 PM for all regular state elections beginning in 2023?

(Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Warrant Article 24 would change the polling hours from 7 am to 8 pm to 7 am to 7 pm. The current polling hours were set by the Selectmen in January 1996. The Town Moderator has requested that this question be placed on the Warrant for the March 2022 election. If this Article passes, the Secretary of State is required to place the question on the next State ballot for the town. If that passes, the hours are changed. There is no tax rate impact for this Warrant Article. This Article is not recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5 to 0.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I will open the discussion on Warrant Article 24 – changing of polling hours. Yes, Ma'am.

Paige Schaller

Paige Schaller, 213 Fox Hollow Drive. As a working person, I am not in support of this. I agree with the Board of Selectmen. It does put a hardship on people who have jobs out of State, which is we know a lot of people. We're a border town. A lot of people work in MA. I know it seems like it's just an hour, but that's a lot to us that work. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion. Yes, Ma'am.

Rita Banatwala

Hello. Rita Banatwala, 29 Fairway Drive. I also do not support this. I, myself, have been here before seven in the morning to try to vote, realized the line was too long, I couldn't get to my work which is with kids on time, so I had to bow out and try to make it, and they get caught up in meetings and things and sometimes you just can't make it. We have a low voter turnout as it is. Let's not reduce the opportunity for them to vote.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Dean Sakati

Hello. Dean Sakati, 11 Fairway Drive. In complete opposition to this. I work in Boston. I travel. There's been times I've literally come back from trips from New York and made it five minutes before eight - before the polling closes. This is just restricting folks right to vote. Definitely opposed. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Mr. Jasper.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I guess there aren't any petitioners here. I assumed this by Petitions and select...

Moderator Inderbitzen

No this put it at my request.

Shawn Jasper

Oh, it's your request? Well, Mr. Moderator. I'm glad to have that clarification and I'm going to speak in opposition to the Article. As the only other person here who has ever served as Town Moderator, I actually as a Selectman after I left the job of being Moderator asked the Selectmen or made the motion to go from 7 to 8. The Selectmen went along with me. The reason being that virtually every State and Presidential Election that we had, we had to extend the polling hours to at least 8. That created the problem where many people told us, I thought the polls were closed at 7. I got home at 7:15. It was too late to vote. So while yes during town elections, election officials are sitting around twiddling their thumbs probably way too much from 7 to 8 in the small elections, that seems to me to be a very small price for us to pay to make sure that we give the maximum amount of time for people who are working out of town to get here, particularly in those State in general elections. So as much as I appreciate, Mr. Moderator that there is a lot of downtime on some of these elections, we're not here about ourselves.

When we're Moderators or election officials, we're here to make sure that we give the voters the maximum amount of time to vote. This does provide them with that as painful as it might be for some of us at times. I urge that this Article be defeated. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

James Crowley

Geez, I'm afraid I'm getting well known. Anyway, I'm opposed to this Article. But I guess my question is to the Moderator. Is the town having a staffing problem in that? Do you need more volunteers or what? Why would we even want to lower an hour?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you, Mr. Crowley. I will yield to that question. I was going to step down and speak to it but I will yield to the question since I'm the one that proposed it to the Selectmen and asked him to put it on.

As we move to two places for voting, we are now going to have to move the equipment and everything from one place to a central place, which will be here at the Community Center in order to finalize all our results. Also, what we have seen in the past is very few people checking in, after 7 o'clock. Even at the Presidential when we closed at 8 o'clock, we had no one waiting in line. We had a lot of people voting. They were still voting. Anybody who shows up gets to vote and we've done that in the past. When there's a line of people coming in, we've kept the polls open past 8 o'clock. That's standard practice for almost all the towns. What I found was that between 7 and 8, very few people were checking in. People that were in line - I even sent people out to the parking lot to say are there any cars coming into the parking lot. There are very few. And then we say those people, I can come and vote even after we close the polls.

So my concern was to getting the results out. It will just be another delay in getting our results out. So I asked the Selectmen to put this on. Obviously, there's a lot of opposition and we will do what the public wants. It was just something I brought up in terms of when we don't have a lot of activity between 7 and 8 in terms of checking in. A lot of people voting. I think at one election, even the people voting we only had 17 ballots go through the machine, but those people were already here at 7 o'clock. For the federal election in 2020, at 8 o'clock there was nobody in line. No one at all. But we closed the polls, but it took another hour for everybody that was in here to finish their vote. So that was my reason for bringing it forward and I will certainly go along with however the town votes. Yes, Ma'am. Mrs. Jasper.

Laurie Jasper

Good afternoon. Laurie Jasper, 83 Old Derry Road. I rise against this. Sorry, Mr. Moderator. But first thing I'll say is beware of unintended consequences. When the last year we voted to have two polling places, that will make finding out the results of our elections that much longer because you have to then join them together. But as someone who has been outside and inside for years at the polls, whether holding signs, etc., and usually staying to the last ballot is cast outside, I do know how important it is for that 8 pm hour to remain.

I like to notice that it does slow down quite significantly at 7 pm but I believe part of that is because most polling places in the State are 7 to 7.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Right.

Laurie Jasper

A lot of people consider that as statewide and it's not. I think they even say, you know, polls are open till 7. We're special. Hudson is very special to me and has a lot of heart. I think it's a great idea to keep it up till 8 o'clock and despite the fact that there aren't as many people coming in, there are those several who do and I think every vote counts. I think they feel they have until 8 o'clock to get there.

Also letting them come in at 8 o'clock. There aren't lines waiting. I believe the law is if you are in line by the close if as long as you were in that line by the 8 o'clock or 7 if it's at another place, you have to be allowed to vote. I'm not sure if that's...

Moderator Inderbitzen

Yes, that's correct.

