

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the August 22, 2023 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairman McGrath the meeting of August 22, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by School Board member Gary Gasdia
3. ATTENDANCE

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

Selectman Roy joined the meeting remotely from her residence.

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia, Town Administrator; Elvis Dhima, Town Engineer; Jay Twardosky, Public Works Director; Scott Tice, Fire Chief; Gary Gasdia, School Board member; Jill Laffin, Executive Assistant

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Heidi Jacoby, 94 Gowing Road

My name is Heidi Jacoby. I live at 94 Gowing Road in Hudson. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. I just have a few things I would like to bring to your attention this evening. Chairman McGrath interjected saying, Wait. Before you get into your monologue here, five minutes of speaking time. To which Ms. Jacoby replied Yeah, it shouldn't take that long.

Ms. Jakoby then said, As a citizen who has been following the progress of the Target Flow Center as it is now being called, I urge this Board and the Planning Board to educate themselves on the definition of a Flow Center. This is a concept Target has had in development for years, yet this was not discussed when Target became the new occupant of the Green Meadow property. The Flow Center is different from the use which was presented and approved. This new Flow Center, in my opinion, would require a new traffic study.

Recently, some members of our community reached out to me about concerns they have concerning the most recent RFQ. Upon reading and reflecting on the RFQ process for the town, I have sought answers and want to share my thoughts with the Board. The concerns raised to me regard the Solar Farm RFQ. I began by calling the number on the RFQ document on Monday and was transferred to Elvis Dhima's voicemail. I left a message stating I needed some more information about the RFQ, and I have still not received a call back. In the case of the Solar Farm RFQ, first and foremost, the size of the property needed to the size of the property needed to be included on the RFQ. After speaking to a colleague in the field, they indicated that they would not consider a solar farm RFQ, without the acreage and the wattage hoped for with minor research, this information could have easily been provided prior to publishing the RFQ. My concern as I review the RFQ process for the Town of Hudson is that some of the RFQs recently and more specifically the one for the Solar Farm is missing some simple details. These RFQs are meant to entice bids. The town needs to make the process as simple as possible by giving the vendors as many details as the town can provide to ensure an even more transparent RFQ process. I would ask you to consider publishing the list of specific vendors the RFQ is sent to be included on the town website for easy access. I believe the Town of Hudson needs to strive for a higher quality RFQ that includes clearer expectations and additional details.

Also, just a reminder, as I look at your agenda today, the Environmental Protection Agency was the original agency who ultimately stopped the Hudson Boulevard Circumferential Highway from being developed

years ago with the number of people who spoke at a previous meeting about not spending any town funds on this project. I would encourage this board to choose not to participate in the NHDOT Feasibility Study, which I know is on your agenda this evening.

And Chairman McGrath, I have sent you several emails requesting a time to have a conversation. Please let me know if you have received my request or if there is a better way to contact you. I look forward to speaking with you about our shared values and the future of Hudson. Thank you. Chairman McGrath asked, are you done? To which Ms. Jakoby replied yes, thank you.

Chairman McGrath then asked, anyone else in the audience? To which there were no other residents present for Public Input. The Chairman then recognized Selectman Morin who said, I just think we need to clarify the status of that solar farm so we can end any questions, because we're a long way off before we're even doing anything that got talked about. Do you want to address that? Selectman Guessferd then said don't really have much to say at this point. Sustainability really didn't address it much last night, but I think it's important for us to get some more details on the RFQ. I think we probably should be talking.

