

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the July 11, 2023 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairman McGrath the meeting of July 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Selectman Dumont

3. ATTENDANCE

Board of Selectmen: Dillon Dumont, Bob Guessferd, Marilyn McGrath, Dave Morin

Selectman Roy had an excused absence this evening.

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

4. PUBLIC INPUT - There was no public input this evening.

5. RECOGNITIONS, NOMINATIONS & APPOINTMENTS - none

6. CONSENT ITEMS

Chairman McGrath asked, does anyone have anything they'd like removed for separate consideration? *Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve Consent Items A, B, C, D, E, & F. Carried 4-0.*

A. Assessing Items

- 1) Elderly Exemption Requalification's: map 237, lot 021, 42A Gowing Rd.; map 225, lot 003, 15 Beaver Path
- 2) Veteran Tax Credit: map 182, lot 010, 4 Chapin St.
- 3) Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed/Timber Warrant: map 235, lot 012, 24 Dracut Rd.; map 235, lot 013, 14 Groves Farm Rd.
- 4) Institutional Exemptions: map 136, lot 36-map 182, lot 100, VFW Hudson Post 5741; map 182, lot 49, Community Church of Hudson; map 228, lot 54, New Life Christian Church

B. Water/Sewer Items - none

C. Licenses & Permits & Policies

- 1) Raffle Permit - Friends of Benson Park
- 2) Pole Licenses: PSNH (3) new poles on Hawkview Ave. (1) new pole on Gibson Ave.

D. Donations - none

E. Acceptance of Minutes

- 1) Minutes of June 27, 2023

F. Calendar

07/12	7:00	Planning Board	Buxton Meeting Room
07/13	7:00	Zoning Board of Adjustment	Buxton Meeting Room
07/18	7:00	Municipal Utility Committee	BOS Meeting Room
07/19	6:00	Library Trustees	Hills Memorial Library
07/19	7:00	Hudson Electric Aggregation Cmte.	Buxton Meeting Room
07/20	1:00	Trustees of the Trust Funds	Buxton Meeting Room
07/20	7:00	Benson Park Committee	HCTV Meeting Room
07/24	7:00	Sustainability Committee	Buxton Meeting Room
07/25	7:00	Board of Selectmen	BOS Meeting Room

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Votes taken after Nonpublic Session on June 27, 2023

- 1) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by selectman Dumont to promote Jeremy Faulkner to the position of Public Works Street Supervisor, Step 5, at \$107,567 per year, effective July 2, 2023. Carried 4-0.
- 2) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Derek Cote of Methuen, MA effective July 3, 2023 at \$21.98 per hour (Grade VIII, Step 1) in accordance with the Hudson Public Works Department Local #1801 AFSME Agreement. Carried 4-0.
- 3) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to hire William Schofield for the position of Dispatcher in the Fire Department at the contracted salary rate of \$19.36 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighters Local #3154, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
- 4) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to continue the employment of Lt. Michael Mallen in a light duty capacity through August 31, 2023, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
- 5) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to authorize Chief Dionne to recognize and award Captain David Cayot, Captain Steven McElhinney, Captain Patrick McStravick, and Lieutenant Patrick Broderick with a merit award of \$250 each per the Hudson Supervisors contract. Carried 4-0.
- 6) Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Dylan Chevalier with a starting salary of \$31.99 (step 3), all in accordance with the Hudson Police Employee Association Contract, as recommended by the Police Chief. Carried 4-0.
- 7) Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to award a 3.0% salary adjustment to the non-union Department Heads effective Jul 1, 2023. Carried 4-0.
- 8) Selectman Morin made a motion to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. This was seconded by Selectman Guessferd. Carried 4-0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing - Updating Limits for Purchase, Contracts and Bids, under Town Code Chapters 98-5, 98-6 and 98-7

Chairman McGrath recognized the Town Administrator who said, as you recall, we've had several conversations about raising some of the bid limits that we've been working with for the last 30 or so years. We're looking to go from \$10,000 and \$25,000 to \$20,000 and \$50,000 respectively. This is for when we go out to bid and when we have to solicit for bids. Again, the numbers have been in place since at least 1993, at least 30 years. And we're just looking from an inflationary perspective. And actually what we see when we go out to bid that \$10,000 is not what it was 30 odd years ago. So there's been a proposal in front of you to raise the limits in Town Code Chapters 98-5, 98-6 and 98-7. There's also a modest language change to make sure that we're documenting any bids that go out so that we put something in a file at this point. Now we're looking for the public hearing because we're changing Town Code and are required to hold a public hearing. And after that, should you choose to amend the Town Code, you'll do it at the next meeting.

Chairman McGrath opened the public hearing at 7:06 p.m. There was no one present to give public input. The Chairman said, and just to note, there was no one other than our Town Engineer, and Chairman of the Conservation Commission present. There's no one else in the room other than members of the Board of Selectmen. Chairman McGrath closed the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Selectman Guessferd then said, I was hoping just before you close it, if someone's come to use outside of this particular public hearing time should we be at least acknowledging it or anything like that? Because I know we've received at least one. We've we've received one email as a Board. Now, does that count as public input or does it have to be right here? Chairman McGrath replied saying, first of all, I haven't seen what you're talking about. Okay. I wasn't on. Selectman Guessferd replied, okay, I thought it went out to all the Board of Selectmen. Chairman McGrath replied, I didn't see, I haven't seen anything. Selectman Guessferd replied, okay. All right. Chairman McGrath then said and that's not the appropriate way to do it either because it's, you know, it's public input and it's for the public to hear thoughts and.... Selectman Guessferd interjected saying, I just wanted to mention that, yeah, I've seen something. Chairman McGrath replied,

Selectman Morin was recognized and said I understand, but from my perspective, I don't think that that's it doesn't fit the, you know, the meaning of public input. You know, we want the public to be able to come in and tell us their thoughts if they oppose something or if they are in favor of it, or maybe they just want to ask a question about it, that that's the appropriate time to do that. Selectman Guessferd replied, okay, okay, no problem.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said, I think we've done it in the past. We've had people send stuff in in the past, particularly what we've gone through for the last two years. I did, I did see it. I did get it. I mean, it's not going to hurt anything just to to make that we did receive a letter and against it. Selectman Guessferd interjected saying, right. Selectman Morin continued saying and that it was put on file, correct, Jill? That would have been put on file. The Executive Assistant replied yes, it's right here. Selectman Guessferd then said and, you know, I considered it, you know, in terms of, you know.

Chairman McGrath interjected saying if the two of you have seen it and you want to talk about it, you know, I'm not about to say you can't. Selectman Guessferd and Morin both said, no, no, no. Selectman Morin then said, but we just recognized with public input we did receive a letter. Did you see it, Selectman Dumont? Selectman Dumont replied, I did, yes. Selectman Morin went on to say so we'll just we'll just, we'll just it was...we did send it in. It was from a town resident. It was against raising these amounts. And it will be put on file with everything else. Chairman McGrath replied, okay.

The Town Administrator then said so the whole point of the public hearing, it gets advertised well in advance. It gets publicized. It is truly the opportunity for people to speak to the government on this specific issue. After you close this public hearing and you proceed to the next meeting, it's certainly up to you whether you vote yes or no on this. But you can take whatever input you'd like, but this is the correct forum to get that input. Selectman Guessferd replied yeah. And that's where I was going, is just making sure that we're at least acknowledging it. And I think we all seeing it would consider it, you know, and as part of the whole plus and minus idea.

Selectman Morin then said, now not to throw a worm into this, but because this is public input and we have our residents state the name and address, should we have to do that. So it's on public record who it was. The Town Administrator replied this is a public hearing. They're not in attendance at the public hearing. You can certainly take their correspondence. But they didn't show up at the public hearing. We'll put it with the file, duly noted. But they did not attend the public hearing. Selectman Morin replied okay. Selectman Dumont replied I would say that's the right thing to do. Selectman Guessferd then said and this person did say, please consider my public input for this public hearing so. The Town Administrator replied, we'll put it into the record. To which Selectman Guessferd replied yep, that's fine. Selectman Morin said I'm good with that, too. Selectman Guessferd then said just trying to be transparent.

