

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the January 24, 2023 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairperson Roy the meeting of January 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Hudson resident Jim Dobens

3. ATTENDANCE

Board of Selectmen: Bob Guessferd, Marilyn McGrath, Dave Morin, Kara Roy

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia Town Administrator; Elvis Dhima Town Engineer; Bill Collins Conservation Commission Chairman; Scott Tice Fire Chief; Jill Laffin Executive Assistant

4. PUBLIC INPUT

John Dubuc, 11 Eagle Drive

Good evening, everyone. My name is John Dubuc. I live at 11 Eagle Drive. I want to ask you tonight to work together with all of us for the future of Hudson. I am Hudson. This Board is Hudson and all the residents that take part in meetings and even those that don't take part in meetings. Our Hudson, our school system, school and town employees that support our friends and family. Our Hudson. Old Home Days is Hudson. We share our pride in our town. These are the things I'm asking you to think about and protect when you have a healthy debate and vote for the future of Hudson, for my family and for your families, you have an important role in an obligation to the residents of Hudson to shape Hudson's future and take the time to research and understand the decisions you make. And if they are right, ones for the future of Hudson. These are impactful and sometimes have a lasting impact on all of us. One example that I found disturbing was an important memorial firefighter's memorial. Do we want that land turned into a gas station or do we want our future generation of Hudson residents to have the chance to visit the memorial where the town chose for it to be? Have we done all we can to keep that memorial in place? Important questions like this need to be asked, and I hope you can do all you can do to do the right thing. I see a great future for Hudson that comes from forward thinking and thoughtful planning and decisions. Be brave, be bold and being informed, independent thinker when you vote. I hope you're all with me for Hudson's bright future. Thank you for your time. And thanks for all you do for this great town.

Heidi Jakoby, 94 Gowing Road

My name is Heidi Jacoby and I live at 94 Gowing Road. I want to begin by thanking the Board for putting the Hillwood sewer discussion on the agenda today. From the Hudson Town Code, I hope you take time to look at the previous letters that I had submitted and that you have the responsibility for to make the decision around sewer. And I don't need to read your provisions around that as far as health, safety and community. I just want to remind you that it was deemed that the Hudson Logistics Center was essential. Well, now and that was when it was Amazon and now it's Target. And that the site plan that the Amazon site plan is now null and void because the target site plan supersedes that. I hope you take some time to research the history of the sewer hookup and easement, which from my understanding was paid for by Walmart for the residents to have future access to the sewer. I've been looking into those records and it's just been difficult to find the origination of that sewer hookup. But my

understanding it was, as is stated in the excerpt, about residents being first and foremost on the list for sewer. I believe, as I have stated before, that the Board of Selectmen needs to vote on granting sewer for the Hudson Logistics Center Target site plan as it has been approved and makes the original Amazon site plan null and void. When the Amazon Warehouse received sewer allocation and the site plan sewer allocation was approved the Plan with the Planning Board on May 5, 2021, the builder had 90 days for to file that approval site plan with the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds per Town Ordinance 272 1782. Unfortunately, they lost that approval since they missed this deadline and only recorded it on September 9th, 2022. Well past that 90 days, and that's in my previous correspondence.

The Hudson Logistics Center Target warehouse site plan, as approved by the Planning Board, is outside the sewer district, as stated by the Town Engineer Elvis Dhima during the January 12th, 2021 Board of Selectmen meeting. The Target site plan needs all fresh approvals from both the town and all New Hampshire state agencies that have jurisdiction over the site plans. Per Brian Groth, as neither the town of Hudson nor the State has the ability or procedure to amend an approved site plan. I want to reiterate that I believe the Board of Selectmen owes it to the town and to the developer to make sure that they clearly do or do not have a sewer allocation for the Target site plan, which is significantly and distinctively different from the Amazon site plan. I look forward to understanding your decision. And let me be clear, it makes no difference to me whether you grant sewer or not for the site plan as I am well outside of ever getting sewer in the Town of Hudson. I just want it to be a clear decision made by the Board and not a default decision. Thank you for serving the Town of Hudson, New Hampshire, to the best of your ability and for your time and dedication to representing the members of this community.

Jim Dobens, 4 Eagle Drive

Good evening. My name is Jim Dobens, and I reside at 4 Eagle Drive in Hudson. And there are a few things in my mind that are bothering me that I'd like to bring up to the Board. Our town is at a crossroads, facing many difficult situations, and I, for one, would love to get some answers and solutions on how these are going to be handled. Many of these issues are our own fault, but it is now time for this board to create solutions before it's too late. It's time to show the residents some critical thinking with solutions. So I have four questions and I have one ask tonight. We're facing uncontrolled and poorly planned developments, traffic issues and rising accident rates, not just in our state primary roads, but all town roads, the collector roads, the rising emergency services and equipment are being stretched in rising taxes on your residents, which will prompt another unfortunately default budget, in my opinion, affecting the town and our school's ability to deliver quality services. So here are my questions. One. Where are you in the creation of a town master plan that will reel in these uncontrolled and poorly planned developments popping up all over town? The master plan will provide a clear vision and protect the quality of life we do all expect. As part of that plan, our zoning rules are weak. I've reviewed many of them and need to be addressed to prevent these predatory real estate and commercial developers from turning our town into an industrial and truck destination. Stop where are you on a traffic and infrastructure study desperately needed by this town? I have asked countless times over the last year or so, and I feel it is falling on deaf ears. Our traffic situation is about to get much worse. Our accident rates are rising. Emergency services are getting stretched and they're about to get stretched even further by all the projects that have been approved. Developers bringing these major, massive projects in are only concerned about their little area of impact, not the entire town. To think these projects are not impacting the entire town's roadway system and infrastructure is absolutely ludicrous. Of course, developers do not want a holistic approach taken because it'll show the truth. State roads we cannot regulate, but town roads we can. Does anybody care? I know the Planning Board. In my opinion, they don't seem to. Three. What are you going to do about the rising taxes on your residents? Regardless of how this happened, for residents to be seeing a 10 to 15% increase. Somebody caught a break, but it wasn't the residents it seems like the commercial base did. When I took a look at it, the answer is not more development because development is never reduced our tax rate and now we're subsidizing them. It's not fair. I could show you where we were back in 1985 and where we are today. I did in one meeting about a year back and warned where we were heading as we have far outstripped inflation rates. In fact, we're almost

double the inflation rate when you compare budgets. In addition, we have 20 20% fewer students than we did back in those days.

A master plan with a vision and strategic choices would help solve budgetary issues like this. Yet here we are facing the stark reality of another default budget in the possible failure of needed requests by the town and the school district for what happened to the equipment our fire department needs, like the platform truck. I missed that meeting. It was an interesting meeting not too long ago. We cannot do without it. Based on all the approvals given for developments. And here I see a Planning Board aligned to a price and not the delivery of a truck from developers, period. Now the town is about \$700,000 short to purchase. From what I could hear, that should not be our issue. It should be theirs. Didn't anybody in that board think about the firefighters needed to staff it? In my calculation, that's about another \$700,000 impact that frankly, is not included anywhere. Where is the forward thinking and vetting of impacts to our town and what will we need? Those are my simple questions. But now for my ask. When I reviewed the agenda I'm now seeing that's the sewer issue on the agenda tonight for discussion. I would strongly recommend that this Board discuss and debate this topic, but to allow yourself the adequate time to gather and review all the facts before making a decision, before this decision is made, I believe there should be a public input session and that we should have a full board as this is a major decision to be made. We're missing a select board member. I will remind this board that sewer was expanded down to the Walmart and Sam's sites back in the late eighties and early ninety's. I was involved in those meetings and requested sewer with another group for South Hudson residents. The larger pipe was installed and paid for by the Walmart developers for future expansion and use by South end residents. The sewer district was created sometime right after that with very specific rules out of all of this to protect the capacity we had for its residents down the road. Do not wash this decision decision over lightly. But, Madam Chair, you have the power to handle this. Let's use some critical thinking in discussions to make the right decision and not push or have it bullied through. I want sewer, but rules say I cannot have it. I do not like the idea of rules for me, but not for thee. I even had conversations with the developer of the Sam's and Wal Mart. Site. Just to validate what I recollected from all of the meetings. It was a fascinating discussion, and that was not too long ago. My final comment is around our Planning Board. I really wish they would ask the hard questions, do the due diligence, put in the stipulations that meet our town's needs and have accountability on the developers with real penalties that all tie into a town's master plan and vision. This board here tonight is our town's leadership. You are the head of the fish, so to speak. So I expect solutions and decisions made that benefit and protect the residents in our town first, not the developers. Thank you.

Dean Sakati, 11 Fairway Drive

So I wasn't really intending to speak tonight, but I saw that the sewer allocation was on the agenda. I'd like to simply add, and I'll be very. Oh, sorry. Dean Sakati, 11 Fairway Drive. Thank you again. I'll start over. Wasn't intending to speak tonight, but saw that the sewer allocation was on the agenda. I'd like to simply add that adding sewer in outside of the sewer district is a simple issue, but a difficult decision. It's simple because the code is very clear. The Board of Selectmen could only approve sewer in south Hudson for the public health, safety and welfare of the town of Hudson. And it's difficult because it's likely that two sides, one of the two sides will be disappointed residents or don't have sewer or the developer themselves, which will probably end in a lawsuit or of sorts. Right. So it's difficult for the town. If it's any consolation, I'm not an engineer, but I understand that industrial septic is a feasible option, especially where this this proposal has more free space than than the prior proposal. I've lived in Hudson for over 30 years without town sewer would love it if there is an allocation of sewer beyond the health, safety and welfare of residents, it probably should go to residents first. That's all I have. Thank you for your time. Thank you for your service.

5. RECOGNITIONS, NOMINATIONS & APPOINTMENTS - none

6. CONSENT ITEMS

Chairperson Roy asked, does anyone have anything they'd like removed for separate consideration? Seeing none, Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to approve consent items A, B, C, D, E & F. Carried 4-0.

CONSENT ITEMS

A. Assessing Items

- 1) Solar Exemption: map 171, lot 024, 17 Bradford Circle

B. Licenses & Permits & Policies

- 1) Hawker Peddler License Renewal - The Blushing Rose
- 2) Raffle Permit - Cradles to Crayons
- 3) Outdoor Gathering Permit - British Cars of New Hampshire
- 4) Tag Day Permit - Girl Scout Troop #219
- 5) Tag Day Permit - Humane Society for Greater Nashua

C. Donations - none

D. Acceptance of Minutes

- 1) Minutes of January 10, 2023

F. Calendar

- 1/25 7:00 Planning Board - Buxton Meeting Room
- 1/26 7:00 Zoning Board of Adjustment - Buxton Meeting Room
- 2/01 8:00 Highway Safety Committee - Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
- 2/02 6:30 Recreation Committee - Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
- 2/04 9:00am Town Deliberative Session - Hudson Community Center
- 2/08 7:00 Planning Board - Buxton Meeting Room
- 2/11 9:00am School Deliberative Session - Hudson Community Center
- 2/13 7:00 Cable Utility Committee - HCTV Meeting Room
- 2/13 7:00 Conservation Commission - Buxton Meeting Room
- 2/14 7:00 Board of Selectmen - Board of Selectmen Meeting Room

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Votes taken after Nonpublic Session on January 10, 2023

- 1) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Gerald Bourdeau for the position of Firefighter/Paramedic in the Fire Department at the contracted salary of \$24.36 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighter's Local #3154 as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 3-0.