Laurie Jasper

Yes. So we don't have that problem of the line snaking for two more hours. It slows down at 7. And this is my observation as being outside there holding signs, but there are people still, you know, going in at 8 and it is much significant the drop off, but they're still coming in. So I'm against 7 pm. I know it's a late night. I know its long day for you and all the poll workers but sorry.

Moderator Inderbitzen

No, not a problem. Mrs. Leary.

Kathy Leary

Kathy Leary, 8 Par Lane. I'm not gonna make any comments as pro or con. To follow along from Laurie Jasper's comment about unintended consequences. One potential unintended consequence being someone who's also involved with working at the elections all the time is if people perceive that the polls are going to close at 7, it potentially will also create some more work in the front end and the back end and Mr. Ordway can attest to this because you potentially have a lot more absentee ballots requested, which take a lot of time as well. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

Yes Xenophon Vurgaropoulos, 5 Muldoon Drive. I'm up here again, sorry. I'm opposed to this because I additionally like many of these people have worked in Boston. I work at the airport. So I have taken advantage of being able to come here by 8 o'clock.

One downside I do see to this is people have a tendency to vote downline or just yes down way. They find the three things that they want to vote on and just go straight down. That could potentially past us. I

would like to see some preventative verbiage in there stating like, “shall this pass the voting places hold the right to extend hours”.

Moderator Inderbitzen

We have that right in the law already. As long as there are people in line to vote, we keep the polls open.

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

Okay, because I just see like downline voting in this passing without anybody actually reading it because the way it's worded.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Well it's, you know, it's not recommended by the Selectmen. So I can't imagine that there may be and there's a lot of opposition so. The Moderator does have the right to keep the polls open and beyond the cut off if there are people in line waiting to vote. I even say if there are cars coming in the parking lot, we keep the polls open. We could do that no matter what time we set for our polling hours.

But it never fails - if I could just make a comment. It never fails. We close the polls. Everyone's voted. We start the count. We're running the tapes on machine and one or two people - I'm sure Mr. Jasper has seen this as well. One or two people come in and say it's like 8:30. Can I still vote? It never ceases to amaze me how people think about it at the last minute, but that does happen and we've seen it.

Any further discussion on Warrant Article 24? Seeing none, we'll close the discussion on Warrant Article 24.

Article 25 Ballots Shall Be Hand Counted (By Petition)

Shall the following provisions pertaining to elections be adopted? All voting shall be paper ballot; and all ballots shall be hand counted only, rather than by use of optical scanning or any other types of programmable electronic counting devices.

(Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION

Fumio Taku

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. My name is Fumio Taku, 17 Garrison Farm Road. I've been a resident here for 23 years. New Hampshire State Constitution begins with these words, “All men are born equal, free, and independent therefore all government of right originates from the people and is founded in consent”. And how do we obtain the consent of the people? First and foremost, by our votes. Therefore, integrity of elections is most fundamental to our State governance. But our nation has fallen into a crisis of confidence. The latest Rasmussen poll shows that 56% - 56% of likely voters said, “It is likely that cheating affected the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election”.

The election process has evolved over the years to where they largely take place inside black boxes hidden from the views of the voters allowing corruption and cheating to take place. As I went around collecting signatures for this Petition, I was met with an overwhelming enthusiasm. The people I spoke with was so upset with the election fraud and were desperate to join in. Now we, of course, we do not accuse our Town of Hudson elections of any misdeeds but every doors to potential cheating and future elections must be closed now. Surely, no one present here would argue that hand counting or paper ballots is evil, or undemocratic, or unconstitutional.

For since the inception of this great nation of ours until just a few decades past, all elections have been conducted by hand counting of tens of millions of paper ballots and many township in New Hampshire, as well as over 50 countries around the world, including Germany, France, Canada, Italy, Denmark, and Finland, employ 100% hand counted paper ballots. A July 16, 2021 article on The Wall Street Journal is titled, "Germany refuses to use voting machines over fears of fraud - will only use paper ballots" and quotes Mr. Georg Thiele, "the man responsible for Germany's elections". It also quotes elections Canada, stating, "Canada uses paper ballots counted by hand in front of scrutineers and have never used any form of voting machines in its 100 year history". Hand counting paper ballots as the article states, indeed are considered, "the gold standard of democratic elections".

So why should a little town like Hudson, New Hampshire, not use hand counting of paper ballots when it is done 100% in cities as big as Berlin and Paris? Let's list why 100% hand counted paper ballot is the gold standard of democracy. Number one - it is simple, basic, and direct. Number two - it provides a greater transparency, security, traceability, and verifiability. Number three - it brings the ownership back in the hands of the voters away from hidden black boxes. Light and transparency expose the darkness where the cheating germinates.

Let me end by addressing three common objections. Objection number one - it opens the human errors. The more people get involved in counting, the more errors we get. Now, that's equivalent to saying the more people vote, the more foolish election results we can expect. That's a tyrannical elitist mindset that does not belong in our democracy. The correct answer is to encourage more voter education, training, and to establish an era free hand counting process. For example, the counting should be done by multiple teams of volunteers. Each team consisting of at least four persons, including two duplicate counters and two duplicate recorders from varying parties each cross checking each other and all on the in person and online observers. That would completely eliminate any human errors or cheating in counting.

Objection number two - it opens the human cheating. No, the opposite is true. The more people are involved, the more transparency we have, the more appropriate procedure is put in place to duplicate, check, and document the results, the more integrity we will achieve.