Chairman McGrath then addressed the Board saying, no, and I'm willing. I mean, if the Board, the majority of Board members want to take it up and put it into the record, you're more than able to do that. I'm not. You know, I'm not going to, I'm not going to take this (gavel) and bang the gavel. I mean, it's you know, we're all part of this body and we should be able to say whatever we'd like as long as it's respectful and it's long as it's, you know, not foul language things. I mean, you know, but you'd be surprised at what could happen at meetings. And and I'm not saying that that's ever happened here, but, you know, it's just we have we have a set of decorum that we want to maintain. And and this should be a professional environment. So but so if anybody wants to bring it up, you're more than able to welcome to. But okay. I didn't I didn't receive it. I haven't seen it that I'm aware of. I mean, maybe it got sent to me a month ago and I just don't remember. Selectman Guessferd replied, okay, okay, no worries.

Chairman McGrath then asked, so are we dispensed with that topic then? okay, then so we've closed the public hearing. The Town Administrator added, and at this point no action is required. You'll take action at the next meeting.

B. On-Call Services Trenchless Pipeline Rehabilitation Contract Award

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima. Mr. Dhima began by saying, Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, everyone. This is something we'll be doing in the past couple of years. It's related to our capital improvements related to our sewer infrastructure. In the past, the theme was dig it up, replace the pipe and go from there. It's a new way of doing it. It's been trying to line the existing pipes that were there if there's enough pipe material there to accommodate this approach. We went out to bid. We had a schematic matrix, how we evaluated everything, cost, ability to get it done, similar contracts with other municipalities, interviews which sometimes we waive. And at the end of the day, three companies really scored pretty close. National Water, which did the work last year for us at 90. Vortex also got awarded last year and scored 93. Then Green Mountain in 92, Insituform was at 80. So we feel because it was so close and they provide the same material, the same services to basically hire three companies on call as needed for this project, which is basically whatever we need for this year, starting July 1st to June 30th, 2020 for the budget we have for this is \$250,000. And we call we'll be calling these three companies as we need them throughout the year. That said, I'll take any questions you might have.

Chairman McGrath asked, anyone have any comments or questions for Mr. Dhima? Selectman Dumont was recognized and he said, I just had a couple. Just curious. So I know it's for an on call basis. Is that, is that the reason behind choosing three, just because you're not sure, depending on when you'll need them? Mr. Dhima replied yeah, we got different pipe size. Sometimes they cannot find what are we looking for.

You know, if it is a UV liner or steamer, you know, diameter depending who gets what. And then also they vary a little bit on the cost. So if there's a little bit of savings there, like a dollar or two per linear foot, for example, and they can get the pipe, we'll go with that particular one. We have an idea to what we want to do this year, but we haven't decided yet because things are changing. But yeah, it gives us the ability to draw out of the three. They're pretty close, but some of them have slightly better price than others. So if we can save \$1000 or two per project, that adds up a little bit. But yeah.

Selectman Dumont replied it seemed like Vortex had some had some good numbers, but that's why I was just curious. So it's just obviously cost is part of it, but availability. Mr. Dhima responded, that's right. That's right. And that's why on the matrix that you have in front of you, there's the ability to secure a staff and material schedule flexibility 15%. And so while it's mostly driven by cost, 50% of it, there is, you know, being able to show up, be able to complete the services and then similar projects. All these companies have done similar projects for municipalities around here, some more than others. But we have not had any issues with the two we have hired in the past, which is National and Vortex. They've done work in the past three or four years for us on different projects. Green Mountain will be new. And we'll see how they play out. But I felt that talking to the Public Works Director and the Sewer Foreman that they're so close. I think it's worth getting all three of them in and figure out what the things are like. We're in much better shape when it comes to being able to get the material that we need, but it's not as fluid as it used to be pre-covid. Still, there's a little bit of an issue there with getting what we need. This provides us with the flexibility to switch at the last minute if we need to.

Selectman Dumont then asked was the plan always to have three different companies or was it the original plan to pick one or going through this you decided it was better to have the three? Mr. Dhima replied saying last year we hired two and this year the plan was for two. But because they were so close, we felt like anything over 90, you know, we have three, so we'll go with that. I think the more the merrier, I guess, in this case. But I don't know. Three is my favorite number too, I guess. I don't know. We felt like we can't go wrong and we want to try Green Mountain for certain services to see if they perform well or not. And it depends year to year. If we have a bad experience with one of the three, probably it's going to be the same players. We might go with two next year, but there's enough to go around I guess, and it'll be up to Public Works to determine who they feel is a good fit for what we're trying to do.

Chairman McGrath asked, does anyone else have questions? Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said Selectman Dumont pretty much had some of the same questions I did. As you know, I'm always kind of a little bit concerned about the bidding process. I know we have three that we that we're going to use here. And yeah, it is significant like like Vortex on almost every every one of these is almost is less expensive. There are a couple where they're not, right? How can we assure or be assured that we're going to get the best bang for the buck on this? I mean, in terms of is there going to be some documentation of when we want to use somebody that they're going to kind of do a comparison of the prices at that point it's just not gonna get. Mr. Dhima replied you get the unit prices based on the the matrix for sewer manhole, the lining of different diameters, the pipe itself, the services, things of that. So the way that would work is we'll determine to what we need to do out there. And what'll happen is the Foreman Public Works will determine to which one provides that service the cheapest. Selectman Guessferd replied the best. Mr. Dhima replied, the best. The cheapest really at the end of the day the most conservative. Selectman Guessferd added 50% of it is cost. To which Mr. Dhima replied so we'll get that consultant for that particular pipe project to come in, inspect the pipe and basically give us a number for that Based on the matrix that I've provided. If they can get us that right of way. Great. If not for some reason and they have 2 or 3 months' delay, we'll get the next one in line to give us. So that's how it's going to be played out. And if we can wait a little bit, great. If not, we don't expect to use this for emergency cases. We expect this to be all planned work. That's how it works. It's called On Call because they will be required to kind of work with us. But it's not really like if something breaks, we need them to come in. It's all planned work and I think next year we might change the language a little bit on that too.

Selectman Guessferd asked it's a yearly contract, right? So we're gonna do this again next year, correct? So it'd be it'd be interesting to revisit this next year when you do this in terms of how this all worked out. In other words, did we save the taxpayer money by doing it this way with the three vendors? You know, and I

think there's got to be some level of a little bit of documentation, if nothing else, so that we can come back. And for you guys, you can come back and look at it next year and go, okay, maybe we don't need three because maybe we got most of it from one of the three or whatever. I know I noticed Like I said, there's a couple, there's a couple of these like liners. One company was humongously expensive. Mr. Dhima replied yeah we probably wouldn't use for that particular one. Selectman Guessferd said so you know, you don't want to use them for everything, you know. Mr. Dhima replied, correct. But they were good on some other ones depending on what we have out there. Selectman Guessferd replied yeah. And some of them didn't make sense either because they knew, for example, like someone bid a one penny per linear foot for a 36-inch diameter pipe. Of course you're going to you know, that makes no sense. We don't have that pipe to begin with, but then to put a penny. But anyway, yeah, we we know the game. I can tell you that there's other communities that have hired only one and they got burned because that company did not perform and they had issues and they lost a whole year. Yeah, that's not a good approach either. So I feel like we're, we're doing it a little differently and it's been working out for us so far. Last year worked out pretty good. We were on budget. We got a lot for our money. We have a solid infrastructure. We're trying to keep it that way with minimum impact above the surface. This approach allows us to do that.

Selectman Guessferd replied yeah, it would be interesting to see how it all plays out. So we'll probably be, I'll probably be asking that question next year as to how it worked out. Mr. Dhima replied yeah, yeah, if I remember it, I might be like, I don't remember it. I'm just kidding. No, we'll see. I mean, we did this a year ago. I remember sitting in front of this Board and doing the same exercise. It's just amazing how fast time goes. But yeah, last year we had no issues. It worked out very well. This year we're going to try to go for the same thing and I'll report next year.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said just so I'm clear on Selectman Guessferd's question. Where you've got three basically they're bidding against each other on every job? Mr. Dhima replied yeah we actually we're not even going to let them bid on it. We're going to pick the one that makes the most sense for that particular job. So let's just say we have an eight-inch diameter pipe rehab that we want to do and one of the three provides the best cost. They're the first one that's gonna get the call. Selectman Morin then said so they're bidding all the time actually. Selectman Guessferd replied essentially. Mr. Dhima replied yeah and if for some reason that person says I can provide cheaper services, but I can't get you that line for six months because I have an issue, then it goes to the next guy that might be a dollar more and see if he can provide it. If we can wait and put that off for later because we have another project, so be it. But the idea is we get all these different unit prices and we pick out of the three knowing that they're locked in and we can call them in because my concern is you get one in and let's just say they can't perform. Now You lost the whole year, so it gives you more flexibility. But the idea is to still be using the most cost effective one for that job depending on what the job is. this matrix, multiple sheets that you got there allows us to see everything that we might we might encounter out there.