- 2) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Aaron Martin for the position of Firefighter/AEMT in the Fire Department at the contracted salary of \$22.24 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighter's Local #3154 as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 3-0.
- 3) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Nicholas Avellani for the position of Firefighter/EMT in the Fire Department at the contracted salary of \$17.78 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighter's Local #3154 as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 3-0.
- 4) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to authorize Chief Dionne to enter into an MOU with HPEA with regard to offering an incentive day off for a referral from an HPEA member that leads to a hiring, and to further allow for an additional day off to the same employee when the referred newly hired employee completes their probationary period. Carried 3-0.
- 5) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to Promote Lieutenant Steve McElhinney to the position of Captain at \$105,354.00 in accordance with the Hudson Police, Fire, Town Supervisors Association Contract (step 4). This elevation in rank would be effective on Sunday, January 15, 2023. Carried 3-0.
- 6) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve Police Chief Tad Dionne's request to buy back 500 hours of his accrued earned time. Carried 3-0.
- 7) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to appoint Public Works Department Supervisor Jay Twardosky to Acting Director of Public Works during the Director of Public Works medical leave at the temporary salary of \$112,671 per year. Carried 3-0.
- 8) Selectman Morin made a motion to adjourn at 9:17 p.m. this was seconded by Selectman Guessferd. Carried 3-0.

B. Serious Incident Reporting Policy

Chairperson Roy recognized the Town Administrator who said, as we briefly discussed at the last meeting, I got this back from the attorney. This has been reviewed. I believe everything that the Board asked for was put into the policy, including definitions of the serious injury and some of the other language. The labor attorney has reviewed this and basically it's for your review. As you recall, you just enacted a policy, you're going to have two readings of a policy just in case. So this would be the first reading, if that's what you're interested in doing the next meeting, you would approve it. Seeing no questions from the Board it was agreed that this item would go on the February 14, 2023 agenda.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing - Aquatics Grant

Chairperson Roy recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima and Chairperson of the Conservation Commission, Bill Collins. Mr. Dhima started off by saying, thank you, Chairperson Roy. Good evening, everyone. You're well aware every year we file, we receive two grants, one for the dash

and a dash removal and herbicide treatment. This year we're only going to do the diving portion of it, not the treatment, because the program has been pretty successful. So the state basically indicated that there's no need for chemical treatment this year. So all we're doing is the physical removal of certain portions of it. But that said, the first item for you tonight is to accept this grant, and the next one will be to actually assign it to one of the two contractors. So with that said, I'll take any questions you might have. Mr. Dhima then added, this is something that we budgeted for. It's an item out of the Conservation Commission and it's a 50/50 this year, unlike previous year, which has been a 60% and 40% match from the state. So this year it seems to be a little bit more money that we'll take. Any questions you might have?

Mr. Collins then said, yeah, actually, it's gonna be significantly cheaper costs this year. We're looking at only about \$11,500 on our part. The other 50% will be coming from the state. And like Mr. Dhima said it's all diving this year and hand pulling. So with some success we should be able to minimize that even. The dives are you pay per dive and they estimate around 15 Dives for the year, both Ottarnic Pond and Robinson Pond. So it'd be good.

Chairperson Roy asked, does anybody on the Board have any questions? Selectman McGrath said, I do. Did you say that previously it was a 60/40 split. 60%? Mr. Dhima replied 60% on the town, 40% match on the state. This year they're going up 50/50, which is pretty good. Selectman McGrath replied, I just wanted to make sure that we weren't losing anything. Mr. Dhima replied, no. It's been as low as 30%, depending who files and how much money that's available. This year it appears, you know, between municipalities less municipalities is doing this. And the fact that we don't need the additional they're willing to match us at 50%, which is huge. Selectman McGrath replied that's good. Every little bit helps. Thank you.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said Okay. Let me just make sure I'm clear, cuz I think when you first said it, you said it was 60% for the state before. Mr. Dhima replied, oh, I'm sorry. Selectman Guessferd then said the second time you said it was so it's 60%. The town paid and 40%. Okay. So this is this is back with more money. Mr. Dhima replied, more money. We're receiving more money this time around.

Chairperson Roy asked, Okay. Anybody else? So at this point, I will open the public hearing at 7:23 p.m. Is there anyone present who would like to speak on this matter? Seeing none. I will close a public hearing at 7:23 p.m. and I will entertain *a motion for the Board of Selectmen to accept the Exotic Aquatic Plant Control grant from the NHDES for services for Spring/Summer 2023. Selectman Morin made this motion, seconded by Selectman McGrath. Carried 4-0.*

B. DASH Contract Approval

Mr. Dhima and Mr. Collins were again recognized. Mr. Dhima began saying, thank you Chairman Roy. So this particular contract has worked for us in the past, is qualified to do the services, and it's basically selected by us and the state. And we're willing to, I mean, ready to execute this contract, and we'll take any questions you might have. Chairperson Roy asked, so anybody have any questions? Seeing no questions from the Board *Selectman McGrath made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to approve and sign the attached 2023 contract for Aqualogic for DASH work at both Robinson and Ottarnic Pond as needed for up to \$23,200. The cost for this contract will be covered by the NHDES Exotic Aquatic Plant Control grant at a 50% cost match in the town portion of up to \$11,600 will be covered through the Conservation Commission Professional Services account number 5586-252. Carried 4-0.*

C. Public Hearing - Brox Industries Inc., proposed donations to Hudson Conservation Commission

Chairperson Roy again recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima and Conservation Commission Chairman Bill Collins. Mr. Dhima explained I have a few items for you tonight. This one, as you recall, is basically something that Brox is pursuing at the state level. As far as the dredge and fill goes, this is part of their attempt trying to preserve wetlands and uplands related to it. They've found a spot in their property that's adjacent to existing conservation land. They would like to donate that subject to state approval. In addition to that, they're willing to donate another \$10,000 towards our boat ramp kayak ramp at Merrill Park. And with that said, we'll take any questions you might have. I have represented by Brox Industries tonight. They're willing to answer any questions you might have, but that's basically that's what's forward for you to consider. And again, as I said, is subject to final state approval.

Chairperson Roy asked, does anybody on the Board have any questions? Selectman Morin asked where are we on the state approvals? Mr. Dhima replied if they get the commitment tonight, they're going to be filing right away and then we're going to hear from the state or Brox will hear from the state right away. If that gets through their next step will be at the Planning Board to subdivide this six-acre parcel and then hand it over to the town with a quick deed and a plan. So that's next. But as soon as they get a commitment from the Board tonight that they're you willing to do that, they'll be filing soon after. So it'll be a quick turnaround.

Chairperson Roy asked, anybody else on the Board? No? In that case, I will open a public hearing to accept the land donation in the money donation at 7:26 p.m. Is there anyone present who would like to speak on this matter? Seeing none, I will close the public hearing at 7:27 p.m. and so there's going to be two motions here. Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to accept the land donation to the Hudson Conservation Commission from Brox Industries Incorporated. Pending approval of NHDES approving their wetlands permit. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to accept a donation of \$10,000 to the Hudson Conservation Commission from Brox Industries Incorporated, pending approval of NHDES approving their wetlands permit. Carried 4-0.

D. Robinson Road & Christine Drive 12" Water Main Extension

Town Engineer Elvis Dhima was again recognized and said Thank you. Chairperson Roy, Planning Board last year approved a multiple lot subdivision along Robinson Road. Two of those lots were purchased by Chasse, which is an existing business in town, well established, very successful. They're planning to expand and two of those lots that were approved will be servicing an expansion related to an existing business in town. The plan is to service these lots with municipality water and they'll be handling domestic and fire protection. In addition, the owner, Steve Chasse, has agreed to do offsite improvements related to fire suppression as well for the amount of \$85,000 which extension. And that financial commitment was completed today subject to final Board of Selectmen approval. So with that said, I'll take any questions you might have, but we can accommodate this request for the domestic and fire suppression at this time, and we'll be handling some. Weaknesses on that side of it by completing some of this work that's proposed through the year. Through this work. We will be literally closing some loops, water loops.

Chairperson Roy replied, can you expand on that a little bit? I'm not sure what what you mean by weaknesses. Mr. Dhima replied basically, the town in the past when we used to do water mains used to be a lot of dead ends. This particular one we've identified to closing the closing basically one side of water main extension to another and basically having a go around a full loop on that. So you have continuous water. It's not just from a fire suppression standpoint, but also from the water quality. When you have

dead ends, you have a lot of stagnant water sitting at the end of the line when you have a continuous loop. That's what we like to see in the industry. So you have the continuous water running around and moving around instead of having that stagnant. So it's a it's really addressing two things through this. We're always looking for developers and contractors and business owners that look to, you know, get connected to the utilities and look for anything that can be worked out between all the parties to have a better system for not just that, but also the town as well. And this is one of those stories that we're willing to work with us. So we're going to have a better product when we're done. Seeing no further

Any other questions? Seeing no further questions Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman McGrath to approve and sign the proposed 12-inch waterline extension agreement, as recommended by the Town Engineer. Carried 4-0.

E. County Road Bridge Engineering Evaluation & Design Phase

Chairperson Roy again recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima. Mr. Dhima said Thank you. So, as discussed in the last Board of Selectmen meeting or a couple of meetings ago, there was money set aside using bridge aid that we receive from the state to do some of the work. County Road was identified as one of them to do an eval. It's not on the pink list. It's not on the red list, but it's something that needs to be looked at to make sure that it stays exactly where it is. So we put aside \$17,500 to do that effort. I reached out to one of our consultants. We got the last job as a low bid for the Lowell Road and First Brook. After some huffing and puffing they agreed to do it for the amount that we budgeted for. So I have a proposal in front of you tonight to do all the engineering evaluation and design for what needs to be done there for \$17,500 and basically sole source and assign it to them. It's too much of a it's too small of an amount to go out for an RFP and you'll see on the next contract, a lot of engineering firms are not pursuing small jobs less than \$50,000 unless they have the job. So we'll be talking about that on the left side. But for something like this small where my my recommendation is just to give it to the last low bid that we had and move forward with this.

Selectman Morin was recognized and asked will this take into any consideration if they want to extend Birch Street over to County Road at some time in the future? I know there was a plan. No? just for the bridge strictly. Okay. Mr. Dhima replied, this is basically the guardrail, the deck. Making sure that stays has got to where it's at was, you know, small amount of money to figure out what we need to do to stay a seven, which it is today. That one is still in place, converting Lowell and Birch to a four-way intersection. It's a two and a half million dollars and going up every day. I'm not sure what we're going to end up with that, but that's still in the queue. Planning Board has the preliminary plans layouts for that. Still discussions about County Road converting to a one-way street, but no decision has been made on that. There was quite a bit of effort put by the Planning Board to come up with different methods to how we can do that better. I think that County Road layout was a temporary set up there, including the street light, but it's a big nut to crack, so we've got other things to worry about for now, but we might have to deal with that when we do the rehab of Lowell and Birch Bridge, which is in the works right now. They'll be coming up in the next two weeks and then for the Board of Selectman for evaluations. That's how that's how now for a proposal, that's going to be a nightmare.