At this point Town Engineer Elvis Dhima was recognized by the Chairman and said, Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, everyone. Chairman McGrath asked, do you really feel compelled to address at public input? Mr. Dhima replied, no, but I think it's good to understand what the process because it seems to be a lot of misinformation out there to what's really going on. So what we're trying to do right now is we're trying to get a list of people that are qualified to do this kind of work. Once we get the list of vendors that can do this work, then we're going to start sharing detailed information about the landfill. You know, we're not going to get into what's available. They need to figure that out. So we're going to provide what we use for power. We're going to provide to what the School uses for power. They've already provided the information to us. We're going to provide details about the landfill closure, details about documentations, limitations, topography. And based on that, then they're going to come back through an interview process that was basically set up by the Board of Selectmen through the committee to provide basically an idea to what we're going to get. Based on that, we come back to the Board of Selectmen. They pick two who they think is best and then we start the process. No one really knows what we're really going to get into it as they start designing this. So people are under the impression we're going to get a proposal, they're going to know exactly what we're going to put out there. That's not the case. This is a little different. What we're following is a an LPA project process, which is similar to what the feds and the state basically chooses, which is you pick the firm first, which you think is best, and then you develop a scope of work and fee. That's what we're doing. So the information that they're mentioning will be provided after a list of short vendors has been picked out of this. There's a lot of people out there trying to do this. We can get people probably doing rooftops for residential. We're trying to look for a developer that's going to put a multi-million dollar capital at their own cost here. This is completely different. So the process we have in place is the right process of doing it. I think people get a little bit ahead of themselves. I think they're getting a little confused with requests for qualifications versus a request for bids. Two different things. And that's basically it in a nutshell. Does any of you have any questions? Does it make any sense? I don't feel comfortable anyone reaching out to anyone as far as town residents go, it clearly states on the invitation that's out there, if you have any questions, reach out to the Town Engineer. It's that simple. You don't need to play third party; I got a call...I got.... we're not getting into that. Everything goes through Town. Staff.

Mr. Dhima went on to say, what else? As far as providing certain information to vendors, it's very important to let everyone know that everyone is going to get the same amount of information at the time when they get. We can't just give one person one piece of information and not give it to another one. That's why it's important that everything goes through Town Staff If you get a call and someone is interested, send them to me. You don't need to be part of this. This is being run by the Town and a Committee set up by the Board of Selectmen who's going to pick that particular firm that's going to do the work. You don't need, you don't need to get in the middle of this. It's that simple. Does that make sense? Do you have any follow up questions?

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said So, Mr. Dhima, I, I see where we're going here. I...what's interesting is in my world of business, when you use the word, when you use the term RFQ, it usually

means request for quote. And it has a little bit of a different connotation, right, of actually getting a quote in. Whereas what we're saying here is it's a request for qualifications. We typically would call that like a request for information or RFI in my world, my my business world. So I guess I think I just want to make sure that that's clear to folks.

Mr. Dhima replied saying yeah, it's clear on the invitation. It's clearly states it's qualification. I've had over 20 inquiries and they seem pretty clear to what they need to do. I think there's going to be a lot of submittals and I think the Committee is going to basically create a short list of who they think is best because we're not going to do 10 or 20. We're going to pick top five. The invitation says top three. But I think if we get a lot of them, we should probably entertain maybe as much as three or 4 or 5. I was talking to Mr. Malizia today. We'll have to see if we need to make any adjustments. But that's about it. That's the first step. Then we're going to go into the second step. And then the third step, which would be the final step by the Board of Selectmen, picking who we think is best for this. And then we're going to develop to what actually can be done out there, because there's a lot of variables, the topography, the limitation on the landfill, the state buying into this, the state giving us the alteration of terrain permit that goes with this project. There's a lot of variables and we're going to start developing those as we get into it. And the process could be as little as 12 months. It could be as much as 18 months. We don't know. Once we get into it and we basically make a commitment to a firm that's going to basically do this for us, we'll figure those things out as we go. And then if all works out and I don't know if it will or not, then the Board of Selectmen is going to commit to a lease or an agreement to buy this energy, you know, for a period of 25 or 30 years. So we haven't even started yet. So when I get emails about we need to talk about this project, we don't have a project yet. We have an idea to what we think might happen, but we don't have that in yet. So that's it in a nutshell. I think some people are just getting maybe too excited about this and I get it. It's an exciting project. It's a feel good project, but we need to do our job first to make sure we're on the same page.