Objection number three - it will require more time and manpower than we have ever available. I say wrong again. The issue here is not lack of time and manpower. Remember Paris and Berlin but general apathy and lack of voter education and participation as a town with his proud history of individual participation, and representation, and its governance, this will be a great opportunity for our town to call upon the citizens to get involved. We need you volunteers to be educated, and trained, and fulfill everyone's most important governance responsibility. Therefore, we say it's time for our town to give the election process back into the hands of the We the People. Everyone, it is our responsibility. It must be under our view. We must take it out of the hidden boxes and let's go back to the way it's always been done. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I will now open Article 25 ballots to be hand counted to questions, comments, amendments. Yes, Sir.

Ben Dibble

Hi my name is Ben Dibble. I live at 7 Stevens Drive here in Hudson. I rise in opposition vehement opposition to this Warrant Article. This is unfounded. There was a collection of misrepresentations by the presenter. I won't bother to go through them. Well I will mention one thing. When I was eight years old, they showed me how to vote on the electronic ballot machine in New York State. So we've been voting for 60 years with electronic machines. This represents a significant manpower issue for no real reason. We have the paper ballots. We've proven in this State that we can recount them when we needed. We can recount them by hand when we need it. We do not need to do this Election Day. This is a bad, bad idea. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Mr. Jasper.

Shawn Jasper

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. It's my pleasure to be able to agree with you I assume on this Article. Having served as Moderator, but starting working with former Moderator Dolbec back in the 1970s, I've learned a lot about human error in the process. I've learned a lot about how much it takes to count ballots by hand and I've observed many recounts not only at the town level, but also participated in State level recounts.

We heard some things that may sound appealing, but we didn't hear is the detail of course and the devil is always in the details. How many positions are those people voting for in an election? I may be wrong Mr. Moderator, but at the last federal election, we voted for at least 23 positions representing much more potentially than double that number of candidates. I would submit to you that each ballot would take at least two minutes to count. Mr. Moderator I should have looked it up but I didn't think of it. How many ballots were cast in the 2020 Presidential...

Moderator Inderbitzen

Just over 15,000

Shawn Jasper

15,000 and so if that's two minutes a ballot, think about how many teams. How long the people have been here, we'd need other teams to come in here and I'm going to ask you the other important thing that the Petitioners did not think about was the cost. There is no appropriation here. There is no possible way that elections in this town could be conducted with the appropriations that the Moderator has available to him. It is just impossible. But more importantly, the reality is that the machine counts are without error on their own. I have never seen a machine count where we couldn't identify the human error - people circling numbers, crossing things out. In Windham, they folded it right across where they were told not to. That resulted in the problem in Windham with that recount issue. That was a human

error. I see them time and time. People over voting and later on, you can determine the intent of the voter in a recount but that is rarely necessary. That only is necessary when the races are closed.

But I've seen and participated in counting where people sort of get in a rhythm and they read off the wrong name. Now in a recount, that's why it's teams of four and just think about that. Now you're talking 23 races, and you need two minutes a person, and you've got to have those teams. We don't have the volunteers. We can't fill all of our positions on our ballots. We're not going to have those people willing, literally, to say I'll come in and stay up all night because that's what we're talking about staying up all night. You don't have the option in New Hampshire of saying we're going to close the polls and we'll come back tomorrow and count. That's not how our Constitution works. That's not what we're allowed. You're going to have to have 100 people willing to come in here at 10 o'clock at night and stay here for God knows how long. I haven't done the math on 15,000 times two minutes and done that. We can do this. This is an idea and maybe I'll be proven wrong but I believe there is not one person who has regularly participated in the election process who will stand here today and tell you they think it's a good idea. I think this is only people who cast their votes, listen to the radio, to the TV, and say yeah this is a great idea. This is one of the worst ideas I have ever seen on a warrant. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Michael Beauchesne

My name is Michael Beauchesne, 10 Oak Ave., Hudson, New Hampshire. I rise in support of this Article. As some of the previous speakers had said, there's issues on both sides. Some of the things that I would raise is do you know that it's possible to hack into any computer software even when it's not connected to the internet? I'd also like to raise that do you know that all New Hampshire voting machines are maintained and programmed by a third party? Also, are you aware about the black box voting as one of the previous speakers had mentioned that in those black boxes, there's cards and up to 16% of the New Hampshire towns had their memory cards erased that were supposed to be saved for 22 months? Also do you know that the RSA 656:40 electronic ballot counting devices were adopted on a trial basis over two decades ago?

From my perspective, do you trust that your vote is secure as your cash deposit in an ATM? Personally, I just don't trust the machines and it should be up to we the people as the previous speaker had indicated large cities - Germany, Paris, in Germany, and in France, and in Canada they use paper ballots. I rise in support of going to paper ballots and as one of the previous speakers had indicated, it may take up to 100 volunteers. I would argue that it would be less than 30 volunteers required to do 15,000 ballots. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am. Mrs. Jasper.

Laurie Jasper

Laurie Jasper, 83 Old Derry Road. I rise in opposition, strong opposition to this. I do agree that it's one of the worst things I've ever heard. First of all, New Hampshire has one of the best voting systems in the entire United States and that has been proven and spoken of. One of the reasons is we have paper

ballots. We do have machines that they get counted into but we have a record of those votes. The paper ballot is a record. Some places in other States only have electronic voting and that's where you can get into trouble because you don't have a record you can actually look at if someone hacks into it. So we are a very safe State.

We also have, I trust our election officials implicitly. I have been in selling baked goods prior to COVID. So I have been right back there seeing the process through the years of the openness of elections. There's an announcement when they're counting the absentee ballots. We can watch them run them through the machines. This is all open space for anyone to watch the election officials, the Selectmen, the Moderator and what they're doing.

The machines that your ballot goes into is also watched and there's always someone there. When they get full like they do during Presidential Elections, there's a process for taking those out and there's a process for storing them as well. It's done very well and very carefully. I would suggest that the next time we do have it for the people who believe this is a good idea to please watch and come and observe. You're allowed to do that. My opinion is that they probably have never watched that happen.