Selectman Guessferd then said, I'm going to pull on the sole source string just for a minute or two to which Chairperson Roy replied, yeah. Thank you. Selectman Guessferd then said, you know, one of the things that we always need to make sure of is that when we do a sole source, that that there's that there's good reasons for it. And you have enumerated some of them in terms of the low cost of this. And so I just I'm just kind of want to pull it a little bit. We've said here that he's going to it would, you know, if we had to go through the bid process. How much can you give me some sort of estimate as to how much time it would have taken to go through a bid process in terms of hours and that sort of thing? Because that's kind of part of that. So can you kind of go through. Mr. Dhima replied, so we went for I'll just go over the we have right now out to bid lowland Birch and also Melendy Road. There were two jobs about \$50,000. The

feedback was you might not get anyone to show up for the pre mandatory pre-bid meeting. We require pre-bid meetings, so we combined those two projects together. Right now the amount for both of those projects is \$125,000. I got three people that showed up for that and two of them are someone we work with all the time, that worked in the past. No one else, no new actors, nothing. For the one that we are that we're going to discuss next time. We had five people that showed up, only one bid because our budget was 40 grand. They just won't even come. It's just too small. So to answer your question, it takes me about depending something like this will probably be about 2 to 3 days to put the RFP together. There'll be money spent for the advertising. There will be about an hour at the mandatory pre-bid meeting, followed up for maybe for an hour for questioning, things of that sort. But then again, you're paying for me no matter what I do anyways. So it's not like I have to charge for the job, but it will probably be about three days, about 22 to 24 hours for me to put something like this at this little magnitude. My concern is there will be a waste of time because you go through this exercise and you don't get anything to come in. Selectman Guessferd added, or you end up with the same outcome. Mr. Dhima replied, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Or more for that matter. Sometimes will be higher if they make it worthwhile. The thing is, my time is free because I'm getting paid. But someone else to go in for a 17 five, they'll probably have to put 3 to \$4000 to put a proposal together to have someone to come out, look at the job, come talk to us. So how do you expect someone to spend three or \$4,000 to get a job for \$17,000? Not a lot of margin there. Selectman Guessferd then said kind of talk to them about it and they were kind of reluctant. Mr. Dhima replied, Yeah. They I almost like I don't want to say we twisted their arms, but we felt like there could be future work in the end here. But these guys got the bid, got the job for Lowell over First Brook because there were the low bid and they were off by like two or three grand from the other person. But in that case, it was only two bids. I would not be surprised for the bigger job that we have we still get two bids. It's just not a lot. Doesn't seem to be a lot of appetite from the engineering firms right now for small jobs. They expect it to be sole source. I will also say, and you probably see this in your industry, that a lot of municipalities right now are creating a list for different engineering firms for services they do. So they have a short list. So does the state, and they draw out of them for small jobs. They don't even go out. We're not there yet, but a lot of them are doing that. And that's what the expectations is. That's what I'm getting out of it. For Small jobs, yes, for big jobs I don't think we're there yet.

Selectman Guessferd replied, but so it sounds to me like there was some some price pressure on them to to keep it where they were. I just again, we just need to make sure that we're doing the right thing here. Mr. Dhima replied if I felt that it was worthwhile, I was going through the exercise because, you know, 20 hours of my time, I'll make it work. I just, I just don't want to waste a month and then coming up with the same thing or something bigger or just not, and then come up to the same conclusion. So time is money at this point. So if we can get this thing done the best and the most efficient way, that's kind of what I'm leaning towards. Selectman Guessferd asked and we want your time spent in the in the most efficient way as well? I get that. Mr. Dhima replied, I agree with you 100% on that one. Yes.

Chairperson Roy then asked, so and maybe there's a question for the town administrator. What's the threshold again? The Town Administrator replied, so by code, it's \$10,000 and up if we're supposed to get bids. Over \$25,000 it gets awarded in public. Selectman Guessferd asked, it gets what? To which the Town Administrator replied, it gets awarded in public. So there's some thresholds there. Mr. Dhima replied, but we felt like this was a better way of doing. Chairperson Roy then asked, and is there is it the same policy for every department? You know what I mean? The Town Administrator replied it's town code. It's town code. The Chairperson then said it's just I don't know, is that something we might at this point need to look at those thresholds? Maybe something to think about. Mr. Dhima replied expedited since. I totally get it. Chairperson Roy said I mean, I we're in a world where \$10,000 isn't a lot of money. Right? And if somebody's spending two or \$3000 to put together a proposal for a \$10,000 job, I mean. Mr. Dhima replied, I couldn't agree with you more. I think that \$10,000, whenever that was said, is not \$10,000 today day. We can all agree to that. Chairperson Roy replied, yeah, I think it's something that maybe once a future discussion, but we are where we are. Does anybody else have any other questions?

Seeing no further questions, *Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman McGrath to waive the bid process and sole source this work to Wright Pierce, Inc., for the reasons they have agreed*

to complete this work for the budgeted amount. They have performed similar services for the town in the past, and they were the lowest bidder on the last bid project. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve the contract for design Engineering Services for County Road Bridge (126/083) to Wright Pearce Incorporated for the amount of not to exceed \$17,500 using account number #4909-6211-503-000. Carried 4-0.

F. DPW Fuel Pump Station Design Phase

Town Engineer Elvis Dhima was again recognized and said Thank you. Again, this is one of the projects that was identified by the Board of Selectmen to utilize ARPA funds. This has to do with the fuel pump station that's in need of replacement and the DPW facility. We budgeted \$40,000 for this project. We had four different vendors show up at the mandatory pre-bid, but only one bid. We were fortunate enough that that bid came below what we estimated. I was a little disappointed, to be honest, but this is basically in line to what I was saying earlier. It's getting harder and GPI has done similar work in the past. They had a great resume, including gas stations in Hudson. And with that said, they're more than capable of doing this work. And I'm asking the Board to approve this contract and move forward with this design. I'll take any questions you might have.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said just was were the companies that came to the pre-bid conference aware of the budget or not? Mr. Dhima replied, yeah. Yeah. We make that all available. And some of them were like, you know, nah. And I did tell them that while our estimate was 40 grand, we budgeted \$50,000. So I always leave a little bit of buffer there. It's hard for me because to think it was more because the area of work, it's 100 by 100. So like what are we building over there, The Big Dig? So when I think about it, but things have changed. You know, the state is more strict on things that you do. There's more specifications. There's a lot of back and forth. I tried to tell them there we'll be hands on with this project. We'll be doing all the grinding with the state like we have in other projects so they don't have to carry the burden of a lot of correspondence back and forth. GPI has good relationships in town have done quite a bit of work and they felt that we were easy to work with, and that's kind of why they put it in. But the other ones just walked away. It's just not enough there to put it in. So you put a proposal together, five grand. That won't be a lot of room. These guys are fortunate because they bought a company, engineering firm that specializes in fuel tanks. Now, that's the only reason versus some of these other ones that had to sub it out. So when you start adding those up and you start paying the subs and the ten and 15% markup, just no money to be made there. And we have a tight budget. You know, our our approach is we need to spend the money on the construction part, not on design as much. We want a solid design obviously, but for what we're trying to do over there, you know, some of the servers for the next 30 years, we need every, every dollar we have, even though we put 650 a side, we hoping to stay within that budget. Things are moving by the day out there. It's just getting insane and not cooling down at all. So with that said, they're more than capable. They're willing to start the surveying work tomorrow if it gets approved tonight. So the plan is to get it done by May and hopefully get this thing up and running by the end of the year. We'll be going out for construction this year as well as soon as we get the design done.

Seeing no further questions from the Board, Selectman McGrath made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve the contract for designs services for the DPW Fuel Pump Station to Greenman-Pedersen Inc. for the amount of, not to exceed \$34,950 and to charge the costs to Account #7207, recommended by the Town Engineer and Finance Director. Carried 4-0.

G. Operation & Maintenance Agreement with NHDOT

Mr. Dhima was again recognized by the Chair and he replied, thank you. Chairperson Roy, as you might recall, back in April of last year, there was discussions about the town coming up with a same agreement that we did at Kimball Hill/Rt. 111. There was issues with traffic operations. We've taken over that intersection on day to day operations and it's been working out really good. While the state still owns it and they're still reliable, still liable for all the financial pieces of replacement we handle day to day. We have that incorporated in our central units by the town hall. We have access to 24/7. We can change things if we need to. We can respond. As the Hillwood project got completed, this discussion is now about the construction piece. One of the things that the state is talking about is who is going to be putting the equipment in there and who isn't. So with the Board's green light last year I was able to get the same agreement that we have at Kimberly and 111. So the question now is, does the Board still wishes to move forward with us the Town of Hudson taking over day to day operations at Sycamore, Wal-Mart, Rena Lowell, Dracut and River Road, which are at this time 100% on the state. What does that mean for us If we do it? It means that we can have our equipment in there, our cameras, we can do the traffic counts, we can see what's coming out of the site. We can make other necessary adjustments. We can see what was proposed versus what's really happening and. Have access to vehicle classifications, volumes, peaks, all that kind of stuff on top of responding to it, probably faster than the state. The downside to it is that there will be another four or five things for us to do on top of all the other things that we're doing. So I spoke to Mr. Forrence, the public works director, looking at all the sites. We believe that we're better off serving better the town by having our hands on it if we need to. Versus relying on the state if they need to make any adjustments or respond to things out there. So what is the wish of the Board?

Chairperson Roy asked, so anybody have any questions? Selectman McGrath was recognized and said so does that mean that I know that it controls controlling the light pattern so that if you see a jam up at Sagamore Bridge, then you can manipulate some of the timing of the lights to alleviate that. Am I right about that? Mr. Dhima replied yes. Selectman McGrath then said and then what about the blue light? I mean is that is that staying, that's staying or is that being enhanced? Mr. Dhima replied, that staying and that's operated since the first day you got put in. Basically it allows an officer to see if anyone is going through a red light by sitting on the right direction that's still staying there. It was very effective the first month after that. Once people kind of Googled what it was and having their little devices saying, know, there's a cop around or not, within 500 feet, 1000 feet. They adapted pretty quick. It's just like everyone else. So that will still stay there. Selectman McGrath then said and I'm still hearing complaints about people running the red light at Sagamore Bridge particularly. Mr. Dhima then added, but to your point, we will know exactly what the numbers are of people going through the red light because these cameras keep track of everyone who goes through the red light, not individuals or the vehicles, but the numbers. So you will have a number if you need to. We know how many red. You know, going through the red violations we have on every intersection, those things keep track of everything. How many people get on the red, how many people get on the yellow? These things are just top of the line. You will have that additional data there.

Selectman McGrath replied well that's great, except that it needs a license plate attached to it. Mr. Dhima replied you don't do that. Selectman McGrath replied, so, no, but. But yeah, I mean, you have conversations with the state, with the DOT. Mr. Dhima replied the legislator won't even entertain it. Nope. It's a privacy issue. Nope. It's not happening ever in this state. It's just that simple. Selectman McGrath replied well don't say ever. Mr. Dhima replied, ever, right. Never ever. But it doesn't look like it. Selectman McGrath replied never say never because that can change depending on who's who's in the big seat up, up in Concord. Mr. Dhima replied, privacy is a big thing in this state, and I totally get it. It's something that they feel very strong about. And that's just how it is. Selectman McGrath replied, it's it's just a matter of, you know, once there's a bad accident there, that there's a number of people that are really killed or injured severely, then maybe the legislature will sit up and take notice and then take action. But and that's going to happen someday because, I mean, I've been there and I've witnessed where tractor trailers are rushing, rushing right through a red light without any hesitation. And cars have already started moving. So one of these days it's going to happen. I don't wish it to happen. I certainly don't want to see anyone get hurt. Mr. Dhima replied there was a bad one today on the bridge, I believe Sagamore Bridge. There was a

bad accident today. A crane flipped I believe. Chairperson Roy replied, something with a crane. Mr. Dhima replied a lot of delays we got on, we got the calls. I could see some of the backup on the camera at Wason because we have a camera there and Yeah, yeah, that's a real deal. Selectman McGrath then said anyway, at some point it's going to cause the legislature and the governor to sit up and take notice because they're the ones that created that mess. They are the ones that created that mess. We wouldn't have all of that traffic being dumped onto Lowell Road at that point if it wasn't for the state and if it wasn't for the legislature and the governor. So I'm getting off my soapbox now. Thank you.

Chairperson Roy then said, does anybody else have anything? Seeing no one, the Chairperson said I have a question. What do you anticipate is the increase in man hours to take on all of this? Mr. Dhima replied, that's a good question. So, Kimball Hill, I would say Kimball Hill has been once it got set up right, it's been maintenance free for the past six months. I mean, we monitor it here, but physically going there and playing with it, we don't have to. And that's what the system allows us to do, make all the necessary modifications from our office. So there's not a lot of field work. The biggest issue the state has is it doesn't have the staff to physically go to the site and check it out. We will have everything connected to the system through a fiber network, which is a landline, basically. So if it can't be done from the office, there's no trip to be made over there. The biggest challenge to answer your question is how to set it up, right? So once the project gets developed and let's just say there are some inconsistencies in projections to what the traffic patterns would be, it would be a matter of how you coordinate them better between the intersections like we did at the library common like we did at Fox and Pelham, for example. And that's where the manpower really comes in, like and we usually get outside help to help us out. But staff going out there and playing with it every day, once it gets set up and it will be done by third party. It would not be any different than what we're putting out there, which is. I would say, I don't know, another maybe 5 to 6 hours a month tops. You know, call it a full day, for example, you know, depending, you know, at the beginning. But average, once it gets set up for the first few months and we work out the, you know, the kinks, I guess, you know, you should be technically speaking, you should be hands off once it gets that upright. But getting sat upright, there will be a little bit of work.