Chairman McGrath asked Selectman Dumont, do you have another question? To which Selectman Dumont replied yeah, just a couple that I was going through. I know it's probably been done in the past because I know this was originally thought the cheaper way instead of, instead of digging up the line. But since costs have obviously gone up a drastic amount, especially with this, have you guys revisited just for the sake of pricing it out? Digging, replacing versus lining? Mr. Dhima replied I wouldn't even get... we can't even... does not even get close. When you start putting traffic control, PD. Got to help them out with their retirement funds as well It's just it's the inconvenience it can be a bit much. The idea now is if you don't have to get in the ground, don't. if you don't have to dig into it, don't you know we're not one of those communities that we know exactly what everything is and we don't, you know we're aware of everything. That's not the case. There's a lot of stuff out there that we can hit that we don't know. I can tell you my experience here in the past eight, nine years, we have hit gas mains that even the gas company didn't know. They were dead, thank God. But I didn't know that was there. Let's document that while we're here. So. Yeah. Selectman Dumont then said I'm sure it doesn't work on every on every job, but I would say that there could be some here and there that it might be a little bit cheaper. Mr. Dhima replied, yeah, if I think the only way that makes sense is if Public Works actually doesn't work themselves. Selectman Dumont replied, correct. Mr. Dhima then said if we sub that out, actually do the digging through a third party, nope. Selectman Dumont replied no, I'm thinking you keep that stuff in-house. Mr. Dhima replied, that's right, so if

they can make that work and they can fit in their schedule. Absolutely. And they still do still do certain ones. But they're mostly services. They're not, we're not getting into the big mains for long runs because it's just, there's only so many of them at the Public Works and they can only do so much. So trying to be more effective to get in and out. But the theme is, to answer your point, this is slightly cheaper than digging in, but not by much. Selectman Dumont replied, right, yeah. It's just enough to keep you going this direction, that's all.

Selectman Dumont replied Yeah. I remember. It was like that when we did it a couple of years ago. And that's why I was going to bring up. I mean, I'm sure you remember them, but Kenyon Pipeline. I don't know if you've, anybody reached out to them because at least when I did it personally they had very, very good crew. They had very good numbers. Mr. Dhima replied but that was a long time ago. To which Selectman Dumont replied, it was yeah, no, it was. But they're a reputable company. They do a lot of stuff for Nashua. They're in there all the time. Mr. Dhima then said, we put it out there and we had mandatory pre-bid meeting. People need to understand how we operate and what we expect out of them. But as I said, I'm not out there dragging people in here. I have sometimes, but for this one, if you get four people show up at the pre-bid meeting, that's a good turnout. So they're more than welcome to go next year if they want. We are going to do this on a yearly basis anyway. Selectman Dumont then said I was just curious. Mr. Dhima then said, give them a call, let them know for next year. But yeah, yeah, this if all goes well, we're going to continue to do this every year.

Chairman McGrath asked, anybody else have any other questions? If not, is anyone willing to make a motion to approve the contract for On Call Services for Trenchless Pipeline Rehabilitation to National Water Main Cleaning Company, Vortex Services, LLC and Green Mountain Pipeline on an as needed basis using sewer capital project account #5564-640 as recommended by the Public Works Director, the Town Engineer and the Finance Director. Selectman Dumont made this motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd. Carried 4-0.

C. Engineering Services EPA MS4 Permit One Year Extension

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima. Mr. Dhima said, Thank you, Madam Chair. This is related to Water Quality Act. It got implemented in 2018. At the time we were looking for a five-year contract, starting a pilot program related to the MS4. We file it every year. In 2018, we went out to bid and VHB was the most qualified low bid at the time, at approximately about \$20,000 per year. To help us out with the water sampling, documentation, coming up with ways to improve the water quality and filing with the EPA. That contract is up this year. We went back and forth and we felt that the best way to do this moving forward was at the yearly basis now, because things are moving and it's very difficult to give a price based on how the EPA feels about changing their regulations and continue to modify their regulations. So with that said, I requested them to provide a proposal for just this year moving forward, and that number was \$21,800, which is about just about 8 or 9% increase from about five years ago, which I thought that was pretty reasonable. With that said, I'm asking you to waive the bid process and hire them based on the fact that they were the low bid last time we did this. They were the low bid on other previous job that we put out, the Robinson Pond they were the only consultant that were in that put a bid on and they can do the work. And I think the number is pretty reasonable. And those provide us with one year to move forward to do what we need to do to stay in compliance with the feds. And I'll take any questions you might have.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and asked is there a time limit for when they need to be hired for this extension or is there a is there? Mr. Dhima replied, it will be July 1st of 2023 to June 30th, 2024. It will be for this upcoming fiscal year. Selectman Dumont went on to say because I was going to ask, quite frankly, why I didn't go out to bid. I know that they were the only ones that did on a similar project. But just again, for keeping everybody moving forward and transparent, why not just throw it out there to see what came in? Different scope of work. Maybe find somebody else. Mr. Dhima responded saying, for a one-year

extension when someone was doing it for five years will be like a huge ask for a lot of people to come in. The read that I got from last time we went out for a \$75,000 job was that one firm showed up VHB. It was a lot of effort put into it and to get one person show up for that, someone that actually does work in town, it was very discouraging. So we don't have the resources to keep putting bids out for small amounts and to get 0 or 1 bid. So I felt that if we went out, we would have the same person in. It probably would have been higher versus kind of being upfront about it and asking for basically someone that says we will consider to sole source it, if you basically give us a number on this. And that's what they did. And I think that's what the number is. If you go out to bid, you can get someone like them saying \$25,000 or \$30,000. There's no guarantee. Selectman Dumont replied, no, there's never a guarantee. Mr. Dhima then said and now we're paying \$10,000 more than versus telling someone, If you give me a reasonable number, we're going to send you the contract. Selectman Dumont replied, yeah but you have the same changes of finding someone less. Mr. Dhima replied, not really. Not really. I put a \$75,000 job about a month ago, and they were the only ones in \$75,000 job. I should have been able to get multiple people to show up for \$75 grand. Selectman Dumont then said, to be honest, I find it amazing how difficult Hudson has with finding bids. I mean, I know it is difficult. Mr. Dhima interjected saying, Nashua's not getting any at all. State, ah Concord is not getting any at all. I just got out of the phone with them when we locked in the one bid for that. Absolutely. You got a lot of communities that aren't getting anything at all. Selectman Dumont replied, no, but I bid projects all the time. I get three, four...Mr. Dhima interjected saying it's different when you're private versus municipality. There's a lot of requirements and there's a lot of paperwork. And a lot of people feel that after a consultant does enough work in there that that's basically their territory. So it's a little different. I understand which how you're looking at it from your point of view. I totally get it. It's a little different. Selectman Dumont replied, Oh, I know. Yeah. No, I completely agree. I'm not saying.... Mr. Dhima interjected saying, I can tell you that VHB has done enough work, for example, in town that people and some consultants consider that to be their territory. There is a lot of companies and firms in Nashua that do a lot of work that no one else will bid on because they know who gets those jobs over there and who they're familiar with. So they kind of pick their territories. Selectman Dumont say well, that's not good. To which Mr. Dhima replied, I know, but that's just how it works out there. You know, they get used to I'm sure he sees it on a federal job that he does. And you have certain consultants like you. That's just how it is. So it's a little different, but I totally get it, what you're saying. And you don't have a purchasing department here. You know, we can only pump so much out there. You know, I can either pursue grants and other things, or I can work on 40 hours to put a bid together for \$20,000. And I'm not going to get anyone in or I'm going to get the same guy. I have to make those calls. I only have so much time. Selectman Dumont replied, yeah, I'm just asking the question. To which Mr. Dhima replied, No, no, I totally get it. But that's the theme. That's kind of the theme out there. So that is one of the reasons why you're pursuing trying to provide some relief on the numbers because you can't you can't carry on ten and 20. It's just not what it used to be. You have to provide a relief to yourself. We're not set up like that. You know, you go to Nashua, they have a purchasing department there. They can pump all day long under \$50,000 RFPs and over \$50,000 all day long. Selectman Dumont replied, that's fine, But I would still hope that they're looking for the best bang for the buck for the taxpayer. I would hope that they don't just know that they have a \$50,000 limit, so they go out and find whoever they want. Mr. Dhima replied, no, but it's just different out there right now. Things have changed a little bit and with consultants, it's getting harder and harder. That's just how it is.