Human error can always happen and the machines are not totally 100% perfect because of errors in markings or as the previous speaker, who I live with, said Windham had the folded problem. It was like their folding anything that was on the fold did not get counted. So there was a problem. That was found because we have the paper ballots to back things up.

Hand counting. No it is not evil but it is time consuming and when we do have a hand count, you know, when there's a race that's people are challenge, it takes time and there's a process. I think that would be like over 400 hours of counting if we had hand counting with four people at 15,000 ballots. I mean, that's ridiculous. I can't even imagine.

And then I don't know if other people know that they're also the ballots are also reconciled to the numbers in the books after the election too. So there are many, many checks and balances. Let's see what else did I want to say. The cost would be prohibitive and I say that we do care here in Hudson. We also elect good people and they take their jobs very seriously on whether they are the stewards of our elections. So I am against this and I will be telling everybody I know to vote against it. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am.

Rita Banatwala

Rita Banatwala, 29 Fairway Drive. I'm trying not to be redundant but in a previous career, I worked over two decades in document imaging. I will put money down in industry that's billions of dollars' worth that the machine can fire out do a one person job for repetitive action. And it's true when we have a misread, or a jam, or something, then it goes to the people and we need multiple volunteers. As it was pointed out, we have a lack of volunteers for all the positions already. Going to two voting places, we need volunteers at both places and then with the pooling of it together. We already are putting more work on everything.

It's 2022. Technology is all around us. We need to accept it. We need to start trusting it more and more

all the time. People are working on it to make it more and more efficient. We've got to go through it and all the reasons that previous people gave I go for as well. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Craig Putnam

Craig Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive. I rise in vehement opposition to this Article. I'm not going to go over and rehash all the excellent comments that have been made by the previous speakers that also were in opposition. But a couple points. We already have and use paper ballots. Alright. So the assertion that we need to move to that is false. We have processes that use those paper ballots effectively when necessary for questionable votes or a problem that machine jams, or too close a vote, and it goes to recount. We have processes in place. We need to have confidence in those processes.

The Petitioner spoke to a crisis of confidence. This is a manufactured crisis. All right. We in New Hampshire have reliable machines. We have reliable processes. We need to use them. Mrs. Jasper did some quick mental math on the amount of time necessary. I believe according to the math my wife did, it's close to 500 hours that will be necessary in order to do this given the numbers that were bandied about. Okay. This is not sustainable. It is not something that we can find volunteers to do. I would ask the petitioner has he been here all night, multiple years in the past, helping with the ballot counting? Alright, so I'm very much in opposition to this. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Bob Wherry

Hi, my name is Bob Wherry. I'm at 37 James Way. I was just - a general question about how we do and verify the validity of the programmable electronic counting devices. I've spent much of my career validating computerized systems and working on lately compliance of artificial intelligence and machine learning. I know that those computers can be very susceptible to problems and need to be thoroughly checked and verified prior to their use. So I'm wanting to understand what sort of activity Hudson goes through to verify the validity of those programmable devices?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. I will yield to that. Our process in the – and required by law - when our machines are not computers. They're optical counters. All they do is count dots on a page. What we do is when we get our ballots, we hand usually 20 to 50 ballots, we hand mark and hand count. I use a spreadsheet. Other town's use other ways, but we hand count them in order to test the machines. When we get the cards for the machine, which is really just for our town, we put the ballots through each machine four times right side up, upside down, top first, bottom first, and then we compare that to the hand count that we did. As long as they agree, then we know that the machine is working. Every year the machines are maintained by the company and the rollers are clean, the optical readers are checked and cleaned, and everything is done. In fact, it was done really well this year because of the Windham one, which I took part in. It took a week to do Windham's recount.

We then use those machines at the end when we get our tapes, and we do the count, and we do the hand counts of the write ins because we have write ins so we do a lot of hand counting. Then we count the number of ballots that we have as opposed to where we started and the ones that are spoiled because people make mistakes and ask for a new ballot. So we do that as well. So we have what comes in, what goes out. We compare the machine count with the hand count that we do as a test, which we're required to do by law, and those have always – as a matter of fact the only time that I had a trouble with that is because in the hand count I was doing a bunch of ballots. I counted them wrong. I said wait a minute, we're off and then I went back and the Clerk told me oh, you made a mistake in doing your tally. So the machine was right. I was wrong. So that's how we pick up those kind of things if there's going to be a problem with the machine. But that's the process we go through. It's pretty extensive.

Bob Wherry

And if I may just ask it further follow up question. So that's done just prior to the polls opening or sufficiently close that there's no other interaction between any other outside firm or anything else?

Moderator Inderbitzen

No. The machines are controlled. They are sealed in bags. The bags have seals. Anybody who has access to that is recorded. So when we open them to test them, we record who's opening them. We usually post when we do our testing. It's usually about a week or so before the election. Anybody can come and watch. We've never had anybody until last year. We had one person come and watch us do the testing. But it's open. Anybody can watch. They're sealed. When we're done with the testing, they are resealed in the bags. The Clerk has control of those in the vault and the Clerk brings them to the polling place and then we unseal them again and for starting to use them. When you turn them on, on voting day, a tape runs. It's a zero tape. It just proves that they're all zeros under all the candidates and Warrant Articles. That is kept as part of the record. So at the end of the night when we run the tapes, the tape runs and all the things are done and then we have to put that on - we collate that on a sheet and then we add in the write in. So we have all of that. There's a number of issues. That's why it takes us a little while to do that.

To do hand counts, it definitely would take a heck of a lot longer. But the machines are not accessible to anything. There are no connectors on those machines. They were removed years ago. Some cities in other States they connect the machines so the machines can be downloaded into a spreadsheet. We don't do that. We run a tape and that tape is what we use to do our tallies.