Chairperson Roy asked, so we contract with a third party to do the setup portion of it. Is that is that what. Mr. Dhima replied there will be t's about \$160,000 worth of improvement will be paid by Hillwood if we agree to this and we're not paying for anything. So brand new controllers, brand new cameras, brand new fiber optic all the way down to the south end. That's on their dime. And basically what that means is the state is saying you can put whatever you want in it there, Elvis, as long as you're going to be keeping an eye on it. If we say no to this, it's fine. But then they'll be putting their own equipment in there and whatever they do. And my concern is if something goes wrong and I need them to come in, respond, they might not be able to. And that's been that's a very that's going to be a very busy segment in there. So we have about \$150,000-\$160,000 worth of improvements, and that will be done by Hillwood if. If we decide to put our equipment. Chairperson Roy asked, okay so this is one of the stipulations to the project that they pay for all the upgrades? Mr. Dhima replied, all the upgrades. Yeah, we're are getting state of the line and, and also we're going to be asking for a spare one for each for at least there's a four system will be asking for a spare one for controller and a camera just in case. So we have spare ones as well on their dime. So it will be quite a bit of a capital in there put to buy what we need if we move forward with this setup, if the Board wishes to do so.

Selectman McGrath was recognized and said I just yeah, I have one final question. I know that you can manipulate the lights after a certain time at night and turn them on so that they're just flashing yellow. We're not going to do that at the Saginaw Bridge location? Mr. Dhima replied, it's too busy. Selectman McGrath replied, No, I know, but I just want to make sure that that question was asked and answered because that could be just as dangerous as letting them run the red lights now. Mr. Dhima replied, yeah, we're doing we implementing the flashing yellow is only on the on the Lowell Road, the straight shot ones. Start from Lowell and Birch all the way down to Executive, which is a straightforward one, it's working out pretty good. It's been gone on for a year now. I've had positive feedback from pretty much everyone, including first responders, the other ones. Sagamore, Walmart, even the Library Common there's still a lot going on at night and they're very close to each other and sometimes so people look at it a red here and they'll look at a yellow over there. It gets a little confusing, but no, I do not expect those to be on flashing

yellow at not now. Selectman McGrath replied I just wanted to make sure about that because one I mean, they run the red lights now, but if they thought that they were getting a flashing yellow, there'd be no stopping them at all. Mr. Dhima replied, well we can put it on red so they can sit on the bridge until we clear Lowell Road. We can do that all day long. Selectman McGrath replied, laughing let's do that. As Mr. Dhima said, or at the site. Those are some of the benefits. Yeah. We, the way we did this is we put the data into a model and the traffic model indicates what the best outcome is if you do certain things. But the traffic model also allows you to put in what your preference is. So if you have a preference to have a certain traffic move better than other traffic on a different direction, you can do that and the outcome will be some limitation on certain. And so there's a there's a reason why there's a backup on Nashua side and not on this side is because that's our preference. We'd like to move traffic better. I'm sure Selectman Morin prefers that instead of having traffic sitting in front of his house. 24/7. Selectman Morin said huge difference. Mr. Dhima then said, so but those are the things that we can't control or we can recommend to the state if we believe that there's a lot of traffic on Lowell Road and some of it is to sit on Sagamore Bridge for a little bit longer or at the side for that matter. Things like that help a little bit every little bit. So we'll be able to do that if we're allowed to put our hands in there. So there's some pros and cons, but I just want to see where the Board sits and what is your wish.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said yeah, I'm just I'm looking. I'm a little confused. And so we've said that we're going to basically be able to control those lights, pretty much the timing of those lights and things, correct? Mr. Dhima replied we'll be able. So there's a there is a proposed timing for every phase, but let's just say we get into it and it's not working out. Basically, it would be a phone call to the state saying this is not working out. I need to change it. Now me changing it versus calling them and say it's not working, you need to figure this out. You're talking about months if they even get to it.

Selectman Guessferd replied yeah, because one of the provisions provision five says any changes in signal timing must be approved by the. Mr. Dhima responded, yeah, which is okay. But if you do the work and you say listen I did the work, I got, you know, the controller guy looking at it and saying it needs to be x, y and z, can I just put in the sequence? And the way it works with our system is let's just say we put something out and we don't like it, you can always go up into phase one. It's not like there's a guy in the field. They're redoing the whole sequence. That's pretty straightforward. And the other beautiful thing about this is we have remote access capabilities from, you know, our contractors from California. They can jump in with the state and basically see what works and what doesn't work. So I don't feel we'll be able to tell the state what they need to do if we don't have access to it. For me, it's easy. I can send the traffic data to a third party, have them look at it and say, Elvis, we believe this is a problem. This is what you need to do. We push it out if it works right, if it doesn't. But I don't think I can't get the state to do that. Okay. I can ask them, but.

Selectman Morin added, they only have one line crew in this whole area. To which Mr. Dhima responded, correct. Selectman Morin then said, so it would be a long time. And let's use Kimball Hill for an example. Before they were salting that, we had accidents. We haven't had an accident in how many years now since the town took it over? So that tells you right there, you know, the response is totally different.

Chairperson Roy then said so the other state roads that we have a similar agreement for, is it the same thing that you have to call the state to get to get? And has there ever been a problem getting that? Mr. Dhima replied, No. They if they don't get a if they don't get a call, they're good. So we tell them this is what we need to do. Yep. We made one change at the beginning, just trying to kind of understand what's what. And that was the end of it. And it's saved, you don't have to write it down. It's saved in the system as well. They usually do the data logging by writing it. It's all saved in there. And so yeah, so my understanding is my take on it is all implement what the proposal timing is. If that doesn't work, then we'll tell them we're not having any luck with this. We need to make the change. We make the proposed changes to them, they greenlight it and then that's the end of it.

Selectman McGrath added, well, you and Jess have a good relationship with them. Mr. Dhima replied, Yeah, it's been, I can't complain. The traffic bureau has been okay. As a matter of fact, they want to hand over to the one on BAE as well but I said no, thank you. That's where we draw the line and we'll see. We

don't have fiber optic over there, so and I'm not willing to recommend extending it to that point, but these four will be enough to deal with for a while if we choose. Selectman McGrath then said that light at BAE in my estimation, any time I've been. I mean, that's just around the corner from my house. Mm hmm. You know, you might have to sit there waiting for traffic from BP to cross over, but it's not exceptionally long period of time. Mr. Dhima replied there's a detection issue. There are the loops in the ground. I believe they have loops in the ground. They're not working. That's the problem with them. The old technology versus everything is visual. That's not 100% either, but it's better than the loops in the ground. They just can't go around to see what works and what doesn't work. So that could be just running on a timer. Basically, you get a turn, you get a turn, but there's no detection. But it's not horrible. Seeing no further comment from the Board, Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman McGrath to approve the Operation and Maintenance Agreement with NH DOT for five years, as recommended by the Town Engineer and Public Works Director and to authorize the Chairperson to sign the agreement. Carried 4-0.

H. Tax Bill Discussion

Chairperson Roy said the next thing on the agenda is a tax bill discussion. And I'll recognize Mr. Michaud, the Town Assessor. As we all know, there's been a lot of talk and consternation about about the tax bills this year. And I think that we need to take this opportunity to clarify what happened and how it happened. So, Mr. Michaud, how would you like to do this? I can.

Mr. Michaud began by saying good evening, Board members. I think I'll just start with where you ended. So, as everyone knows, we did a reevaluation in 2022. We hired two outside firms, one for the residential, commercial, industrial one for the public utility. The residential component of our tax base was at 76% of our tax base coming into the reval. That percentage has gone up to 79%. The commercial industrial, we'll say the non-residential part, decreased from 24% to 21%. So, so the taxes that were being paid by commercial industrial public utility is now being, some of that is now being absorbed by the residential taxpayer. And we would call that a tax shift and that in every revaluation we've had, we've had some kind of tax shift. I went back through the last six revaluations and except for one year, the tax shifts have all been I'm sorry, except for two years, the tax shifts have all been towards residential. So when the revaluation company did their work, we came in front of the Board in July of last year and we said what the median assessment increase was for single family was 60%. The median increase for commercial commercial property was 15% and the median increase for industrial property was 20%. So the tax rate going down, as we find out later in December, tax rate going down by 32%. If my median assessed value percentage increase was 57 and the rate that's going up, the rates going down 32, if I take subtraction, that's 25%. Right? So I know right off the bat that I'm going to have an increase beyond my normal increase as a residential property owner in Hudson, just based on those numbers Mr. Michaud continued saying, now in July of last year, we don't know what the tax rate is going to be. We know it's going to go down a lot. It's going to go down significantly. But literally until we get into early December, the state of New Hampshire Department of Revenue, they don't have all of the forms in front of them in order for us to get the rate back in July. So tax shift is largely responsible for residential properties bearing a bigger burden than they were before. I calculated what the median tax bill was in 2021 for a single family on its own lot. And then I calculated what the median tax bill was in 2022 is about 11.5% increase on the median single family home on its own lot.

Mr. Michaud went on to say so in New Hampshire, right, we're following the laws in the state of New Hampshire. So there's no there's no prohibition on something going up too much or something going down too much in terms of value. There's no prohibition on any kind of tax shift. So in other states, they might have different tax rate classifications that they apply to commercial industrial that might smooth that out. That has its own problems, of course, because you run out of space to smooth it out. After we did the numbers and we got our tax rate and I looked at other communities that had re-evaluations done in 2020, 2021, 2022 and fairly consistent. There's a tax shift across the board from commercial industrial property to residential. So the real estate market over that five-year period from the '17 rival to the '22 rival and especially over the last three years of '20, '21, '22, the residential market increase at a far higher

percentage than commercial industrial. So as appraisers, we're just reflecting what people are buying and selling property for. And the leader of the pack is residential property value increases were pretty, pretty significant, probably the highest that I've seen. That's really the long and short of it. Rise in tax bills for residential property are the result of a tax shift.

Chairperson Roy then said and I just want to be clear. By law, we're required to do a property reevaluation every five years. Mr. Michaud replied, at least once every five years. That's correct. That's by Constitution as well as statutory law. Chairperson Roy replied, okay. And then we hired vision appraisal and San Soucy? Mr. Michaud replied, that's correct. Yep. George E. San Soucy, P.E., LLC for the public utilities. We've had him since 1992, since before I got here, and then Vision. So we switched to a new mass appraisal software and as well as we use them as our vendor for the revaluation, they also did Nashua, Keene, Manchester, Salem, Portsmouth, Bedford, a number of all the larger communities in the state.

Chairperson Roy asked, and they use the same industry standards as everybody else to do the evaluation. Mr. Michaud replied that's correct. That's correct. So the jobs are monitored. The projects are monitored by the New Hampshire Department Revenue Administration. So they get various progress updates. Vision has personnel that are certified by the Department of Revenue Administration at different levels. And we know the statistical measurements that we need to meet in a revaluation. You're supposed to be between 90 and 110% of value in the year of revaluation. So we were shooting for 100. The market continued to increase after the analysis was done, so our ratio is actually below 100. We have a draft ratio right now. We don't have an actual assessment ratio from the Department of Revenue. So that's the level of assessment standard. There's also the level of equity, how much do we disperse from that and that's a statistical term is coefficient of dispersion. Our state standard is a dispersion of 20% or less. In a community like Hudson, fairly homogeneous. We should be should get a cod of 10% or less, which we did was somewhere around 7% or 8% dispersion. So that's measuring how much we're dispersing from. That median level of assessment. Right? So if the median level of assessment turned out to be 95. Are we dispersing plus or minus seven or 8% from that. And that's what the statistics indicate in our ratio study with the state.