Chairman McGrath then said, VHB has has been for as long as I've been around. And I was on the Planning Board for a lot of years, Zoning Board. I've, you know, been around for a while and they were always considered the premier engineering company, always. Selectman Dumont replied, and I'm not discrediting them whatsoever. Chairman McGrath went on to say, I so I mean, it's they don't come. You know, I haven't dealt with them in a number of years because I haven't been on the Planning Board that, you know, that's where I had where I had the the the stroke happened. I was at a Planning Board meeting, so I haven't been back since. But planning was always, you know, that was always my thing to do. I always enjoyed it. But VRB was always considered to be a really good engineering company. In fact, I think that they were probably the first one that ever did a traffic study for us that ever, you know, they came up with the to get collect cap fees. We never you know, at one time it was unheard of to collect CAP fees of any kind. And so they deserve some credit for that. Selectman Dumont replied, and yeah I'm not taking away, because I remember them very much through my years on the Planning Board as well. They've always

done a fantastic job. It's nothing against their work or just purely same way I would do my business. I always just look for multiple numbers. So I just wanted to ask the question. Chairman McGrath replied to Selectman Dumont saying, no, I'm not saying that you shouldn't ask it. It's just that that's my experience with VHB. I always found them to be a reputable, reputable company to come in and do work for the Town of Hudson. Selectman Dumont replied, I would agree. Chairman McGrath went on to say and they did do a lot with the Town of Hudson. Again, going back to the CAP fees, if we hadn't been able to utilize them and talk to them about it was a novel approach at that time to collect CAP fee, we would have lost out on a lot of money over the years. So. That's my experience with them. So are we.... anyone else have any questions or comments?

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said just real quick, I won't try to belabor this too much, but I think this is a perfect example of why we're doing what we're doing with the limits, because it's it's a balance, right? I mean, we want to get the best bang for the buck. And sometimes that best bang for the buck is maybe not competing at \$20 Million or \$20,000 job. I'm thinking BAE. and and because it's going to cost us more and I know that's some calls that you have to make but it's it's an example and I mean we should always be thinking first you know go out and get bids if we can. And I think that's really kind of the mentality we need to have is is but there are some occasions where it's less money for the taxpayer in the end if if we go another route. So I just think we always need to have this in our heads and and you know, that's really kind of my thought about it.

Chairman McGrath then said, I'm also... excuse me, I'm going to add a comment here that I think needs to be said. Because I've sat here now for a few years and I have been over the years since I've gotten to know Mr. Dhima. I'm so impressed with his ability to and his his work ethic is beyond question. Beyond question. He looks out for the town like he lives here himself. And it's the truth. I'm not saying something that I consider to be a falsehood. It's I mean, I've been so impressed with his work ethic and what he does for the town of Hudson. And it's I don't think he would sell us down the road, you know, And I just think that that needs to be said. It needs to be put out there because there's people that are watching this meeting that are probably, you know, complaining about him and, you know, don't want to, you know, want to go out to bid and send out as many bids as you can and and it takes time. It takes time away from he has to he's working here eight, eight hours every day, some days longer. He's here at a meeting here. He goes to the Conservation Commission. He goes to the Municipal Utility meeting. So, I mean, it's not like he's not here a lot. So I just felt that that needed to be said.

Selectman Guessferd then said I get it, and no one's casting any.... Mr. Dhima interjected saying no, no, no, no. I totally get it. And I. And I get the speech. I totally get it. It's not the first time. I just, I just need you to know that the way it works is when, when, when things like this, this caliber, when you have, for example, they've gone through the process like, you know, like we have gone through like a lot of RFPs and go do the dance. And sometimes we get one, sometimes we get 2 or 3. But for something like this, when you ask for a scope of work and fee and you get someone to give you a price, that's 8.3% higher than five years ago. I don't like to gamble. It's just that simple. It really is. And when I get someone telling me that they're going to go 8.3% higher than five years ago, 2% average, less than no. That's about 1.5, 1.7% average per year. When I have had jobs that have gone up 50% or 100% from year to year. I'm going that route because I think that's the best route. That's what I would do for me. That's what I would do for you and the town. And those are the decisions that have to be made. So how could it be like, No, I don't like it, I'm going out to bid. You know, we did that with Pennichuck five years ago when we said, Give us a number. I didn't like it. All right. We're going out to bid. And now if we were, we've been away from them ever since. But that increase was significant. You know, that's a 20% markups on everything. When we knew very well we could have done better than that. My take on it was something like this, that it comes at 8% from five years ago. I don't think you'd be wise to walk away. I mean, that's what I would do if this was my own thing. You know, I wish every single one of this was like this 1.5% increase per year. I do. But that's not the world we live in. So certain calls need to be made that way. They came in and said, 25, 30. All right. What happened? I'd be worth a look. But it's also hard to bring someone new in. When someone was doing it for five years. They've done a good job. There's nothing to complain about. They're doing it for almost the same price, and be like, Nah, I don't like it. I'm going out next time. They won't even put a bid on for something else because I didn't do anything wrong. I don't understand why for a 1.7 per year, 1.5% per

year, which is really low, you kicking me out and giving it to another guy because they're slightly cheaper and I don't even know what I'm going to get for that. If it's slightly less so for something like this, you're not getting a product, you're getting a service. It's a little different. It's not apples to apples like materials for wood. Yeah. Framer for last price. You can have someone that says, I can do the framing for less and find out that you make a mess.

Selectman Dumont replied that's why I asked the question because it was a service. It wasn't a product. You see a lot of products increase over the years. Services, they've kind of stayed. Mr. Dhima replied but even that has gone up a little bit like even their rates. So like when you come in and say someone at 1.5% average per year, engineering, even engineering is going to have to deal with that. Engineering is gone up. Engineering services. (inaudible) There's not work out there, but I get it. I get it. And we're going to continue to do that. We're going to try to do it for the best way possible, but sometimes it hurts more if you go out. It's just it really is. I think this is one of them. That's it in a nutshell.

Chairman McGrath then said okay. So have we exhausted this topic? So is anybody willing to make a *motion to waive the bid process for sole source sole source this work to VRB, Inc. for the following reasons. 1) they have been and currently are our water quality consultant. 2) they were recently the only bidder for similar work and the bid was within our budget.* Anyone willing to make that as a motion? Selectman Morin are you willing to make that motion? Selectman Guessferd? Going once, going twice...if not, Selectman Morin?

Selectman Morin then said, I listened to both Selectmen's comments and I fully agree with the bidding process and that's why I didn't do it, because, you know, they they had their comments, figured they'd make a motion one way or the other. When we talk and I get the bids, we're doing the best for our citizens. I get that. But sometimes knowing the amount of work, manpower, hours, money we have to spend to send stuff out. That it's, it's a tough thing. And and he's right. We don't have anybody to do that. And again, that's the town the way everybody else has somebody that takes care of that. But we dump it on our employees instead of having a department to do that kind of stuff. It just sometimes. We beat this to death for no reason. I mean, this this is not a big amount. We've had them for five years. If he's taken all this time, you know, doing bids when I was at the Fire Department being involved in that, I know what it takes. He's not going to be able to do anything else because we don't have the people to do it. You know, that's my only that's my only concern. I don't have a problem with this one. I do agree with you. But like I said, you guys, I get where you're coming from. So, you know, if you feel that strong, either you make the motion or don't. Selectman Guessferd replied, I don't have a problem with this one. Selectman Morin then said, yeah. Just like I said, it just I think we I think at some point we probably should have another discussion on this because I fully understand where you guys are coming from. But, But we got to figure out a cut off, you know what I'm saying? Selectman Guessferd said Yeah. That's why we're raising the limits. Okay, understood. Yeah.

Chairman McGrath then said, and, you know, it's I think it's fair to say every one of us in this room, with the exception of Mr. Dhima, because he doesn't live in Hudson. We're all taxpayers here. Every single one of us. Maybe not Jill, either. I don't know. But I'm not trying to point anybody out. But I'm just saying, you know, it's every one of us is a taxpayer, so it's meaningful to us, too. I don't like to see my taxes go up any more than anybody else likes them. And, you know, given the state of the country that we're in a heck of a mess. So anyway, I think that I think we've probably talked this out. And if you if you know, it's if we have it, if you want to talk more about it and more questions. But I think that. So did anyone make a motion? Is anyone willing to make a motion? I've read the motion. Do you want me to read it again?