Bob Wherry

Alright, thank you for the clarification.

Moderator Inderbitzen

You're welcome. Yes.

Diana Lamothe

Hi. Diana Lamothe, 21 St. Laurent Drive. I just wanted to point out two years ago there was a school warrant article that passed by just a few votes. So a recount was requested and I was involved in the recount - a team of four. We had several teams of four to recount. The warrant article ended up failing

by six votes. The reason for the change in the count from what I observed was how the circles were filled in - the oval spaces on the ballots. It did not appear to be any error related to the counting devices. It was strictly voter error. They would circle the oval or, you know, put a little dot and so the machine couldn't pick that up. So I do agree more voter education would be beneficial but switching to hand counting, I don't see any benefit to that at all.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am.

Mary Joy Gasdia

My name is Mary Joy Gasdia, 4 MacCann Road. I've actually worked the past three years. Every election I've been here. I work with the Supervisors of the Checklist and I've stayed after multiple of those elections actually helping with end of night tasks, including, you know, counting things. I can tell you that the people that are here - because when somebody - I just want to say I believe Mr. Jasper said, you're going to need about 100 volunteers to count those votes at the end of night. He's 100% correct. The person that got up after that that said they he wants to argue you need 30. 100% wrong because it takes more than that to be here for a little town election and the people that are here counting those, right because we don't have loads of volunteers. I'm going to tell you I'm the youngest person in the building by probably 15 years. So to get people that are under the age of 50. Let's say under the age of 60 to actually come and help with this, right. Election workers get paid \$9 an hour for their volunteering. How this is zero tax impact rate I have no idea how that's even possible because it's going to take hundreds of hours. As the man just said, let's say we roughly said 500 hours times four people pods of things - 500 hours.

I've been here two weeks in a row listening to people argue over a petty three cents on this, and two cents on this, and we can't afford this, and we can't do this. This really before you vote yes for this. Really think through. We are Hudson, New Hampshire. This isn't conspiracy theory world. This is 2022. There's a reason you use machines. People that work here all day right and give all their time and now you think they're gonna volunteer and mentally be able to continue to count all night and not make more errors than the machine? You're completely wrong. It's insane. It doesn't even make possible sense. I just don't even get it. I get some people don't trust something but actually everything's been kind of invalidated by what the Petitioner said just by what was - you just heard Mr. Inderbitzen actually counteract the arguments regarding anything to do with fraud regarding, you know, breaking into the machines, and doing this, you know, hacking in computers and stuff because we don't use that. We don't even connect to Excel to download the darn spreadsheet. We're Hudson. We use a tab of paper off a machine that scans it. And then to top it off, if there's an issue there can be a hand count. So why would we start with the hand count, go back 50 years, let's start with a hand count, so that we can have people, you know, use their mental skills after they've worked all day because there's no way you're going to get 100 new people to come in here and volunteer. I'd love to see you get 25 people, right, that are going to come and give their time. Okay, because they're not. They're not going to just do that. You can't give people - people aren't even here today for something just that matters in the town and you think they're going to volunteer to count the votes? They're not and it's going to cost a ton of money.

So my question is who figures out the tax rate impact because it can't be zero. There's no possible way. Just like voting for two wards is not a zero tax impact. That's costing us a lot of money. The mailing alone to let everybody know this year what ward they're in cost us money. So that's not a zero tax impact. This is going to have an effect on taxpayers. It's going to cost a hell of a lot more money than

everybody realizes and it's the stupidest thing. You know what's going to be trending on Twitter and Tik Tok, it's going to be all over the world how stupid Hudson, New Hampshire, is because this is the dumbest thing. I get some people don't trust something, then come back after the election and say, I request a hand vote for that or whatever the policy may be argue for it. But this is absolutely absurd. I've sat here. I've worked with these people. Everybody that volunteers at those elections has the best heart. These are people giving up their time to be here that don't have to be here. People give up work. I actually take - somebody is like oh, you get paid to volunteer at the election. I lose money. I take time off work to be here to volunteer and help the community as do a lot of people that are there. So don't just think, oh, we're going to get all these people working. So I have to argue against it but can you tell me who picks that tax impact?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Who pick what?

Mary Joy Gasdia

Who said tax impact zero? Who comes up with that?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Well, we have no idea.

Mary Joy Gasdia

Yeah, but it can't be zero. It can't cause zero money.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Right now, we have no funds that we know of that would do that. We couldn't estimate - I couldn't estimate a tax.

Mary Joy Gasdia

Right but there's no possible way it can be a tax impact of zero because it requires extra help. Extra help has to be paid for and people in the Town of Hudson don't want to see their taxes go up. They're very concerned about what they spend their money on. I'm not gonna call people cheap. Everybody has their reasons. I'm not. Everybody has their reasons why you can afford to or want to vote for this and that. I don't care but this is going to cost you money. It's going to cost time. It's ridiculous and we're going to be here undoing it in the future.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir. Okay, we have one person to speak and then there's a request to move the question or we'll see if there's nobody else. Yes, Sir.

Ed Duchesne

My name is Ed Duchesne. I live at 10 Spruce Street in Hudson. I agree with most of the previous

speaker spoke about. I just want to say I put a couple of figures together here. You're talking about 500 additional hours of work. I count that out to become 50 people working each an additional 10 hours. So multiply that by \$9 an hour. That's that much more we'd have to at least pay for this additional type of thing happening. So I'm rising and speaking against this motion. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. There was a request for move the question, but if I don't see anybody else getting up I won't take that. I will - nope. Then I will have to take it because there was a question to cut off debate. I said if nobody was going to get up, I wouldn't do that. So Mr. Trost moves to move the question. Mr. Barnard seconds.