Mr. Michaud went on to say there's also another coefficient, another statistical measurement called the price related differential, and that basically measures regressive and progressivity. So on the higher value properties, are you assessing them at a lower percentage of market value as compared to the lower value properties or the inverse? Are you assessing higher value properties closer to market than the lower end? So that's statistical measurement. You need to be between 0.98 and 1.03. We're right around between 99 and 100. So they met that standard. So it's a long answer to that. They have standards they have to meet. They've conducted a used PAP manual, uniform standards, professional Appraisal practice manual. It's on a website. The public utility contractor did the same thing. And the state looks at that, reviews it. They're going to take a bit of time to review it, but they are required to have an opinion as to whether that appraisal met reasonable conformance with those professional appraisal standards, which Vision has done throughout the communities that they've been involved in in the state of New Hampshire for as long as I can remember.

Chairperson Roy asked does anyone have any questions? Selectman Guessferd said yes, so is it, is it, is it safe to say or is there any other methodology of performing this assessment that could have resulted in a lower impact to the residential piece of this. Mr. Michaud replied given the numbers that the real estate market produced, the open marketplace, that we have to be at market value. It would not have been it would not be following appraisal standards to put the penny, put the the finger on the scale and say, well, we're going to assess residential a little bit less than commercial industrial, we're going to shoot residential and 90 and shoot commercial industrial at 100. That would not be following fair and equitable standards. We don't have different levels of assessment in our law, case law, constitutional law. We're required to meet the same standard of level of assessment. Some people would say, Well, if we did an earlier reevaluation, right, we wouldn't have been caught up in the in the market of '22 or '21. Yeah, Monday morning quarterbacking who wanted to do a rebound in 2020 pandemic? We wanted to do it in '21. I mean, I was thinking the whole time, it's it's going to go down. It's going to go down. As a matter of fact, it's still not really going down according to New Hampshire Association of Realtors. It's I think the

appreciation has lessened. Certainly those interest rates have had an impact, but the supply of buyers is still out there. So I don't know if I answered your question enough, but I, I don't know of a statutory legal way for us to have done anything other than what was done in the rival.

Selectman Guessferd replied, and that was that was basically my my question. I mean, to try to just make sure that we're doing everything we can to minimize the impact. One other kind of observation, I guess I'll say is I think we mentioned we talked about this before, although we have to do it every five years, if something happened in the next few years to dramatically change the market, would we possibly be considering doing something in less than five years so that we could lessen that impact in a sooner, you know, sooner period of time? Mr. Michaud replied, so I'd answer that two ways. That's why I answer that two ways. First, yes, we've been putting money away in a capital reserve account and we don't have to wait five years. We don't have to wait till 2027. So if there's some market change in the real estate market and you know, what's the right number, is it ten or 15% or is it 15 or 20? Right. So there's a number that's out there. We'll know it when we see it. But, you know, lowering assessments will say if they're all lowered by if the market is doing its thing and everything's going down 15 or 20%, so then all the values go down 15 to 20% and then the rate goes up 15 or 20%. I don't know what it's resolved. So I don't, I don't know about how lessening the impact. Right. I don't have. You know, the ways we have to lessen the impact we have from the state of New Hampshire. There called elderly exemptions, disabled exemptions, blind exemptions, veterans tax credits, current use solar exemptions, disabled veterans exemptions. Those are the circuit breakers that are in the program. We also have tax deferrals, which are not very popular. And then the state offers some some circuit breaker tax relief. But, you know, the function on the assessing side is are we getting the values correct? Over here we have budgets, we have warrant articles, we have revenue from other revenue sources. The school has their side; the county has their side. But we our focus really is on are we getting accurate values as opposed to how do we stop a shift from happening. I don't have a statutory method to stop any shift from happening.

Selectman Guessferd replied I get that. I'm just I'm asking questions that I think a lot of our citizens would want answered. And that's all. And whether it results in a change or a possible difference in the way things are done, I just we're trying to do everything we can to answer the concerns out there. And if there's if there's a different way of doing this or something else that could have happened, I'm just trying to ask those kind of questions, that's all.

Mr. Michaud went on to say, I think that if folks are looking for a change in the level of assessment to say commercial industrial should be assessed at a different level of assessment than residential, that's got to happen up in Concord and probably at the ballot box in terms of the constitutional issues that that might run into not being a lawyer, just having been around the the legislative scene quite a bit. You know, a lot of those answers have to be done and have to be arrived at and conquered beyond that. A couple of dates I wanted to mention. One is we do have an abatement filing application deadline of March 1st. I'm not encouraging a discouraging. I'm just saying that is the statutory date that is out there. So if I feel that the value of my property is inaccurate, either my data is wrong or my value is wrong, and I'm going to fill out the form, I'm going to provide the comparable sales. So that's an avenue for. Individual property owners to to pursue. And beyond that, the tax break, circuit breakers I was talking about the filing deadline for exemptions and credits. April 17th. Usually it's April 15th, but we have a weekend in there. And so it's April 17th of this year. So those those are deadlines, those pretty hard and fast. I, we hear people the questions you're asking. We're getting them every day. We're getting them on the phone by email and at the counter and we expected that that was going to happen outside of not doing our job. We knew it was going to be happening.

So and Vision, you know, they they're not the only reval company out there. But, you know, I have statistics from the other communities that they were in. I have statistics from communities they weren't in that did rivals, but kind of all in a similar pot. I have relatives that live in Berlin New Hampshire. Single family assessments went up 87%. So you're dealing with smaller numbers, right? So if you change an a value on a property, it's at 120 and you're making it 200 know, but percentages are pretty significant. Lebanon had a steeper tax rate tax shift than us. Nashua had a steeper tax shift than us. Doesn't make anybody here feel any better. But you know we're not alone again, doesn't make anybody here feel any

better. And, you know, the payment deadline was last Tuesday. And, you know, folks came in that day and after and they're having trouble, so. But we didn't have this huge you can tell me, Steve, and we didn't have this huge budget change right from one year to the next. So there's no huge warrant article change. This was a tax shift driven by by doing reevaluation and responding to the market that's out there and that's what's driving it.

Selectman McGrath then said can you talk about why the tax bills were late going out? I know the reason, but I think that for the people that are watching this meeting and the people that are sitting in this audience, if they're interested in that reason, I wish you'd talk about it. Mr. Michaud replied, so I think it's a multifaceted answer. We depend on the State of New Hampshire to do its job timely, efficiently. They depend upon other state agencies to get them information timely and efficiently. There is a labor problem out there. I don't think the state is immune to it. I do know that they've had staffing issues, the Department of Revenue and that's that's replicated throughout all the entities that are feeding information in right on the school side, on the county side, on the town side. So and you have people that are in new positions that are that have a learning curve. Maybe not me and Steve, but some other people in positions and forms need to be dotted. I's need to be dotted, T's need to be crossed, and there'll be a form submitted. And then you're like, okay, I submitted the form, what's up? And then eventually the communicate and say, Well, you were supposed to sign on this line to Steve and help me out here. I mean, there's a there's many different reasons. The Town Administrator added, the state doesn't communicate back well to us. When we send something up, we have to pester them. They don't necessarily come back and say, oh, by the way, you needed to do this. Mr. Michaud said there are four advisors for DRA. The Town Administrator added four advisors for the whole state. Mr. Michaud then said so they're not just doing Hudson. I'm not I'm not pointing the finger at any one entity because I think there's more than enough to go around. I was late with the MSS-1, so I'll just point the finger at me to start with. It wasn't hugely late. I've been later, but in reval I kind of expected I'd be late. You know, that's my answer. There's multiple areas where it got to the point where we have a late, not the only one, Right? It wasn't like Hudson was the last one.

Selectman McGrath replied no, but, you know, people are talking about it. We're concerned. I called. I talked to you about it. That's how I knew where I'm pointing my finger. And it's up north. So, you know, it's. But I made the call, and I'm sure that, you know, I know a lot of other people have done that. And they were concerned, of course, with Christmas coming and they were expecting their tax bills and hoping that they weren't going to be going up, wishing that they were going down and then to have them show up late and then getting the other part of it where the increases were much higher than they anticipated. So and we're in a, you know, the state of the country. It's not just here. It's it's throughout the United States that a lot of people are really hurting. Families are hurting. So, you know, it's it's understandable. And but it doesn't change things. It doesn't change the bottom line. Like help helping people to understand you weren't holding back. Sending out the bills wasn't something that. No, I mean, but that's you know, when we when you leave, you don't give people answers. Then they start. Believe me, I grew up with somebody that, you know, if he didn't get an answer, then he started supposing that it was something else and far more negative than than what it really was. But, you know, people people are human and they're you know, they they're concerned about themselves. They're concerned about their families. They're concerned about their communities. It's so, you know, we owe them an answer. So and I think you've given it to them. Mr. Michaud responded to Selectman McGrath's comments saying, we try. You can there's things that we can't answer as an assessing department, but we do our best to answer things beyond our department just because we've been involved in this process for so long. Those people in department, me and the two others.

Chairperson Roy then said I have one more question for you is if someone is struggling to pay their bill, what are their options? Can they contact you folks to set up a payment plan? What can they do to help? Mr. Michaud replied, so there's so we're kind of getting into the tax collector area a little bit. So let's take away exemptions and credits, the things that assessing office gets involved in the abatements. Let's get away from that and let's get over on the other side of the hallway Tax Collector's Office. So they have a due date. The due dates passed, the amount that's there is accruing eight 8% interest. For the first six months and you know, they can talk to the tax collector and set up a payment plan. It's really a one-way

payment plan at that point in time. Right? There's no formal agreement. There's no statutory way for a formal agreement for the tax collector to follow. But the person says, well, I got I've got \$1,000 left to pay. If I pay \$200 a month, I'll be paid off in five months. Right? And what's my relative interest going to be. Right? So they can kind of set up that it's really it's a one-way agreement. There's no written like here's an agreement. It's different than when we're coming up to take a property right for a tax lien and the Board gets involved in a written payment plan and the property owner knows if I don't follow his payment plan, the town is going to do the thing it doesn't want to do, which is a tax deed. So we're really at the real beginning of that, right? We just had that that tax due date of last week. So it's an informal payment plan. I think that would be my best my best answer.

Mr. Michaud continued saying, beyond that, there is the tax deferral process. You have to be elderly or disabled for that and you have to prove a financial hardship. That's one where we look at income and expenses and that's discretionary and the Board's part to approve a tax deferral agreement. So first, I have to have taxes that I owed. Second, I have to be either elderly, or disabled. Then I have to fill out the paperwork and let's say we're going to defer \$3000 in taxes off my property. It puts it into a special kind of tax lien. It's not a taking tax lien. It's a tax lien that gets recorded the registry and then it has 5% interest, which is pretty favorable compared to the other interest rates. And then it sits there until I go to sell the property or I pass away or I voluntarily pay it. So we just had the long term property owner pay off it must have been 15 years' worth of tax deferrals. We can't demand payment until some qualifying event happens. That's different than a normal tax lien, which is two years and a day from the date of lien. So tax deferral is really not a popular item. A lot of folks like I paid off my taxes, I paid off my house. I don't want to have any lien on my property. But it is it is an option that's out there. It's just not done that. It's not done that much. We spend more time talking about it than we actually end up actually going through that process. Seeing no further questions for Mr. Michaud the Chairperson thanked him for coming in.