Selectman Guessferd replied, I understand. The only thing I would say is I have been talking with folks from the Sustainability Committee and I would ask that that they that, that we be involved in that the Sustainability Committee, there's some expertise there that you might be able to draw from. Mr. Dhima replied, but we're not quite there yet. Chairman McGrath interjected saying, I don't think that that's so. Selectman Guessferd responded, no? To which Chairman McGrath replied no, I don't. And and I'd be careful about involving committees that we haven't vetted their credentials. We don't know what their credentials are and they could possibly be not have the credentials that would be necessary to assist with something like that. So people, you know, they're jumping. It's this happened a long time ago on one of the TV programs with jumping the shark or trying to trying to get ahead of things before it even happens. And this isn't happening. And it's something that Mr. Dhima brought before us. I think you were here.

At the last meeting. And had a discussion about it. But all of a sudden, all of these people are getting you know, they think that it's a done deal. It's certainly not. And it's not it's not. Selectman Guessferd replied I don't think they think it's a done deal. Chairman McGrath replied well, they think that we're getting a solar farm on the landfill site. That's you know, I haven't voted for that. We haven't voted for that. Selectman Guessferd replied, none of us have for that. Chairman McGrath went on to say so, you know, it's...We need to....people are getting too excited over this. And by excited, I don't mean happy.

Selectman Morin then said and the other the other thing that's got to be looked at is the amount of time it's going to take because we have to because it's on the landfill and it's capped, it's got to get all the permit. This could be five years down the road. And we're just starting. So, you know, there's a lot to do before we even get to that point. Selectman Guessferd replied, yeah, okay. That's fair point. Chairman McGrath added and that landfill, I was probably from this Board, I was probably the only one that has taken a tour of that when they capped it. And the information that I got and it was somebody from the state that came down to give us a tour of it, it was pretty scary stuff about how it has to be handled. And if it gets penetrated, then we're going to have to replace it and it's in the millions of dollars. So it's not anything to play with and it's not anything to be, you know, like thinking about putting solar panels on it. And if it penetrates the the lining in any way, then we're going to be in a world of hurt. Selectman Guessferd replied

yeah, absolutely. Chairman McGrath said so, you know, people are getting they're getting ahead of themselves with this.

Mr. Dhima then said we need to make sure this is this makes sense for us and it's doable. And there is some limitations at the field. Also, you have to understand, just because you have 20 acres doesn't mean you're going to utilize 20 acres, especially if you have areas, you know, one, to three slope. Now, that's when the innovation comes in place. Some people can work with 10%, some with 15, some from 20. But we all know most of them can't work with 30% slopes, things of that sort. We have to look into areas that are beyond the cap, you know, So we have a fenced area there that represents a capped line where there's any area that can be utilized beyond that, I think so. And that information will be provided to them. But I can tell you, we're not going to put solar panels when they're doing the shooting range for the fire, I mean, for the Police Department and maybe the Fire Department. I don't know. I'm kidding. But, you know. You know what I mean? We're going to maximize as much as we can, but I can tell you, we're not going to put solar panels probably where we're going to think we might put a you know, recycling center there that we filed a grant for with with the feds. So those are the information is going to be provided if we provide the same information to everyone. Now, everyone is subject to the same information. It's fair game and they can look at the same thing. And during the interview process, we're going to get into what they can and cannot provide. What they think can be done and cannot be done.

Mr. Dhima continued saying, I can also tell you that I'm planning to bring in the vendors that are going to be short listed to the site. I think it's only fair for them to look at the site and understand what they're getting into. You can only get so much for a visual. They're more than welcome to get their drones to get an overall picture if they need to. So there's a lot to it. We haven't like, I wish I can tell you, like we're almost we haven't even started yet. So we're doing this the best way we think it's possible by slowly getting into it and understanding what we're getting into it and providing these vendors with the information they need, when time comes. To put this up front, it would have been overwhelming for all of us. So let's figure out who can do this work and make sure that they have done this on over a landfill in the past from a municipality similar to us around here, because we don't need someone that's done this in Chernobyl that doesn't do us any good and then we'll go from there. So we have the proper process we're going to follow, and I don't know what else to say. I think everyone just needs to give us a little bit of time to get through this as far as sharing that information as we work through the process, absolutely. I don't have a problem with that. But we need to do a job first and then make sure that we're sharing that information with everyone. We're all trying to do the right thing here, trying to get on this if there's a project. That's all. Thank you. Selectman Guessferd replied thanks for explaining that. Mr. Dhima replied I hope that helps. I know it's a lot.