MOTION BY TED TROST, SECONDED BY LEO BERNARD, TO MOVE THE QUESTION

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. We've had both pluses and minuses spoken today for and against. This will be for cutting off debate and I'll close the discussion of Warrant Article 25. If you want to cut off debate if there's still people that might want to speak, you may want to let them. If you want to close off debate at this time, please raise your voter cards. Thank you. Those who do not want to cut off debate. The ayes have it. We've cut off debate. Warrant Article 25 will go to the ballot as is.

MOTION CARRIED

Article 26 Land Use Change Tax (By Petition)

Shall the Town vote to place 100% of the revenues of all future payments collected from the Land Use Change Tax into the Conservation Fund in accordance with RSA 36-A:5 III, as authorized under the provisions of RSA 79-A:25 II, said monies to be used for the acquisition of conservation land, conservation easements, development rights and the costs associated therewith?

(Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1)

Tax Rate Impact is \$0.00

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

I'll recognize Petitioner Mr. Gagnon to present Warrant Article 26.

Brett Gagnon

Thank you Mr. Moderator. Today I come to you as a resident, a conservationist not as a Selectman just to clarify that. So as the Moderator has spoken, he has read the Article which you see in front of you. My presentation today is going to speak to one of the biggest misconceptions regarding the current use program in the Land Use Change Tax associated with it. Next slide please.

To understand how we utilize and distribute current use change tax income, we first must understand the intent of the current use law. New Hampshire Governor John Lynch said in New Hampshire, we know that our high quality of life depends on our breathtaking landscape, traditional uses. That is why in 1973, the New Hampshire General Court created the current use law to encourage the preservation of undeveloped land and forest lands. Next slide, please.

The current use program is not a tax break. I repeat, the current use program is not a tax break. The current use program is a mechanism for taxing land based on its usable value. Based on that, we can conclude that the town has not lost any taxable revenues and which should be refunded to the general fund. On the contrary, it can be argued that this program increases the town's valuation and subsequent property tax revenues during the years the open spaces are kept in their natural state. By having more farm and forest land in town, home values are increased due to the demand to live in privacy. Next slide please.

What is land use change tax? Land use change tax is when land which was once in the current use system is sold for development and triggers a 10% tax on the buildable value. Next slide please.

So far, we have declared that the current use program is designed to encourage the preservation of farm and forest lands. The current use program is not a tax break that needs to be refunded upon cancellation of the land in the program. And thirdly, open spaces such as farmland forest land increases the town's valuation due to the demand to live around beautiful, natural environments. Thus in conclusion, 100% of these fees associated with the land use change tax should go directly to purchasing and protecting more open spaces via the Conservation Commission Fund. This supports the overall intent of the program and furthers the financial benefits to our State from protecting farm and forest land. Next slide please. It should be noted that even if this Article were to pass and we were to put 100% of the land use change tax into the Conservation Fund, this is only a 10% mitigatory effort towards protecting open space. Put differently - every 10 parcels of land that are taken out of the current use program for development will only fund one similar sized parcel under conservation protections. I'll kind like the finish, excuse me, many people voted for me as a Selectman because they know what I stand for and this is one of them. So thank you for your time.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. We'll now open Article 26 Land Use Change Tax to questions, comments, amendments. Yes, Sir.

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos

Xenophon Vurgaropoulos, 5 Muldoon Drive. I'm in favor of this amendment because I've lived here for just over eight years now. Over the last eight years, I can say over the last five years, I've seen a horrible trend that this town is moving towards industrializing and destroying our natural landscape for which I moved up here for privacy and the land itself. I didn't come up here to live in a bunch of warehouses and all that stuff. This is what I want. I want my forest. I want privacy. So I'm for this.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir. Mr. Crowley.

James Crowley

James Crowley, 4 Fairway Drive and I support this Article. But just help with some clarification. Does this Article for land use change if tax affectability of the landowner to develop their land in any way or is it limited to only changes percentage allocation of contributions for conservation purposes? And I guess we earlier articles we're always wondering, how much money are we talking about here? So I guess, do we have any projection amount of revenue transfer? Are we talking about - I mean, we're just changing from 70% to 100 if this passes. Is that 2 cents?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Question of the finance people if anybody could give us - Lisa Labrie our Finance Director will yield.

Lisa Labrie, Finance Director

So last year \$87,000 went to general fund; \$261,000 went to conservation. The prior year, \$29,000 went to general fund; \$89,000 to conservation. When it was 50/50, it was \$73,000 to general fund and \$73,000 to conservation.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am. Mrs. Jasper.

Laurie Jasper

Laurie Jasper, 83 Old Derry Road. Questions for the Selectmen. First of all, it was not recommended 4 to 1. I'm going to presume I know who the one is. But notice I didn't say "assume". Why was the vote that way? I'm wondering if it is because it was a Petitioned Warrant Article. I'd like an explanation. And then what are the fees used for now that this is being petitioned? As I am in favor of open space as a rule, but I just want to know what the Selectmen - the majority of the Selectmen views are.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Selectman Roy will yield.

Kara Roy, Selectwoman

So I will speak to why I didn't support this and it had to do with having a balance between what went back to this taxpayers and what funded conservation. I think right now, particularly in this economic time, we do have to have that balance. And I'm sure Mr. Gagnon can correct me because he has a lot of experience with the ConCom but I believe it is used to - it's put in the conservation fund to purchase land to maintain trails, to do all those kinds of things to preserve the conservation land we have, and to purchase new conservation land.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Ma'am. Mrs. Appler.