I. Resignation of Firefighter/AEMT & Request to Advertise

Chairperson Roy recognized Chief Tice who said thank you, Madam Chair. And good evening, everybody. So I did receive a letter of resignation from firefighter Tim Lafortune effective Friday, January 27th. That will be his last shift. He's going to be moving on to the Concord Fire Department. He's been a good employee, so we wish him well. But this will leave. We'll now have a couple of openings and we'd like to run another hiring process. Seeing no questions from the Board, Selectman McGrath made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to accept the letter of resignation from firefighter/AEMT Timothy Lafortune effective January 27, 2023 with the Board's thanks and appreciation. Selectman McGrath asked, exit interview. I see he requested that. Chairperson Roy agreed saying, yeah. Chief Tice replied Friday. Friday is his last shift and we've got a plan to sit down that day. Selectman McGrath and Chairperson Roy both thanked the Chief. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Morin said that's four in a little over a month. What do we need to do to keep them? Chief Tice replied the other positions were personal. Andrew going to Franklin was purely a personal decision based on his family. So there was really nothing we were going to do and. Are you referring to? Two positions we have coming up. Again, I've talked to them and they it was not a Hudson issue. They grew up in Nashua. They have always wanted to be on Nashua. So that's their mindset that this is their opportunity to go beyond their hometown department. So I do plan, I will sit with them again. They're not expected until end of March, roughly time frame. So I will have some good discussions with them. But the discussions I have had with them, they're actually happy here and it was a tough decision for them to go. But they had that draw to go back to back to Nashua. So after Friday, I'll have some more insight on Tim. I know we had a brief conversation when he when he gave me his resignation. I think he has some some good insight that would be good for for me and for the organization.

But I don't I know what you're saying. Like it's oh, my God, we're starting to lose. But three of the four,

three of the four have said it has nothing to do with Hudson. It has to do with either personal family situation or growing up in Nashua and wanting to go back to Nashua. Selectman Morin replied I can understand Franklin, because I wouldn't want to drive. It just, you know, and we have that. What is it, an hour from here? You can live? I don't want to take that away from the guys either, but if that's what we're starting to see, because where does he live that's going to Concord, do you know? Is it up that way? Chief Tice replied, yeah, he moved up. I want to say Pembroke; I think Concord Pembroke area. So he might have some other. We might just not have been the right fit with him. So I'll find out more on Friday. But the other three have been very clear that they're not not looking to leave Hudson. It was brought outside of here. So but yeah, I'm very, very aware of that as well. Selectman Morin replied that's not good. but we missed the whole middle. That's what we're coming up to happen again. But in. Selectman Guessferd said Middle level. To which Selectman Morin replied, exactly you got the new guys in the old guys and there's no middle and it doesn't work well. Chief Tice replied yeah. So I am very, you know, very concerned about that as well. I'm not panicking now because of what I'm being told by those employees, but it is something we're definitely keeping an eye on.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said when you say it's not Hudson, is it, Is it is there It's like the 500 pound gorilla in the room. Is there a financial component? Chief Tice replied certainly going to Nashua there is. I know Tim going to Concord, getting a pay raise. Andrew, because I think the way they worked up there, he was about breaking even with saving you know, I can only imagine what he was paying in gas coming back and forth from up there. There will be there is a little bit of a financial component. I'm not hearing, you know, a great complaint about it, but the guys are well aware of where their pay scale is compared to the departments around them. I know they're going into negotiations next year and that's going to be a big concern that what I'm being told, is a big concern of theirs, depending upon how that goes, could have a great bearing on how our turnover rate or our retention rate goes. The Town Administrator added, that should be later this year. To which the Chief replied, yeah, that's right. We're already in 2023. Yeah. This year. So, you know, I don't see them. They're not complaining about it, but they are hoping to be optimistic that negotiations will go well. Selectman Morin added and you've got to look at the pay compared to here. And Nashua is huge. They don't ride the ambulance. The poor guys here take a beating on the ambulance. Selectman Guessferd asked so the guys are just firefighting? To which Selectman Morin replied right. The guy going to Concord is going to do the same thing he does here pretty much. But but if you you take the manpower that Hudson has, compare it to the manpower Nashua has our guys do triple the calls man for man, you know, And that's huge. Chief Tice added the workload right now is pretty unbelievable. Selectman Guessferd added that's got to be a component Obviously. Chief Tice replied it is because, you know, like Tim going to Concord where he's not a medic, even when he's on the ambulance, he won't be teching the calls, he'll be driving, which when you look at workload and stress level is a walk in the park compared to being in the back of the ambulance. So there's that. And they also have a ladder company. They have three engine companies. So he will get more time off the ambulance and on a fire truck, whereas the guys here, 95% of their time is spent on the ambulance.

Selectman Morin then said and the the process we got here, although the squad saves us a lot of money, it kills the guys in the outlying stations because they never ride the engine. Never unless there's a fire. Selectman McGrath added and thankfully, we don't have a whole lot of those. Selectman Morin replied right but that's why they're always on the ambulance and that's why because the squad system we have they never ride the fire truck. Chairperson Roy said that's kind of a double edged sword. It is. You know, from a training perspective, Right? They're not on the engine then, you know. Chief Tice replied right. Even if we change the way we operate with our current staffing, we staffed, say, two ambulances. Or if we went back to staffing one primary ambulances, the engine companies would spend so much time cross manning and ambulances anyways that just running them like we do doesn't really. There's no real way with our current staffing to reduce that workload.

Selectman McGrath then said can I ask? This isn't about staffing, but it's a question that just came to me. And if you don't want to answer it, I'll understand. What is the level? I know there's a lot of ambulance calls, a lot of medical emergencies that you have to attend to. How many of those are related to drug overdoses in particular? What's the latest one that's killing a lot of kids? All I can think of is Narcan. And

that's not that's the. Chief Tice said Fentanyl, Fentanyl is a concern. Locally, within Hudson, we haven't had a spike in calls. Areas around us are we're not seeing a lot of that in Hudson right now. Luckily one of the things could also be Narcan is readily available so they don't have to call any ambulance for the Narcan. Selectman McGrath then said except that one of the fentanyl fentanyl that's being distributed has something else added to it that Narcan won't. Chief Tice replied in that we haven't had a lot of we're not seeing the ambulance calls for I don't know if PD seen a lot of it through their investigations or whatnot, but as far as know we won't see that until somebody's overdosed on it. And we're not we haven't seen an increase in the overdose calls. Selectman McGrath then asked and none of our paramedics have been affected by the Narcan, ah fentanyl? Chief Tice replied we have not had that issue.

J. Grant Application - HFD

Chief Tice was again recognized and explained All right, so tonight, I'm asking for permission to apply for a assistance of firefighters grant for FY22. That's federal FY22. It doesn't align with our municipal budget, but they're still there. Just rolling out the FY22 program. This is the last Board meeting before the deadline. We're still waiting to hear on our application from FY21 for the AFG. Which was portable radios. That remains a high priority for us, but we could. They don't know exactly. They said we might find out by the deadline or we might not. So what I'm asking for is permission to apply one or two options based on what we hear from the federal government when it comes time to apply. The radios are high priority for us. If we don't hear about last year's grant application or we're denied. I'd like to apply for those again, if we hear that we did get it, did get the grant, then I'd like to apply for a gear extractor and two PPE dryers. The gear extractor would replace the one at Central. And what that is, it's really a heavy duty washing machine that's designed to take the contaminants out of our protective clothing. The one at Central is nearing the end of its expected lifespan, so I'd like to get that replaced on a grant if we could. And then the PPE dryers would be for Central Station and Lowell Road, who also has a gear extractor. So we do all our gear washing between those two stations and it would allow us to dry the gear faster. We can't put it in a conventional dryer with heat. So it's it just moves. You put the gear on it and it moves air through. It helps dry it faster and more thoroughly, return it to service quicker. So the if we applied for the radio grant, the radio replacements, about \$265,000, with a we would have a 10% match at \$26,500 if we applied for the PPE Gear extractor and the dryers, it's about \$35,000. So it would be a \$3,500 match. And again, if we got those grants, I would be back here to you for permission to accept those grants. Not looking for that permission now. Seeing no questions from the Board, *Selectmen McGrath made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to authorize the Fire Chief to apply for the FY22 Assistance to Firefighters Grant. Carried 4-0.*

Selectman McGrath asked the Chief what about the flag? Is it flown at half-mast or? Chief Tice replied I never got word. I was never able to contact anyone for tomorrow (Lt. Todd Berube's funeral) to get half-mast. I never heard back. Selectman McGrath replied Well, that's disappointing and infuriating. They should know better. Not your fault, but the ones up north. He's going to be running for higher office soon, and I'll remember that. Thank you.

K. Warrant Articles 15 & 16

The Town Administrator was recognized and said So as you recall, we had a warrant article proposed to re adopt the optional Veterans' tax credit and the All Veterans' Tax credit. It was formally Article 15. It had the two credits in one warrant article. DRA has informed us we need to do them separately. So I prepared two separate warrant articles for the Board's consideration. Basically, if we don't adopt or if we don't put these forward, DRA will set our standard, our exemption back to the standard of \$50, which is not fair to our veterans because currently it's \$600. So in order to reaffirm that, we need these two more articles. Optional Veterans Tax Credit, All Veterans Tax Credit. Optional for veterans to

serve in certain defined periods of war for all veterans is for the veterans who fell outside of that. They recently, a few years ago, were covered. So this is all being caused by the I believe the veterans tax credits are being extended to active service personnel with certain qualifications. So if you are active duty, you very well may qualify. In the past, you didn't you had to actually be retired or resigned or honorably discharged from service. So the long and short of it is you would only made a recommendation on one war article. Now there's two I'd like the Board to move them to the ballot, to the warrant, and to hopefully recommend both articles. So there are two separate motions here.

Chairperson Roy said so I'm just going to channel slightly McGrath for a second. And Concord, just want to continue to make the warrant longer and longer so that less and less people vote? The Town Administrator replied well, we added six more articles to fund money at the Capital Reserve Funds which in my strong opinion is not right. Chairperson Roy replied I'm saying!

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to reconsider warrant article 15. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to remove warrant article 15 from the ballot. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to move warrant article 15, Readopt the Optional Veterans' Tax Credit to the warrant as recommended. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to move warrant article 16, Readopt the All Veterans' Tax Credit to the warrant as recommended. Carried 4-0.

After these votes Selectman Morin said while we're on warrant articles I'd like to see if the Board would like to reconsider our vote on the Budget Committee. And if we move forward, I'll speak on it. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to reconsider the Budget Committee petitioned warrant article. Selectman Morin then said We voted to go forward with the petition warrant article. This Board voted in favor of it, as I had stated that night and considerable thought during that. That is a checks and balances. It really is. Whether we like it or not the Budget Committee this year was brought this on themselves. They really did. We had this discussion at our meeting last week and I said the same thing. They need to understand that this warrant article is brought because of the way they address the budget this year and in lack of better terms, it was it was payback. And that's what happened. A lot of citizens have reached out and say that they understand, but they don't agree that we should abolish the Budget Committee. And you've got to look at them. If a Board of Selectmen are the only ones to have have say on this, in theory, it could run wild, as the Budget Committee did. And then there's no checks and balances. Right now we have the Board of Selectmen for checks and the Budget Committee. So I'd like to make a motion to to vote no on that, have the Board vote no on that petition warrant article. Selectman Guessferd seconded this motion. The Town Administrator, Selectman McGrath and Selectman Morin all said at the same time, to not recommend. Chairperson Roy then said okay, so motion has been made and seconded. Is there a discussion?

Selectman McGrath spoke up saying I I wasn't here, as you all know. Excuse me. And but I did watch the meeting, and I was dismayed that you voted to recommend it because it's short the in my opinion, the decision to put that on the ballot was not just for this Board, but for the people that recommended it. Petitioned it. It's shortsighted. And I know what I do when I look at the budget, I look at every line item and try to understand what the department head is why they're looking for that, how much money they're looking for, what they spent the last. I mean, I put a lot of time into it. I would expect that the other Board members do the same. And and I don't know what the Budget Committee does if they do the same type of spend that kind of time on it. But I know that as a selectman, that's what I do so that I can make a reasonable, what I consider to be a reasonable decision. So I think that, you know, again, perhaps because of the personalities that are involved on the Budget Committee and people aren't happy with it, I

don't know what their reasoning was, but I think that in the long run, if that were to pass and the Budget Committee was abolished, I think that they would be disenchanting with their decisions.