Selectman Roy spoke up saying, I have a question for Elvis. Chairman McGrath replied okay. Go ahead. Selectman Roy then said, hey, Elvis, did you receive a voice mail from Ms. Jakoby? Mr. Dhima replied I did. Selectman Roy then asked and did you return that voicemail? Mr. Dhima replied no, I didn't. Selectman Roy replied okay. Mr. Dhima then said because I cannot get involved with residents trying to get information to third parties regarding this. This is not how we handle things. If anyone has a question, and if Heidi Jakoby....Selectman Roy interjected saying but she had a question. Mr. Dhima replied but she can't but she can't answer that to a vendor, if she has anything, she can send the vendor the information to where that question can be answered. I don't have a problem with that. But we're not paying third parties. Selectman Roy replied, you could have called her and told her that. Mr. Dhima replied okay. But that's your, that is your take on it. It's fine.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said Selectman Roy, The Engineer called me, told me it, and I listened to the call. And I have been in contact with Mrs. Jakoby, and I told Elvis not to call her back because I will be talking with her. It is not Elvis' fault. It is mine. He was directed not to because I agree with him. We shouldn't have residents doing our our work and trying to get information that should be through the town. And that's the end of the conversation. Selectman Roy replied, well, somebody could have told I mean, Elvis could have told her that, I guess. But that's fine. Selectman Morin replied, but like I just said, I told Elvis not to call her back, that I was in contact with her because she's asked to talk to me and I would talk to her at that time. Selectman Roy replied okay. Chairman McGrath then said, okay. Thank you. Thank you, Elvis. Okay, so no other public input.

5. RECOGNITIONS, NOMINATIONS & APPOINTMENTS

Chairman McGrath addressed the room stating, Move on to recognition. 20 Years of Service. Amy McMullen from the Assessing Department. She's unable to be here this evening, but we wanted to recognize Amy for all that she has done. Who recently had her 20 year anniversary with the Assessing Department. Thank you, Amy, for your 20 years of dedicated service to the Town of Hudson.

6. CONSENT ITEMS

Chairman McGrath said, Next up on the agenda, consent items. And there's been one item added to the consent. I have have a copy of it on the desk here Assessing item 6A1 institutional exemptions was added to the agenda on Monday. The chief assessor has reviewed the applications and associated documents for the for those two exemptions. And does anybody else have anything that have they seen that?

Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to approve Consent Items A, B, C, D, E, & F. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

6A-1 - Assessing Items - Institutional Exemptions: American Legion Post #48, Map 182, lot 30 & 22; Alvirne School Trustees, map 147, lot 27

A. Water/Sewer Items

Sewer Abatements: S-UTL-24-01 5 Parkhurst Drive; S-UTL-24-02 15 Shoreline Drive; S-UTL-20-03 49 Bear Path Lane

B. Licenses & Permits & Policies

1) Raffle Permit - Friends of Benson Park

C. Donations - none

D. Acceptance of Minutes

1) Minutes of August 08, 2023

F. Calendar

08/23	7:00	Planning Board	Buxton Meeting Room
08/24	7:00	Zoning Board	Buxton Meeting Room
09/04	Labor Day - Town Offices Closed		-----
09/05	7:00	Town Hall Relocation Public Meeting	Community Center
09/06	7:00	Budget Committee	Buxton Meeting Room
09/11	6:30	9/11 Observance	Benson Park
09/11	7:00	Sustainability Committee	Buxton Meeting Room
09/11	7:00	Cable Utility Committee	HCTV Access Center
09/12	7:00	Board of Selectmen	BOS Meeting Room