Selectman Guessferd replied, you don't need to read it again. *I'll make that motion for this one.* Absolutely. *Chairman McGrath* asked is there a second? I'll *second* the motion if no one else is willing to, just to move it along. *Motion carried 4-0.*

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to award the one-year contract for Engineering Services to VHB, Inc. in the amount of not to exceed \$21,800 as recommended by the Town Engineer. Carried 4-0.

D. Request to Apply - PROTECT Grant Program

Chairman McGrath recognized Mr. Dhima. Selectman Morin then spoke up saying, before we get into this one, we're going to run into the same. This one's for \$9,700. The Town Administrator then said, Actually, this is under the \$10,000 limit. He didn't even have to do that. He only did it because he wants to get permission to apply for the grant and he needs these folks to do that. Technically this one didn't need to go out to bid, under the old numbers.

Mr. Dhima then said, so this particular one is related to, as you all know, and probably have a missed drainage and the runoff and everything we've been having. So as you know, we're kind of locked in for everything that we have in place from July 1st to June 30th of next year. As you know, all the runoff we've been having, especially the last Tuesday, we were about 2.35 inches in one hour. We got a lot of requests, Selectman Morin has been involved with some of the cases we're dealing with right now. And unfortunately, the feedback that we have to provide is that we do not have any money for any drainage related projects as of now because of two previous default budgets. And the fact that moving in now to this fiscal year, the amount of money for the drainage is been fixed. So DPW has about \$10,000 and I don't have any money related to drainage. So what we're doing is we're looking for ways to raise funds related to drainage related projects because they still need to be addressed. So it came to our attention that there is a program out there, federal related project, it's called PROTECT, and it's basically related to planning and construction for this particular item that I'm in front of you tonight is related to planning and designing projects that are going to improve drainage and transportation related to drainage structures. We came up with a list of eight. Out of the eight that we submitted to consultant for makes the most sense for us to move forward with, and we basically will hire a consultant to help us out with applying for these grant. And the amount for that grant is, work related to the grant, is \$9,700. It'll be coming out of the engineering account and hopefully we get it. And if we get it, we'll have four projects that we can basically address, at least for the designing phase. If we get this grant, the next piece will be the construction portion. The construction portion of these projects will have a 20% match requirement by the town. The only way we can achieve that is by probably having a warrant article in March next year for this. I think that warrant article is probably going to be coming up anyways no matter if we get the grant or not because we do not have money to address drainage issues out there and it's coming to the point that we need to start doing some things. We're in good shape with the bridge and the bridge program, with the water, with the sewer, but there's a lot of drainage infrastructure out there and its kind of put it in the back burner for now because it's just underground no one cares until someone gets flooded. And I think that's going to be the next thing that we need to start paying attention to. The challenging part about that is that it costs a lot of money and no one is interested in it because it doesn't impact me. I don't have any water issues in front of me. I shouldn't have to pay for it. So that will be the next battle. But that's it in a nutshell. I'll take any questions you might have.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said just with the last two rainstorms that we've had, we've had one resident that's taken a beating out there. I actually talked to him, went to the site. They actually have three street drains within 50ft from each other. Problem is, everything goes into the street drains, but the pipes are too small, so it all backs up, floods into there. We went twice with the two last, to these, this particular place. And the only fix we can do for this, for a person which public works is going to work on, is there's a swale that we're going to have to extend across their driveway, try to put the water away from the driveway at this time, because every time we get a big storm, street floods, it goes into his basement. So this is not the only problem. I mean, if you went around town, they had, what, like 8 or 9 different large floods just from the rain. And it's all because we don't have the appropriate drainage. So I'm in support of this one because we're having some problems and the residents are taking a beating of it.

Mr. Dhima then said, and the design portion is 100% funded. It is no match required by the town. So that's the other nice thing about this. If we get it, it's 100% covered by the by the feds. So while we have a challenges on our own to raise money, maybe the one way to go is pursue grants. But that takes time too, as well as you know. But this is due in August, so we have to have a quick turnaround of this. But I think we can make the deadline. So getting \$100,000 for drainage related projects out there, it's a good start. It shows that we're trying. And while we might not have the money on the budget for this year, maybe we can

secure this funds to help to start addressing some of these projects out there. And this will take care of four out of 10 or 15 that we have out there.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said just a question. If we get this and the engineering is done, that would be considered shovel ready, which would make it easier for us to get grants because we have a project that's ready to go, correct? Mr. Dhima replied, that is correct. Yep. This particular grant has about \$600 Million built into shovel ready projects. And even if we get 1 or 2 of those projects, it'll be huge because they can add up to hundreds of thousands. Those are expensive too. You have to close the road detouring, PD. It's not \$50,000 job that used to be back in the old days everything. Now it's just it's significantly more money.

Seeing no further questions, Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd any questions, to waive the bid process and to award the engineering services to CMA Engineers, Inc. for the amount of not to exceed \$9,700 using engineering accounts. #5585-225. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to authorize the Town Engineer to file for the grant. Carried 4-0.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to authorize the Town Engineer to be the principal for this grant. Mr. Dhima said, it's weird. They want someone to be authorized by the Board for all these things that we put in, and I feel weird about asking for it, but unfortunately, unless I had, I had something signed by the Board that allows the Chairman to sign for on behalf of the Board, because that's not enough. It's just it's just another thing for all the federal agencies not to require. So that's why that's in there. I don't want to be the principal. Carried 4-0.

E. Conservation Commission Property Purchase - 13 Tiger Road

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Engineer, Elvis Dhima and Conservation Commission Chairman, Bill Collins. Mr. Collins began by saying, Good evening, Madam Chairman, Chairperson and Select Board members. The Conservation Commission has another opportunity to purchase another tract of land in the southwestern side of Robinson Pond. It's located off of Tiger Road. It's got good public access. And it's it's really going to help protect more of the watershed back there. As you remember, a couple of years ago, we purchased the land on the south eastern side, the Berrigan property. And this kind of ties into all of that for a total of about 80 acres of conservation property. We feel it's at this time, it's a, it's a good deal. The landowner wishes it to stay as a conservation property. That's why she was willing to work with us and not look for a competitive bidding process for development or anything like that. And it's just another parcel that will help protect the outflow of Robinson Pond for the water quality and everything else like that from deterring development in that area.

Chairman McGrath replied, I think it's wonderful that you're able to get it. And I remember when when the former chairperson came in to try and Get it. And we had a rogue member that almost scuttled the deal for you. But anyway, it's it's good to see. And I questioned whether or not you had enough money left in the budget for other properties than you do. Mr. Collins replied, yeah we we probably have enough left to do one more large purchase somewhere in the community. Obviously, we're going to try to target properties that tie into other conservation lands for connectivity and things along that line and the value of the property itself. We're not just going to look at buying up house lots for that purpose. I think it our job is to seek out lands that should maintain themselves as undeveloped properties and take it from there. Chairman McGrath replied you're doing a good job.

Selectman Morin was recognized and asked how does this tie into the MS4 permit where we're purchasing around the pond. Mr. Dhima replied, it's going to help a lot. One of the recommendations by the VHB pilot program that's being run by NRPC, the \$50,000 grant we got is basically one way to protect the pond or the the watershed related to is to purchase either property or to protect it further. This particular property that

could have been developed. Falling under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission it's one less parcel that the town has to worry about creating run offs and develop, you know, so it helps significantly. So we have this protected on this side of the pond. We have the other side that the Chairman just mentioned it. So we know that we're not going to just completely isolate Robinson, but anything that we can grab that's not going to be developed, it's a huge help because think about 1 or 2 lots being developed there with a septic system that's eventually discharges there. That won't be the case for this particular parcel. Seeing no further questions from the Board, Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to approve and authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Purchase and Sales Agreement for the property located at 13 Tiger Road for the amount of not to exceed \$327,750, as recommended by the Hudson Conservation Commission and the Town Engineer, and to remain under the jurisdiction of the Hudson Conservation Commission. Carried 4-0.

F. Increase Police Detail Cruiser Rate Town Code Ch. 205-8M

Chairman McGrath recognized the Town Administrator who said, as you recall, at the last meeting, you had a public hearing regarding changing the private detail rate for cruisers at a detail from \$15 to \$20 an hour. I believe the last time the code was changed was somewhere back in 2007. So subsequently the cost of operating cruisers has gone up. Prior to the public hearing, you held a meeting. You basically looked at this at the public hearing. I don't believe you had anybody show up at the public hearing. If I recall. You might have received some comment or somebody did some sort of analysis, which that was about it. But bottom line, the Chief has requested that we raise the detail. This is, again, private detail. So if somebody's buying a utility or if somebody's private hires a detail officer and they want the cruiser, it'll be \$20 per hour from \$15. This is a pass through. So basically we collect the money, if you recall, half the money would be going into a newly established revolving fund to help pay for some of the cruiser expenses. The voters approved that. So monies we pull in for a police cruiser detail half will go into that revolving fund. The other half will come to the town to help defray the cost of the cruiser. So you held the hearing. I recommend you amend town code by approving this.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to amend Town Code Chapter 205-8M, Police Department fees, by increasing the police cruiser present at details, by request, from \$15 per hour to \$20 per hour. Carried 4-0.