Phyllis Appler

Phyllis Appler, 62 Glen Drive. I served on the Conservation Commission amazingly for 13 years, but it's

been a long time ago. I taught biology in Hudson for 30 years. The value of open space of land that is in the current use provision now often is fairly large pieces of land. It's so important for wildlife habitat that we have these larger pieces of land. Having the Conservation Commission able to put pieces of land together and protect them is one of the things that they are able to do with this money. I certainly stand in support of their ability to have a little bit more money to do this with. So thank you very much for supporting this Article.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

Ron Brown

Ron Brown, 5 Hickory Street. I'm in support of this Article because in my opinion what it does is it takes the money out of the hands of the town boards that are leaning in allowing the development to take place that is destroying this place. By taking that incentive away, the developers may come but the board's don't have any gain from a financial perspective, which everybody on the board would deny is happening but they have their pet projects and they're looking for funding for the bunny, you know, and it comes from these fees.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Someone who hasn't spoken a first time why don't we let.

Holly Wagner

Holly Wagner, 14 Tessier Street. I am in support of this Petition. I am not a member of the Conservation Committee, or whatever it is, but I am a mother of a daughter who is an environmental student who went through the CTE forestry program at Alvirne. Rocked it. Represented FFA as a wonderful student. She learned to love the environment and forestry and she is at Syracuse University. One of the things that they talked about is how New Hampshire is killing their forests, and how everybody is developing everything, and how open spaces are dwindling. They talked about Hudson, and they talked about Nashua, and all of this area. Emily was just so sad because she comes from a community that has a CTE program in forestry and how much they made her love the environment and how she's going on to be an environmental biologist and environmental law program. Here we are in this community loving open spaces is what we should be about and keeping them, preserving them, and teaching our young ones to love the environment. That's what this is about. So I am in favor for this and hopefully we can keep it to what it is.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 26. Mr. Gagnon.

Brett Gagnon

And forgive me. I originally didn't say my address – 123 Wason Road here in Hudson. To speak to a couple questions that were brought up and to my fellow Selectmen. Selectman Roy who I highly respect, she made some good points but I've actually prepared a statement for that.

So some people may say that sending land use change tax revenues to the general fund helps lower the tax burden. Although this may hold some truth, let's look at it in more detail. The general fund can be used for things like fire trucks, or maybe town infrastructure, and so forth. Mostly depreciating assets. So we would be taking tax revenues from a depleting asset. They're not making any more land and they're spending it on depreciating expenses. This is not a sustainable financial decision. If we spent all the incoming land use change tax to purchase and protect new conservation land, we not only gain appreciating assets, but we increase the value of the town which attracts young families and helps keep our drinking water safe and retain some of the character this town has left. So thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Sir.

James Battis

James Battis, 6 Potter Road. I was also on the Conservation Commission for 12 years in the past and the two items that I would like to point out, I think Mr. Gagnon just stated them but the land use change tax is a one-time tax. It occurs when the property comes out of open space and becomes buildable. So giving 100% to the Conservation Commission actually it's one time. The town on the other hand when the land is built, increases its tax role. So it gets tax from the buildable land out into infinity. Of course, it get its expenses out into infinity too but it does get the future tax. So I think taking the land use change tax, one-time event, giving it to the Conservation Commission is a very worthwhile goal.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you very much. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 26. Selectman McGrath.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

I was a negative vote on this when it was brought before the Selectmen. The reason for my vote is that currently the Conservation Commission out of the land use change tax is 75%. 25% goes back to the taxpayers. That has been supporting that land use change tax all along. So to get 25% of that returned to the taxpayer, I think is a reasonable request. 100% to go to conservation in addition to the different - what is it - I just had it here. Excuse me because I'm a little worked up over this because we discussed this in the Board of Selectmen. We thought four of us, at least, at the time thought that 75% of that fund going to conservation was enough in addition to what they get every year in taxes. I've got to find the Capital Reserve Fund, sorry. Out of the Capital Reserve Fund, the Conservation Commission has \$748,183 currently. They've used some of that money to buy other property, other conservation property that's available to the taxpayers.

The land use change fund, the 75% that has gone to the Conservation Commission, is \$261,283, currently available to the Conservation Committee. An interfund with general fund, I can't read it because they've crossed out - it looks like the numbers. Can you see that? In any event - \$140,000 from interfund with general fund. Total assets for the Conservation Commission currently, nets money, is \$1,149,752.60. That's money that the taxpayers have generously given to the Conservation Commission. As other individuals in this room have stated, they've served on the Conservation Commission. I, too, have served on the Conservation Commission. That was the very first committee I ever served on in this town and then I transitioned to the Planning Board. I've been donating my time to the Town of Hudson that I've grown up here. I love this town. I'm going to continue to donate my time, as long as I'm able to. I've

been doing this for more than 40 years. Seems like only yesterday that I started but it's over 40 years. I've never asked for anything. I don't expect to get anything. I consider it a donation of my time.

But this, this goes beyond as far as I'm concerned. It goes beyond the pail. It's like asking the taxpayers to donate not once, but twice. One of the donations, this one, I'd venture to say that most people wouldn't know what that was. They would think that great its conservation land. It's a donation. I'm willing to do that. They don't realize they're donating twice. So that's why I opposed giving that money to the Conservation Commission. They get a donation every year in our tax dollars. Thank you.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. This lady and then Mr. Guessferd.

Rita Banatwala

Rita Banatwala, 29 Fairway Drive. While I'm for wide open spaces and wanting to preserve everything that we have around us because it's nice to breathe good air, the question of the day is how much money are we talking about? What is the real tax impact? Because if the money now that 25% that was going to taxpayers reduced our tax impact in reality - indirectly but it does - now goes to the Conservation Commission. Then how much money are we talking about on an annual basis? Now it's going to vary from year to year depending on the land that sold and da, da, da, da but we need to know what is the tax impact because there is a tax impact. Not directly but indirectly. It comes back to the people in the town and how much we have to pay for all our other wonderful services that we want.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Let's see if we can get that figure. Do we have a figure for the current? Selectman Guessferd will yield.