Selectman Guessferd then said I just want to reiterate in terms of the feedback. At the time we voted, we didn't have a lot of opportunity for feedback. That was a last minute article. So the feedback we had and the public input we had was all in the, in the in the petition warrant article. And, you know, looking at it since that time, we have had a lot of input. And I do agree that this particular budget committee has there's been there's been some personal things, I think, going on. There's been we'll call it payback, but it's been it's the individuals, not the concept. The concept of a budget committee is to provide that level of checks and balances. And believe me, from the other perspective, I do not believe that that either us or the School District would run wild without a budget committee. There is a check and balance on that. A lot of times you oversight, you maybe overlook something, things change or you look at it again. So having that extra set of eyes on it from a conceptual perspective makes, makes, makes a difference. The other part of that is that, okay, just say that this passed. And so we know we you know, we don't have a budget committee. I think we would probably want to try to reinstate that as soon as possible. And I don't know whether this would be an opportunity for some people to get rid of the current Budget Committee members and then have them reapply, you know, whatever that whatever that goes to. And maybe, you know, it the idea was to kind of start fresh after this year. I don't I don't know all the motivations, but from my perspective, after having thought about it for a couple of weeks and getting input from a lot of citizens, I feel very, very similar to that, that I think I think if we really think about this, it's probably not the right call.

Chairperson Roy then said after speaking to a lot of citizens. And even my position, quite frankly, hasn't changed because theoretically, I think you're right. I think it's an important piece. The problem that I think we have right now, and trust me, I don't want to put this on an individual board. I just don't know how to make it functional cuz they refuse to function. Right. They don't have conversations with open and honest conversations with with other boards and those kinds of things. So I, I, I there's a piece of me that agrees that maybe it's we look at it as a restart and at some point in the sort of near future we put it back together. I just don't see us getting beyond. The personalities on that Board so that we have a functioning town. In the near future. I wish I could say over the next election cycle or whatever, that that would change. I just don't see it. You know, I received an email from an individual that pointed out that she had talked to several citizens about running for the and and quite frankly, they didn't want to be bullied. That's you know, that was they didn't want to run because they didn't want to be bullied. So as much as it sort of pains me to make this about this particular board, this particular budget committee, I just don't know how to sort of turn that that around to make them not use it as a personal forum for payback or whatever their agenda is. So my position has not changed.

Selectman Guessferd then said okay and did you make you make legitimate points and I respect your opinion on it. I think it's in this particular case, let's let the folks at the polls decide. Chairperson Roy replied big fan of that. Selectman Guessferd added Let's make them let's let them decide. But we are, in my view, we are also part of the the government. We are part of our local government here as as the Budget Committee is. I think we just need to let the citizens make their call on it, hopefully as an independent voice of themselves. I mean, in other words, whether we recommend it or not, I would hope that the citizens would take this and look at it and make make whatever call they're going to make. And then and then after the election, we figure we figure it out. Chairperson Roy then said So and sort of to your point, I think I want to reiterate what you said at the last meeting was that I love to see all kinds of input at deliberative session about this issue. Right? You know, let us know. I mean, that certainly helps. But that's that's where I am. Is there any more discussion? Because I believe there's been a motion in a second. So all those in favor say aye. Motion to not recommend the petitioned warrant article 3-1. Chairperson Roy opposed. Selectman McGrath then said just so just to just to be clear of how I'm voting, I think it's I think that we need to give the citizens, the voters an opinion of how we feel as a board. I want I want to say that I'm opposed to abolishing the Budget Committee as it currently stands. Do I like what some of the actions have been? Certainly not. But I'm not willing to throw the baby out with the bathwater. It's I just think it's shortsighted. Chairperson Roy then said and the other, the other thing that I guess I would point out is I would hope that the Budget Committee listens to what's going on and sort of takes

heed about how they've conducted themselves. To which Selectman Guessferd replied absolutely. Absolutely.

L. FY24 Town Warrant & Warrant Article Speaker Designation

Chairperson Roy recognized the Town Administrator who said yes. So every year I come to the Board, I give you a list of speaking assignments for the Deliberative Session, basically to introduce the warrant articles. It essentially follows your liaison on assignments and or what departments you may have been assigned to represent. So if you look at this list, you'll see that the Budget Committee Chair represents the general fund budget, because that's really their budget at that point in time. And I've tried to assign these basically based on your assignments. If you've negotiated a contract, for example, you're on that particular warrant article, and when you get to the end, it's up to the petitioners to represent their articles. I also, if you look on number 20, I have Mr. Putnam, Craig Putnam, doing the energy aggregation. If there's any speaking to that, you can certainly introduce it, but he'll probably speak to that, the lion's share of that. So this is up to you. If you don't like it, you can change it. If somebody wants to take something or somebody doesn't want to do something, this is your time to make that known. But essentially, I try to follow what we've done in the past and as usual, I'll prepare notes for all of you. Selectman Guessferd thanked the Town Administrator. Chairperson Roy asked does anybody have any? Selectman McGrath said we can adlib too. The Town Administrator said don't go too far off the reservation to which Chairperson Roy replied that's no fun. The Board was in consensus with the order of who is speaking to which warrant articles at Deliberative Session.

M. Sewer Allocation - Hillwood Project

Chairperson Roy began by saying, I've lost my notes, so bear with me for one second. The sewer allocation for Hillwood for the Hillwood project. So I know that we have had a lot of feedback, we've had a lot of input about it. I think that we need to have a public discussion about what direction the Board wants to take about that. I know that we have received both not only the input from citizens, but we've some guidance from, from town council. So and I think the question really on the table and anybody can correct me on if they think something else, but is that are we going to require Hillwood to reapply for their sewer allocation? Because if we all remember correctly, in May of 2021, this Board voted to allow a sewer. Well, that's not quite how it went, but it's a little confusing but that the sewer allocation was allowed. So. So I guess I would look for input and thoughts from the Board based on everything that we again, that we've heard over the last few months. And and the other thing I'll point out is the Planning Board at this point has approved the project. So I think this is an appropriate time to have this discussion. Anyone want to start?

Selectman Morin said let's start off with. You probably should review just what the town policy is first. I mean, just to to relook at that and then look at what the Attorney told us, because we did have some discussion with the Attorney. Selectman Guessferd replied and then we can take it from there as the Board, just so all the information is out there ahead of time. Chairperson Roy added Yeah. I mean, yeah, my my thought was on a similar vein in terms of let's make sure that that we have 100% reviewed what the Attorney has said to us. And we look at the. What I'll call the exposure of the town and our citizens going forward. So, you know, that's that I think is paramount. Selectman Guessferd then said one of the things I wanted to bring up was and I think it was part of the question and answer from our previous selectman, and do we want to make any of the the legal discussion because I think it's I think we said in there we'd have to vote on it if we were going to make any of that discussion public. On the legal side. Do we want to expose that out there so that we so that there's some better, you know, better understanding amongst the public of of what the legal exposure is? Chairperson Roy replied so I'll reserve that question

for for maybe the next time. But I will tell you, my initial gut reaction to that is that I don't know that I would be willing to support that. There's a lot of exposure on both sides of the issue. And and I just think that putting that out there would just maybe add some fuel to the fire. Selectman Guessferd replied I get that. Chairperson Roy then said at this point, I would I would be reluctant to support that. Selectman Guessferd then said but it also may provide some level of support for a different for for folks to see because we've had a lot of input, you know, against a sewer allocation, against not requiring a sewer allocation, a new one. And I think people should operate with all the facts. Chairperson Roy replied, I agree. Selectman Guessferd then said that's the other part of why I kind of wanted to at least put that on the table. Selectman Morin then said and I have to agree with you, because how can we have a total open discussion if we don't include because we went to the Attorney for a reason, so why wouldn't we talk about that? I don't understand that. Chairperson Roy replied well, I'll say a couple of things. One, I hold that attorney client privilege very dear. Selectman Morin said but we can vote to unseal them that's not an issues. Chairperson Roy added, and we can. Selectman Morin then said and again but we're not giving everybody the information. Chairperson Roy replied and again I would have to look at that again and see if there I Just...Selectman Morin said then if we have to look at it again, I'm not making a decision Tonight. Chairperson Roy replied well, I wouldn't recommend that we do. I don't think I think based on what we've already said, that that wasn't going to happen anyways. Selectman Morin responded so I'll table it till the next meeting so we can review the attorney's information again. Selectman Guessferd asked, yeah. Does everybody does everybody have that or do we need. Chairperson Roy replied, no, I think I think we all have we should all have it part of our an email I think it was an email. Selectman Guessferd said so to do back it's been a couple months. It's an important decision. The Town Administrator said we'll get you a new copy. Selectman McGrath said I don't save paperwork from the Town of Hudson anymore. Reams of it if we've already disposed of it. So anyway, I'll be in touch. Steve. The Town Administrator replied we'll get it to you.

Chairperson Roy replied so we want to take another two weeks to review everything? Selectman McGrath said can I get clarification? So because I'm not on the Planning Board anymore and I don't torture myself by watching meetings that I'm not attending. So I don't know where where this development stands. I thought that they the Planning Board approved the now Target site. Chairperson Roy replied, correct. Selectman McGrath then asked, and didn't that include the sewer allocation? Selectman Guessferd replied, no. There was a there was a stipulation that stated that subject to the Board of Selectmen decision to require it or to approve a sewer or approval of a sewer allocation. The the the applicant actually, just so we're clear, the applicant actually wanted to have language in there saying that the sewer allocation, since it was already taken care of, they kind of wanted to presuppose it in the stipulation and I recommend it to the to the Town Planner that that be struck that piece of it, so that it leaves us to make a decision on it. Chairperson Roy replied, right cuz that would take that would take the decision away from us. Selectman Guessferd replied, well, no, not really, because in the end, what he also said, what we also, you know, is that our decision overrides that stipulation, even if it was in there. So we still have an opportunity to to look at it, even if it said that in there, because it didn't really say it just said having approved the sewer allocation, I think was the stipulation, kind of presupposing that it was going to be approved in their words. So I just felt that it was important for us to not have that in there and for basically it just says the sewer allocation decision by us.

Selectman McGrath replied saying so well, that makes this a little bit more confusing. Again, I don't torture myself by watching these meetings. I get enough torture. How can they approve the plan without knowing how they're going to dispose of any waste? So are they is has Target agreed to do a septic septic system if the Board of Selectmen didn't approve the sewer allocation or I mean, how, how did they how did they approve that plan if that wasn't if that wasn't part of it? Selectman Guessferd replied well again, it was, it was. Selectman McGrath replied, please. Please. Selectman Guessferd continued speaking saying it was stated in the stipulation and I wish I had it with me that that it was subject to just like just like we have certain other stipulations in these plans, subject to approval of this or approval of that. This was actually part of the stipulation is that it was basically allowed for the Board of Selectmen to make the call on the sewer allocation. And that's really all there was. There wasn't much other discussion on it again.

Selectman McGrath then said again, did Target, the applicant. Selectman Guessferd replied the answers no. Selectman McGrath then said they didn't agree to that? They didn't, they didn't. They didn't come up with any kind of input on? Selectman Guessferd replied, there was no input on that. To which Selectman McGrath replied that makes no sense to me. But that's why I'm not there any longer.

Chairperson Roy replied well, I mean, I would presume they'd have to go back if it wasn't approved. Selectman Guessferd then said right. If it wasn't approved, they would have to then present a plan for a sewer. Chairperson Roy said I mean, again, that would be a presumption. Selectman Guessferd said add a septic system or. Selectman McGrath said either that or go to court. To which Selectman Guessferd replied Right. Right. Well, there's that aspect of it, too. I think that that it may end up there.