G. Proposed Application Fee Building Board of Appeals Town Code Ch. 205-18

Chairman McGrath recognized the Town Administrator who said, Similar to the similar to the previous item, you had a public hearing at the last meeting regarding establishing a fee for Building Board of Appeals applications. In my tenure here, I don't think we've ever had a Building Board of Appeal meeting, but certainly I think there's something coming this way which kind of stimulated the Building Board of Appeals to meet, established ground rules like chairman, vice chair, and they're also recommending a fee to cover the cost of advertising minutes, whatever. It's \$200. Again, there's been no fee up to now, but this fee is consistent with the Zoning, I believe, application fee. I think it was very similar to that. So it's basically a fee that folks, if they want to make an appeal, they can make the appeal, but they have to pay the fee. You had a public hearing and prior to that you had it at a meeting. I don't think we got any comment on this one, if I recall. Chairman McGrath replied we didn't have any comments on anything. The Town Administrator replied I think you had some email on the police detail. Selectman Morin replied yeah on the police detail we did. The Town Administrator agreed saying but you didn't have any other public comment, but you didn't receive any email on that one either. So again, I'm recommending it. Selectman Morin added, and just for the record, that got submitted into the file will be part of the record for the police detail just so it's there.

Chairman McGrath asked, on this one, do we have any people serving on the Building Board of Appeals? The Town Administrator replied Yeah, you have three and they just organized. They had their first meeting. So Mr. Emanuelson is Chair, I believe. I think Mr. Malley is Vice Chair. And then I believe Mr. Lawlor is recording secretary. So there are three people on it. They've been on it for quite a while. We put bylaws, they put bylaws into place, they elected their officers and they came forward with this and they're ready to go.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to amend Town Code Chapter 205-18 Building Board of Appeals by adding Section A 1) building Board of Appeals fees are set at \$200 per application. Carried 4-0.

H. Application for Payment from Capital Reserve Fund

The Town Administrator was recognized and said We have a request that came from the Finance Director. It's basically for reimbursement from the Sewer Capital Assessment Capital Reserve Fund. I believe these were expenses for sewer main and manhole lining. It fits the purpose of the Capital Reserve Fund. And basically the Trustees of Trust Fund have asked it whenever you ask for disbursement that the Board vote to make the disbursement. So this is coming from an established capital reserve fund. I believe it's been around since we've probably forever. It's been around since 1997 and it has \$9.1 million in it. So they're asking for disbursement of \$41,388.50.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and said, just a question. Was the cross out on the purchase order just a typo or did the cost actually increase that much? The Town Administrator replied, so when they got done, that was the cost. So they thought it would be \$31,000. It ended up being \$41,350. Selectman Dumont asked, and that's the same company that we're using for the next year? The Town Administrator replied this appears to be the same company, correct.

Selectman Dumont then said and the other thing I just noticed probably would've been a question for Elvis, but I don't know if you can answer it. It looks like they were charging about \$65 a lineal foot for 15 inch pipe this year. But their new quote is about 14% higher going forward. The Town Administrator replied, if that's what the numbers say, I'm not probably qualified to answer that. He's probably better qualified. This is something they've already spent. So this is this is. Selectman Dumont replied yeah, I just figured this was a good this was a good comparison. I should have brought it up earlier. That was my fault. But I thought this was an older date until I realized it was 2023, but they were at \$65 a lineal foot for a 15-inch pipe, and now they're over 75. The Town Administrator replied, I know this one was right out here on the main drag over here, so I don't know if that made any more complex, but it certainly took more staging on their part. They literally did it right out here, I think, and tried to avoid daytime hours. I think they did some of this at night that may have made a difference in it. In and out, though. Selectman Dumont replied, alright, thank you. Chairman McGrath added so if you really want to know, you need to call Elvis. Selectman Dumont replied I'll reach out to Elvis to see what he has to say. I'm curious and I just want to make sure that we don't obviously have someone bid a job and then constantly have them come in 10 or \$15,000 over that bid and just expecting us to pay for it. I don't want to. Yeah, the numbers aren't good at that point, obviously. The Town Administrator then said, or sometimes you get into the ground, you go, Oops, there's more here than we thought. Selectman Dumont replied that happens a lot. Normally that's why you're lining, because you're not digging up the ground. You're basically putting a balloon down a pipe. So normally you're not running into that as much. But I'll have the conversation with Elvis. Thank you.

Seeing no further questions from the Board, Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve the disbursement from the Nashua Capital Assessment Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$41,388.50 as requested by the Finance Director. Carried 4-0.

I. June 2023 Revenues and Expenditures

Chairman McGrath recognized the Town Administrator who said, this is preliminary budget and actuals. This is preliminary. We're still getting expenses hitting the books. Obviously, invoices are still coming in close, but so we're not done. But just to get an idea where I think I think it's about \$287,000 under budget on the on the general fund. But that's not a final number that will go down. But right now, we're less than 1% within budget. So it was it was close in my opinion. Anything under a 1% is close. And again, that number will decline. It won't be \$287,000. We're still getting, I think, one more payables run to capture all the bills that not everybody gets to bill in here July 1st.

So, again, bottom line, it looks like it was a tight year, but we made it through. We continue to do very well with automobiles, \$6.2 million with the registrations, which was \$680,000 over the budget. Chairman McGrath said, people are racing to buy cars before they have to buy an electric car. The Town Administrator replied, I'm not sure what they're doing, but they're certainly registering a lot of cars. And also the interest. Our new Treasurer is working very well with our Finance Department and they're capitalizing on our investments. So they're moving the money. So I think we finished the year \$161,000 over what we budgeted, which was pretty anemic, but the interest is picked back up. So all of that helps. It goes into our fund balance. From there, you can either use some to lower taxes, you can do a project or you can let it sit there and just for fiscal stability. But we look decent considering we've had a couple of default budgets. We're in decent shape. Now this year we can maybe get some of that stuff done we want to get done. Cuz a lot of stuff's been sort of put on the back burner, you know? Luckily we've had, you know, ARPA grants and whatnot and that helps. But still day to day stuff, you know, needs to get done. So if you have any questions. But again, this is not final is still again, there will be a payables run and there'll be the auditors come in in August. And when the auditors come in, they just they may or may not make certain adjustments, put things in the proper, proper bucket. So but just to tell you, it's under 1%. Selectman Guessferd replied, I'll take that. The Town Administrator then said, yeah. You know, you budgeting this stuff out? Almost 18 months ago, you know? Let me put it in this context. If you had a \$50,000 budget at your house, this is \$250. If you had \$100,000 budget at your house, this is like under \$1,000 bucks. That's close. Yeah. That's context.

J. Town Hall Relocation Discussion

Chairman McGrath said, this is to begin a discussion publicly about what we've talked about and considered. Mr. Malizia would you like to? The Town Administrator said, well, I think the thought was that the Board was considering maybe possibly a relocation of town hall. It's been identified through CIP process that this facility is aged. You'd have to not really a lot of possibilities to expand it. So the thought was, you know, maybe there was another location near here that we could possibly look at for town hall. And I think this Board wanted to maybe get a sense from the public what the pulse would be for something like that. You know, you want to be able to provide a visible location, a location that works for everybody. You don't want it down in the south end. You don't want it on the north end. You don't want it on the outskirts where the police station is. So as we are aware, there may be a parcel that might be available that would probably be in the discussion. And the thought was, is this something that perhaps the public would support? And I think this Board wanted to maybe discuss putting this to some sort of public session probably at the beginning of September, because I think summertime is just difficult. People on vacation to give the public some sort of say in, hey, is this something you folks are interested in? Would you be willing to support it or are we all wet?