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Thank you Mr. Moderator. As you can probably tell, I was one of the four on the 4 to 1 vote on this by the Selectmen. To try to answer the previous speaker who's standing there now as well who asked the question about why we voted no. This is not an easy slam dunk yes or no situation. I moved to New Hampshire 32 years ago for some of the very same reasons that have been stated here. It's beautiful. It's not, you know, open land, all kinds of things. I love being near the mountains. I love being near the ocean being able to enjoy all of that and I love Hudson. I've come to love Hudson even more, since I first moved to this town.

I support conservation efforts but we just we're operating right now under a default budget. The citizens of this town, the voters of this town sent us a message very clearly last year at the last vote saying that, you know, we had it was almost a surprise I think for many of us that the budget was voted no. So we've been operating under that default budget this year doing the best we can with it. I think the reason I voted no was, and I have the ultimate amount of respect for the Petitioner and for the other Selectmen here, and for the folks who got up and spoke earlier about how passionate they are about conservation and all of that. I mean it's wonderful. It's wonderful. It's a wonderful thing to support. It's part of who we are in this State.

But I have a hard time with this this year given that we are operating under a default budget. I would not want us to have to operate under another default budget because we are taking money out or less money

for the general fund. That's the reason I voted no on this. In future years, I would most likely support this effort to bring it up to 100%. I just think right now it may not be the right time to do this. That was my rationale.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Yes, Mrs. Jasper for a second time. She had asked a question and then I'll take a move the question.

Laurie Jasper

Thank you for your explanations. That's a little bit clearer and it also makes this Petition Warrant Article even more vague. I feel a little bit misled. I want to know who are the agents to expend the money? Does this go to the Selectmen or is the Commission in charge of this money for spending it as they will?

And another public service announcement for land. It's still on topic, but I was driving to Greeley Street to get here today and I had four beautiful deer in that place that's being dug up on Greeley. Stop, look at me, and I guess they didn't like my car. They turned around and went but I was waiting because they like to dash in front of cars. But yes, I am all in favor of open space and land and but this money it now sounds like there's a lot of money that they have in the Commission. So I think this seems a little greedy at this time, especially with Selectmen Guessferd's explanation.

Moderator Inderbitzen

The question was agents to expand on the conservation money.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

The Selectmen actually vote to expend the money.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. It's the Board of Selectmen that have to vote to do it.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Yes, but the Conservation Committee, the Chairman or whoever they designate, come before us to request the funds to be expended. They explain exactly what they want to spend it on and we either vote to allow them to or not. I would say while I've been on the Board of Selectmen the few times that they've come in to request funds then we've certainly approved that. In fact, we approved it to buy some property up off of Pelham Road, which abuts to Benson Park. We allowed them to take that money and buy the property.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Okay. Thank you. The mover of the motion to call the question says this lady was in line so we'll let this was the last person before we take a decision whether to cut off debate. Yes, Ma'am.

Jen Rousseau

123 Wason Road.

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Excuse me, can you just identify your relationship to the Petitioner?

Jen Rousseau

What business of that is yours?

Moderator Inderbitzen

Excuse me. Be in order? Please be in order. Go ahead.

Jen Rousseau

Thank you. Two points. I just wanted to legitimately question. I understand, you know, we have to be fiscally responsible in a default year especially. But earlier in the Deliberative Session we talked about an unassigned fund and we have \$6 million sitting in it. Although I agree, default budget is dire but with a \$6 million backup, are we truly in a dire circumstance?

My second point is anybody that's gone shopping for land, boy, they're not giving it away. \$747,000 in our current fund gets spent up pretty quick. I mean there's, you know, under 10 acres going for over \$400,000. So land deals are very complicated. I also served on the Conservation Commission. They come up sometimes in a moment's notice and the Commission has to make a decision, can we really afford to go after something? It's great, but we only have, you know, a million, or 800,000 or 700,000? Should we really go for this? What's the likelihood we're even going to get it? So the more buying power you can have in the account makes it much easier for the Commission to make decisions on land deals, especially when they have maybe a couple different options on the table and they have to give up one. So, you know, there's a lot to it.

So the more you can kind of give them if you're serious about saving land, the better the chances are to secure a deal. This town, not for nothing, you know, has for the past several years showing majority that we want to back efforts to save land. That's what the constituents are voting. We need our leaders to hear that. I mean in some years over 70% of our town's voters have said yes, save that land. So this is - we've got our represent what the voters are voting not what we personally might think. So that's how I'll leave it. Thank you very much.

Moderator Inderbitzen

Thank you. Mr. Murray made a motion to move the question. Seconded by Selectman Morin.

MOTION BY SHAWN MURRAY, SECONDED BY DAVID MORIN, TO MOVE THE QUESTION

Moderator Inderbitzen

Are you ready to take that to close debate on Article 26? If you're in favor of closing debate on Article

26, please raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed to closing debate. The ayes have it. Article 26 is closed and goes to the ballot as is.

MOTION CARRIED

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Inderbitzen

That is the last item on our Warrant for tonight. Ladies and gentlemen. Speaking of volunteers, I heard a couple of times there's a poster in the back with applications for getting on boards and commissions. I would encourage people to please sign up if you're willing and able. Also the map is in the back for where your voting location is. Like I said, the only mistake is Central Street is Ward One not Ward Two. I will take a verbal motion to adjourn at this time.

MOTION BY PHYLLIS APPLER, SECONDED BY NORMAND MARTIN, TO ADJOURN

Moderator Inderbitzen

All in favor of adjournment, please signify by saying aye. I'll take a voice – the ayes have it. We are adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED

Transcribed by Donna L. Graham

Attest: 
Roger Ordway, Town Clerk