Chairperson Roy asked so are we all set with this? And we're just going to table for. Yeah, and table it until he next meeting. Okay.

N. Application for Payment for Payment from Capital Reserve Funds

Chairperson Roy recognized the Town Administrator who said so we have an application for painful capital reserve funds. This is what the Assessor spoke of. This is for the utility portion of the assessment. This is a bill from San Soucy who does that. So we're seeking reimbursement from the Capital Reserve Fund that was established for this purpose. If you recall, at the end of December, we had a list of capital reserve fund withdrawals. There was the Vision side. Now this is the San Soucy side. So it's a request to approve the disbursement of \$24,975 from the future Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, of which you are the agents to expend. That's why it's in front of you. The Trustees have just requested that we take a formal vote so that it's recorded. You do have the right to spend it, but it's best to do it in a meeting setting. So very simple motion. Chairperson Roy then said I just have a quick question just for transparency. San Soucy was the commercial? The Town Administrator replied he was, pardon me, the utility valuation. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve to approve the disbursement from the Future Property Reevaluation Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$24,975, Carried 4-0.

At this point Selectman McGrath said before we go on to nonpublic can we just go back just for a moment to the Budget Committee? So if the if the if it passes and they abolish the Budget Committee, is there any kind of a plan in place as to who's going to be reviewing the budgets? Is it just going to be the Board of Selectmen? Chairperson Roy said and the voters. Selectman McGrath said but the voters have to approve what but I would I would expect that they'd want someone looking at the budget. Selectman Morin said I think it says advisory in there. The Town Administrator said you'd have to form one but it's not automatically formed. Chairperson Roy then added, so so there's an option for if I read the RSA correctly an advisory budget committee or an advisory finance committee. The Town Administrator said but they don't have the same statutory powers.

So in essence, you are reviewing the budgets and you're presenting them at the Deliberative Session to the voters who obviously can review them at that point in time. But that important check and the check and balances will be absent for both sides of the street. Us and the school. Chairperson Roy added Right. And and it would be the advisory presuming would have some some some. The Town administrator replied nope. To which Chairperson Roy asked then why would we have them at all. That makes no sense. Because. But what I'm saying is it's advisory. So they would have a piece in the process to advise. So, so so we so we go through budget. Right? And they come to us and they say we think you should adjust. They don't have the power to do it themselves, but they can advise us to adjust the budget, right? I mean, it's not like they, they, we form this committee and then nothing happens.

Selectman Morin said so so basically what that says is what they tried to do to us. Right. We'd have our selectmen advisor. That's it. And that's the only power they would have. Chairperson Roy replied, right. But, but the difference being we're a governing body and whatever they may think the way they are now or an advisory committee, they are not a governing body. They can't they can't set policy. Selectman Morin replied, no, they can't set policy, but they can do the budget. But that's not a that's not a governing. That's not a Government is advisory. They can't even they can. Selectman Guessferd added all they can do is make suggestions to us and the School Board. Chairperson Roy replied right, they can have a conversation with us. An adult conversation like that would be. Chairperson Roy said it would be an advosour committee. Maybe we could clarify that. The Town Administrator said I don't think it would. Selectman Guessferd said Selectman approved or School Board approved. Selectman Morin said you're right it wouldn't be a reason to have all that. What can they do? Selectman Guessferd replied they really can't do anything. but just say they find something, right, You know, and say, Hey, wait a minute, You know, this is, you know, \$20,000 over budgeted, you know, whatever. Selectman Morin said the found 1000 things this year. Selectman Guessferd replied, no, I hear you. I hear you. You know, I mean, it's going to change anything, but.

Chairperson Roy added, I don't see advisory as being is being useless, quite frankly. Again, it would it would hopefully engage. They would engage with us and maybe have some. And if if we're all being open minded and we can take that, then then maybe it goes somewhere. But if we if we just want to think that, oh, we looked at the budget and we think it's the best thing and we're not going to do anything about it, then maybe you're right. Selectman Morin said I guess we got to wait to see what the voters so we can take it from there. Selectman McGrath added but that's presuming that we get applicants for the advisory committee, because the way things are going, we're not getting a whole lot of applicants for other boards. So anyway, I just wanted to clarify that and what would happen.

Selectman McGrath then said and the other thing that I'd like to ask go back to is Hillwood and, and the sewer allocation. I'm going to ask if anybody on this Board, the four of us remaining, if anybody has posted anything on Facebook or social media that has predisposed and and I'm just. Selectman Guessferd replied, No, no, I hear you. I mean it's worth it's a good question. Selectman McGrath continued saying, and stated their position long before it's even gotten to us so and if it has please tell me because I'm going to vote the same way that I did the last time, I'm going to have to abstain. Selectman Guessferd replied, no, no. I think, you know, no, no way. I would never I don't even go I don't even comment on Facebook on on these on these posts that we see out there at all. Hudson residents. I mean, I see them out there and I stay away from it because it's just to me, it's dangerous. And it's interesting to read some of the stuff, some of the comments, but I'm not going to make any sort of intimation of any sort of opinion on those pages. So you don't have to worry about that from me. And I know the rest of us don't either. Selectman McGrath replied, I don't think so. But it's it's a fair question to ask because that explains my vote to abstain the last time, because if I had voted, it would have tipped the scale on the sewer allocation last time and we would have ended up in court and the town would have lost. So and I'm not willing to do that. So if anybody decides that they want to post anything on Facebook about the Hillwood and the sewer allocation, please let me know because that will determine my vote. Selectman Guessferd replied again saying you should be confident that's not going to happen. To which Selectman McGrath replied, thank you.

9. Board Liaison Reports

Selectman McGrath: I've said enough for this evening.

Selectman Guessferd: Let's see. As we said, Planning Board approved the Hillwood project last meeting. We have another meeting tomorrow night. We're going to be actually; we're going to be one of the things we're doing is looking at the master plan. We're starting. We're now getting back to that after some of these other things we've been doing so that that's going to be occurring tomorrow night as part of that meeting.

Rec Committee- Basketball is going strong. Both the youth and adult. It's a great league. The adult league is always a great league. In the summertime or in the wintertime. We have a comedy show coming up on the 18th. There's only eight tickets left. So if you haven't gotten your tickets, grab them now. Lacrosse is open for registration and senior program is going really well. Anybody who knows anything about pickleball, we maxed out registration for pickleball. They have that over at the Community Center. There's three courts all lined and they have a great time over there. And there's seems to be a lot of interest in some of the upcoming trips for the seniors as well. They're even looking at a trip to Ireland. So some fun stuff out there for the seniors.

We did have a Cable meeting recently and really I think we talked I might have talked about it last time. We're probably going to be meeting like every corner at this point from here on out because and try to make sure that we meet every corner, because sometimes months will go by when there's really nothing to talk about with regard to making decisions on things. I mean, we're. Advisory anyway, so I believe that's it.

Selectman Morin: Benson Park Committee -There was a question last meeting in reference to the fee schedule. They have worked on that, but it's actually been put on the back burner, so they will bring it forward again at the next meeting. And what they're looking at is sort of like a fee to get into the park because it'd cost employees and all that they're looking at a fee for. If you want to use the park and it will more guarantee you have that spot where in the past there's been some disagreements. Well we got it may show up and there's no oh for like so that will guarantee you pay your guaranteed the spot. So they're going to work on that next month and hopefully I can get back to you on that. Some citizens have come forward to. While they haven't come to the Board yet, but they have made contact with the Board to have music at the gazebo during the summer. So that's being worked on. And they have a paint lead paint. They're checking that out right now and the train station to see if there's any lead paint like the asbestos. Get that removed and then they're going to start tearing out those old walls they were apartment and start putting that back into. It's an original state. So that's what's coming down the road at this point. That's it for that.

Budget Committee, we had our last meeting and it was to address the school, the last budget item of the school. So that's all completed.

Chairperson Roy: The only thing I have is so there was no School Board meeting Monday. It was rescheduled for this coming Monday and then the ZBA is on Thursday. But I did attend the Library Board of Trustees meeting and they are working with a donor to build a pavilion on the library property, which I think is kind of exciting. It's in the very beginning stages. The Town Administrator added I know Linda has been working with the Town Engineer. To which Chairperson Roy replied, Yeah. And she, she had some questions about. How, how things progress when it comes to us. The Town Administrator added, that's why hearing to the Town Engineer. Chairperson Roy continued saying yeah. So. So hopefully as time goes on, we'll we'll hear more about that. But I kind of think it's exciting. So it will expand the usable space, particularly in the summertime. They can move programs out there and stuff like that. So. Look forward to seeing how that develops. And that's all I have.

10. Remarks by Town Administrator

The Town Administrator was recognized and said A couple of quick things just to let everybody know. Just a reminder. Tomorrow starts to sign up for elected offices for both the town and the school so you can come into town clerk's office. It runs through Friday, February 3rd. They'll be open till 5:00 that day. Normally we're open 8 to 430. So folks who want to sign up for various Offices, which I believe are posted on the web page. It starts tomorrow and just it's coming quick. The Town Deliberative Session is scheduled for February 4th. That's a week from Saturday. But they snow day of February 6th in

case we need it. So we will be first this year. The schools will be the following week. I believe there's February 11th. The Superbowl for the Town. Or for Paul Inderbitzen at least.

11. Remarks by School Board - no School Board member was present this evening.

12. Other Business/Remarks by the Selectmen

Selectman Morin: just that the services for Lt. Berube will take place tomorrow at the community Center. Just that the services for Lieutenant Berube will take place tomorrow at the community center. There will be a walk through fire personnel at noon, and then 1 to 5 will be open to the general public. And there's a memorial service, I believe, at 1:45.

Selectman McGrath: I'm not going to be able to attend. that service. I have an appointment in Boston, so it's a required medical appointment. And I don't know if you heard me asking. Chief Tice, but one of the citizens in Hudson sent an email to all of us suggesting that the flag be lowered, and I thought it was a great idea. I responded and put. Selectmen Roy and Chief Tice on the response. And based on his answer tonight, our state government, as wonderful as it is, failed to respond. Selectman Guessferd replied so it was their responsibility to they're the only ones that can grant that. Chairperson Roy added yeah the Governor. The Town Administrator added the president or the governor. Selectman Morin said I actually sent the rules and regulations to that resident. Then once she read it, she understood. So I sent her why we didn't do it. Selectman McGrath said I mean, I think it's other people that didn't get that email and didn't know about it, and maybe it might have had the same thoughts. To honor our firefighter, I think it's important that they know that that decision wasn't wasn't in our hands. It was in the governor's hands. And he's busy doing other things. Yeah.

Selectman Guessferd: Actually I don't have anything else.

Chairperson Roy: All I have is I hope I see a whole bunch of people on February 4th. Fourth. 9a.m.

13. Nonpublic Session

Motion by Selectman Guessferd at 9:17p.m., seconded by Selectman Morin to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:2, III (a) Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining. RSA 91-A:3 II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 4-0.

Nonpublic Session was entered at 9:17 p.m. thus ending the televised portion of the meeting. Any votes taken upon entering open session will be listed on the Board's next agenda. The public was asked to leave the room.

The Board entered open session at 9:44 p.m.

Motions made after nonpublic session

1. Selectman McGrath made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to authorize a non-precedent setting earned time buyout for Firefighter/AEMT Benjamin Savage in the amount of 290 hours. Carried 4-0.

2. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to authorize the appointment of Christine Strout-Lizotte as Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector beginning on January 24, 2022. Carried 4-0.

3. Selectman Guessferd made a motion to adjourn at 9:46 pm. This was seconded by Selectman McGrath. Carried 4-0.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:46 p.m. by Selectman Guessferd seconded by Selectman McGrath. Carried 4-0.

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

Kara Roy, Chairperson

Bob Guessferd, Vice Chairman

David Morin, Selectman

Marilyn McGrath, Selectman