Yeah, I think, I think that was the thought that I had is that's the I mean, we talked about it and I think that we should do, you know, have a public meeting at the Community Center where where it's big enough that, you know, there's a large number of people that are interested and want to come out and express an opinion or just get information about it to make a decision. I think that that would be an ideal place to have it. We couldn't really facilitate something like that here. There's just not enough room. So I think but, you know, we may be surprised and we may go out to the community center and there might be two people that show up or ten people, you know. So, I mean, it's I go back to the days when when we were when the town

was considering buying the Friary property and that, that was a like a meeting, like it was a town meeting actually. And we had it at the Memorial School. The auditorium was filled. People were really interested and wanted to vote on it, and it failed by 20 something. How many? The Town Administrator replied, like 26. Something in the twenties. votes. Chairman McGrath went on to say, the town, the townspeople, I dare say, have been regretting that decision every day since, especially now that there's more development that isn't, you know, isn't considered to be, you know, something that they really want in that property. So, you know, this is an opportunity for people to express an opinion, get information, tell us what they want. Tell us if they, you know, tell us if we want want to go ahead with something like this, look into it further, get more plans, figure out, you know, parking, size of the building, what we're going to need and what and more importantly, other than all of those things, how much it's going to cost. And, I mean, that's going to be a big part of the decision making. But I think that, I think we owe it to.... I think we owe it to the townspeople. And I don't think that we're at liberty now to say what the, where the property is. But we've had some input over the last couple of years that people don't want to see a certain type of development on that property. And so, you know, it's just a it's an opportunity for all of us to find out what the townspeople want and whether they want it or they don't want it, whether they're willing to support it or not. So.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and said, yeah, I would agree. I think it's important to bring it to the voters. Especially kind of like a town forum like you had mentioned, to get their, to get the pulse on it or to see what their, what their views are. It was brought up in the CIP. It was brought up in a report last year. Obviously, that there's there's some issues. There's overcrowding, limited storage space. Bob actually has has the full report. He could probably speak to a little bit better than I could, but it has been something that's been on the radar. I think it's time to see if the voters want to spend the money and move forward. So but ultimately leave it up to them, see what they want to do.

Chairman McGrath then said, and I think, you know, I think we'd be negligent not to bring it to, you know, bring it to the public and let them make the decision. I mean, it's their decision. It's their town and it's their money. So, yeah, my town. Our town. I mean, I've been doing this for a long time. And like I've said before, that meeting for the Friary property, my mother was alive and I took her with me, much to her chagrin, and much that she really didn't want to be there, but she went and cast a vote. So.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said, I think it's time to take a look at this building. As Selectman Dumont said, we've outgrown it. And it's been it's been a long time coming, and this will give us a chance to do it right, to make sure for the future. I would like to make a motion that we hold the public meeting on our September workshop, Tuesday, September 5th. Selectman Guessferd said yeah that would be right after Labor Day. The Town Administrator replied, the day after Labor Day. The 5th of September. And the folks will be the summer program will be done, which is also. You're not going to do this when they're in there. So they'll be done. So September 5th would be your scheduled workshop date. Chairman McGrath said, I thinking early September because that's when people are back from vacations. You know, they're back to school. The schools are back in session. Selectman Dumont seconded Selectman Morin's motion. Chairman McGrath then said, motion has been made and seconded to have a public public meeting about the the expansion, building and expansion of town hall facility and the location to be disclosed at that time. I mean, I don't think that we're I don't think we're able to do that at this point. Am I wrong or is there? The Town Administrator replied, I think we're being careful. That's fine. Selectman Guessferd then said, I mean, people need to be fully obviously informed both from the location perspective and from a general kind. The Town Administrator said do they want a new town hall. Is that something that they find important? Selectman Dumont replied, exactly.

Chairman McGrath then said, but there's also I mean, there's also another consideration that there's other property, you know, like what are we going to do with this town hall, this building, you know, what are we going to do to utilize that or are we going to sell it or are we going to, you know, I mean, there's other things, other things to take into consideration. And we've got the administration building for the Fire Department. That's another building. Do we want to keep that or can we sell it and offset some of the cost for the new town? So, I mean, there's a lot to go into this and a lot of thought to be put into it. And maybe we should have, you know, at some point, you know, give it some thought and maybe make a small

subcommittee to get together and have these discussions, make a list of what we need to do and what, you know, what we think we should do. I don't know. I mean, that's just my thought.

Selectman Guessferd then said, well, like you said, there's a lot of moving parts here. But it's it's and we need to have some level of answers, I guess I'll say, for the September meeting. So say this is what the thought process is where and general it's it's going to be it's going to increase taxes. It's going to. The Town Administrator replied, yeah that's inevitable unfortunately. Selectman Dumont added we have that, you got the rough dollar amount. You could show roughly what the increase on the tax rate would be. Based off of that people can make the decision with, you know, pull it all together.

Selectman Morin then said, and chairpersons, you know, what do we do with the buildings. There's a possibility of two buildings we could sell to take those to help offset some of that tax burden. Selectman Guessferd said, yeah. Again, that's all got to be part of kind of the discussion. And if the townspeople want us to move forward with at least, you know, kind of investigation research more of that, like you say, are they interested in a new town hall building or do they just want this one to be renovated or.

Chairman McGrath replied, I don't think I don't know that I'm not certain about the, you know, whether or not we could expand it. I mean, I think. I mean, when KC was here, she talked about that and she was you know, she was had ideas of what you could do to expand this building. The Town Administrator replied, she's not an architect and I don't think you're going up. So no offense, but I don't think you could actually. Selectman Dumont replied, I think correct me if I'm wrong, Steve, but the original sketch at least was provided to the CIP was was talking about blowing out that that left side of the building over there towards the parking lot which would reduce parking and yeah, you get some more space on the inside but then you lose the spaces outside. The Town Administrator replied, maybe the one most logical is where you look where Land Use is. If you come up the ramp, if you could put something to the front there, yeah, you're going to gain 400ft or something like that. Selectman Dumont replied, yeah, not much. The Town Administrator then said, again, you know, you're dealing with a building that's been added onto through the years and not everybody's customer facing. In other words, not every department that needs to face the customer faces the customer. We're not unique. There's probably a lot of town halls like this. But on the other hand, there's the Londonderry. There's Derry, and they spent a lot of money doing those. Does this community want to support that? Because, I mean, 40 years from now, it'll all be in the cloud and you won't need to come here because kids like my kids, they don't. They do everything on their phone. You know, you'll need workers. But we have the interface that you have today. Maybe not. I don't know, 40 years from now, who knows? Chairman McGrath replied, I don't know The way Elon Musk, Musk is talking. And what's the other guy? Zuckerberg or...The Town Administrator said, all the high tech guys? They know way more than I do.

Selectman Guessferd then said, I mean, another possibility. I mean, another thought that, again, brainstorming about all the different things here. I mean. I mean, who knows? Yeah, we can't expand this building, but, you know, instead of building a new building, is there an opportunity and I don't know of a smaller building that we could annex, you know, as part of the town hall.

The Town Administrator replied you start running into the issue where people come into this building, they want a certain service and then they go, oh, you got to go to building A they go to building and they say, well, really, really got to go back to building B. And who do you cleave off? You know what I'm saying? Selectman Guessferd said, I'm saying I'm just throwing everything, you know? To which the Town Administrator replied, I'm just saying, who who do you cleave off and how does that really work from a customer perspective? Because nobody likes to run around.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said and to your point, we talked about maybe the bank building over there at one point, but that's why we moved everybody from the Fire Department over here because people had to come here and then go there. And that was the problem. The Town Administrator replied, typically, if you move like if you move the Clerk over there, I need to know about my assessment. Oh, you got to go back to town hall, talk to those folks over there. I'm not making excuses. I'm just saying that seems to be the reality, because a lot of your customers are older. They're the ones that come in and deal

with that. And you start sending them down a one-way road that you can't go that way. You got to go around or you got to go over there. That's all you know.

Chairman McGrath then aid, well, we've got a lot of things to talk about, and I'm sure that we're going to get a lot of feedback. The what is what are they called? The people that are sitting at home on their iPads or on their computers and they're shooting shooting off emails or that thing and and they're shooting off, you know, what they think are good ideas, bad ideas. So, you know, Facebook is going to be loaded with with all kinds of comments and it's you know, that's the way it is today. People can do it from their home and and not take, you know, like not coming out to speak about something that they want to have input to, but they're not willing to come out and do it themselves. They want other people to do it for them. The Town Administrator replied that's why we try to provide the opportunity to at least give them the opportunity.

Selectman Guessferd then said it sounds like when we were expanding the school system, you know, the school buildings, what, 20 years, 25 years ago or whatever it was when Hills and there were three different plans, there were different and we picked A, B or C, I mean, there's all kinds of different ways this could this could play out. The Town Administrator said, on the other hand, sometimes you just start digging and there it is. Sometimes. Get it done.

Selectman Morin said so we got a motion on the floor. To which Chairman McGrath replied, we do? The Town Administrator replied, yes, we do. Selectman Guessferd said to hold the hearing. Selectman Dumont replied made and seconded. Chairman McGrath replied, sorry, I got sidelined here. Okay. *Motion has been made and seconded (made by Selectman Morin, seconded by Selectman Dumont) to hold a public meeting on September 5th at the Community Center at 7 p.m.* And everyone that lives in town and is a voter and taxpayer, you're more than willing to come out. Selectman Guessferd said we got to get the word out. Chairman McGrath added, but we'll have we'll have ideas by then. We should have some some ideas and some information that that can be shared and hopefully the location can be shared by that time because I think that that will be an important consideration. Selectman Guessferd replied, Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah.

Chairman McGrath took the vote, which carried 4-0. She then addressed School Board Chairman, Gary Gasdia asking, Gary, would you like to say anything about any of that? I mean, I didn't give you that opportunity. Mr. Gasdia asked, about the town hall? And said, no, I. You know, it is an old building, right? I mean, it's. But it's up to the town's people. I think having a public forum is good. I hope the people come out. I know we did run into this with with our projects over the years. Right? Is that there's however many people in this town in a good night is 12 people. And so you get 12 people and they all tell you to go one direction and then everybody votes it down because they wanted option B, So I think it's great you're doing it. Get the word out. Hopefully people come because that's. Selectman Guessferd added, I remember some of those poorly attended meetings. Mr. Gasdia then said, I think it's great what you're doing. I think it's probably well past due and, you know, looking forward to see what comes out of it. Chairman McGrath then said, I didn't I didn't mean to put you on the spot about. Mr. Gasdia replied No, I appreciate it. I feel I feel the pain because we've been there the past several years. So I hope it. Chairman McGrath said thought it was fair to at least ask you if you wanted to have some input. Mr. Gasdia replied we got to move the town forward.

9. Board Liaison Reports/Other Remarks by Selectmen

Selectman Dumont: On Thursday the 29th, I attended New Hampshire's Municipal Association, local workshop or the Workshop for Local Officials. I found it very informative. Just want to encourage everybody on every board throughout town if they have the availability to go in person or even do Zoom. It's just a great thing to be able to be a part of and get all that information.

I participated in the ZBA site Walk. It was nice to see we had some a couple residents that came out and participated as well. Also wanted to encourage the townspeople that if you see a sidewalk or if you see a meeting posted to try to come out and and give you feedback, it's very, very helpful.

I want to point out that at the Bensons Park, the Friends of Friends of Bensons are putting on a Beatles tribute band on the 22nd. And that's about it. That's everything I had.

Chairman McGrath asked, how are you enjoying the ZBA? Selectman Dumont replied, I like it. It's good. It's yeah. Chairman McGrath replied, it's a good learning experience. Selectman Dumont replied it's a different side. You know, I was very used to the Planning Board side. ZBA is just a different aspect and it's a good process.

Selectman Guessferd: Okay, I've got a few things. Let's see. I'll just I'll start off with Planning. Tomorrow night, we're going to be talking about the traffic study. It finally is has reached us. Has been completed. So we're going to be talking about that. We're still working through the the Master Plan. And there's there's one project tomorrow night that we're we're looking over. And Selectman Morin is going to replace me tomorrow night for that because that will be unavailable.

As far as I guess I'll go to Rec Department next summer. Programs going really well. Lots of cool activities for the kids. They went to Stone Zoo today. They're having all kinds of different contests and stuff like that. Over 200 kids are going to these field trips, which is really cool. Adult softball, the program continues, but there's been a lot of rain delays and rain postponements, as everybody can understand. So they've been struggling through that. But still, the program is going well. And tennis, the program that started last year, the tennis program, they're kicking it off again in in mid-July, coming up probably next week. So that'll be great for for those folks that are interested in tennis.

And the only other one I have is kind of an update from our from the Electric Aggregation Plan and the Sustainability Committee. We we're trying to keep things moving forward to be able to implement the the plan for electric aggregation aggregation. We did, we approved, the selectmen, earlier this year. We approved a plan, a document. That document is now slightly out of date. In other words, we had we had things in there about, well, the town meeting is coming up. So what we want to do is update the plan and that's what they're doing right now. It's administrative more than anything else. Nothing is changing in terms of the intent of the plan or the content, really. But it's really they're kind of fine tuning it in terms of editing. And so what they want to do is bring that plan, although there's there's some discussion as to whether it's needed to be re approved. I think we just my view is and I think Mr. Putnam's view as well, is that let's bring it back to us real quick. We're not going to spend an hour on it, but we're going to try to get it to us before the meeting. People can take a quick look at it. It'll be red. So you better see exactly what changed. And then at the meeting, we just reapprove the plan. And again, it really should be nothing more than administrative and updating it to where we are now that it was approved at the town meeting and that sort of thing. So I just wanted to give everybody a heads up and we'll put it on the agenda for the next Selectmen's meeting to reapprove review that electric aggregation plan. And again, the idea here is to try to make this not a not a marathon agenda item, but to go over the plan real quick. If everybody looks at it ahead of time, we should be able to just reapprove it and then we can submit it to the Public Utility Commission and keep things momentum going forward to meet our possible goal of kicking off this early next year in spring, early spring of next year. So that's really the aim here, is to keep things moving forward. Anyway, that's, that's what I got.

Selectman Morin: Budget is not having a meeting this month. So that'll come back next month.

Conservation had a meeting last night, and as you heard tonight, they approved, they were coming in for the land purchase. There was some discussion on a possible warrant article related to wetland buffers, but that's there's a lot of work to go on that. And a couple of the members had stated that they've seen an increase at the boat access that we just rebuilt and everything. So that's working out well. People are starting to use it. That's all I have and appreciate it.

Chairman McGrath: Good. Okay. And I have nothing to report, other than you know, I'm glad that we're going to have a discussion about that town hall. And in September, I think that that's the right thing to do.

10. Remarks by Town Administrator

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Administrator Steve Malizia who said, I don't think I have anything this evening either.

11. Remarks by School Board

Chairman McGrath recognize School Board Member Gary Gasdia who said, No, we don't. We don't have much school. School is out, but a lot of work's going on. Some you can see. The parking lot over there is in full swing, being paved. There are classrooms being updated like normal. The science labs are being done. Sports teams are starting to practice. Bands practicing. But it's a slow year. We're in the best position we've been in in a while for hiring, but we still have a lot of open positions, especially in the non-teacher roles. So we still have a lot of paraprofessionals, lunch monitors, custodial staff really right down the line. So if anyone's interested in working for the District, go on our website. We're looking for great candidates, but we're in the best position we've been in for having a shortage in a long time. So thank you to the taxpayers because a lot of that came from the contracts they approved and things like that. So that's all I had.

12. Nonpublic Session

Motion by Selectman Morin at 8:31p.m., seconded by Selectman Dumont to go into non-public session under 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. (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 4-0.

Nonpublic Session was entered at 8:31 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 9:52 p.m.

Motions made after nonpublic session:

1. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to terminate Lieutenant Michael Mallen effective July 15, 2023, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
2. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to amend the motion made on May 9, 2023, to hire Steven Lubinger for the position of Firefighter/EMT in the Fire Department at the contracted rate of \$17.78 per hour (step 1), and change it to a contracted salary rate of \$22.43 per hour (step 3), as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
3. Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to hire Robert Soares for the position of Dispatcher in the Fire Department at the contracted salary of \$19.36 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighters Local #3154, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.

4. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Dumont to hire Cole Lodi, James Sheldon, Gavyn Torres for the position of Firefighter/EMT in the Fire Department at the contacted salary of \$18.14 per hour (step 1). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighters Local #3254, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
5. Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to hire Joseph Walker for the position of Firefighter/EMT in the Fire Department at the contracted salary of \$22.43 per hour (step 3). This assignment will be a non-exempt position in accordance with the International Association of Firefighters Local #3154, as recommended by the Fire Chief. Carried 4-0.
7. Selectman Guessferd made a motion to adjourn at 9:56pm. This was seconded by Selectman Morin. Carried 4-0.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:56 p.m. by Selectman Morin seconded by Selectman Guessferd. Carried 4-0.

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

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman

Dave Morin, Vice Chairman

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Dillon Dumont, Selectman

ABSENT

Kara Roy, Selectman