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Votes taken after Nonpublic Session on August 08, 2023

1. Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to promote Eric Dionne to the position of Public Works Sewer/Drain Supervisor, with a salary of \$107,567, step 5, of the Hudson Supervisors Association contract. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

2. Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to promote Dan Clarke Jr. to the position of Street Foreman, with a starting salary of \$40.11, grade XVI, step 9, of the Hudson Public Works Employee Association contract, effective August 13, 2023. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.
3. Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to hire Verlaine Swazelle Doyle as a full time Police Officers, with a starting rate of \$27.98, step 1, in accordance with the Hudson Police Employee Association contract. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.
4. Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to allow IT Director John Beike to buy back 250 hours of earned time. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.
5. Selectman Morin made a motion to adjourn at 10:18p.m. this was seconded by Selectman Guessferd. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

B. Joint Meeting with the School Board - Chairman - Decision

The Town Administrator stated we're just confirming that we had a discussion for September 28th. Chairman McGrath confirmed with Chair Whiting of the School Board. Chairman McGrath replied well, Well, I have I haven't talked to her yet, so. Mr. Malizia replied it's my understanding it's confirmed. Mr. Gasdia replied it's confirmed for the 28th. The Town Administrator reiterated it's the 28th at the Community Center. So that's September 28th at the Community Center. Chairman McGrath replied The only thing that we need to decide on is the time. The Town Administrator replied we'll have to look at last year. I thought we got there early, I think 6:00 somewhere, maybe a little earlier. Mr. Gasdia replied yeah, we got we got there early. And some of the feedback from the early portion was that it was too early for for folks. And so since we're not doing the whole thing, we could probably go a little bit later than, than we started last year since I don't I would imagine this would be a lot less than less time commitment than last year was.

Chairman McGrath replied so 6:30 or 7:00. Does anybody have any objections to 6:30? No. Okay, let's plan on 6:30 p.m.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Line Striping Bids - Public Works

Chairman McGrath recognized Public Works Director Jay Twardosky. Mr. Twardosky explained, Good evening. So you with the extra money that was added to the line striping budget warranted going out to bid for line striping this year and we sent the bid packet to the four contractors that are in the area from Barre, Vermont down to Rockland, Mass. Everywhere in between. We advertised in the Union Leader. We put it on the town's website. We got three bids in on time and all three of those bids were way above our budget. So I'm motioning to reject the current bids and go out for a bid to try and get a price that's more in line with our with the budget we have.

Chairman McGrath asked anybody have any questions? Selectman Guessferd was recognized and asked So do we do we believe that if we do that, that we are going to get lower bids? I mean, or did we under budget this? Mr. Twardosky replied no I don't believe it's under budgeted. Of course, costs always escalate. I think we're just, I got to finish going through the existing bid packet and fine tune a couple of things. Get it back out to everybody. Actually there's one more contractor up in Westbrook, Maine that

we're going to directly send it to also to see if they want to entertain a bid. But I believe that we can get a better price than what we got. Selectman Guessferd asked so do you think the bid was or the RFQ was or the RF RFP was a little ambiguous or provided maybe maybe made a feeling to them that it was more than it was or I think I think it looked like it was more than it was. Mr. Twardosky replied I think we got we're going to be a little more specific on on it.

Chairman McGrath asked what about the, the one that was late? The Town Administrator replied so they didn't comply with the RFP requirements. We talked to our Attorney and they said you can't accept it. So hopefully they'll come back on a timely basis and give us a solid bid. Chairman McGrath asked but is that the Industrial Traffic amount? Mr. Twardosky replied correct. Chairman McGrath replied so that's substantially lower than the other bids that we received. Okay. That was my question. Anybody else have anything? Seeing no further questions, Selectman Dumont made a motion, seconded by Selectman Guessferd to reject the current bids and go out to competitive bid again. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

B. Southern Portion of Circumferential Highway (Lowell Road to Route 111) State Ten Year Traffic Study Feasibility Study - Engineering

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Engineer Elvis Dhima. Mr. Dhima began by saying, Thank you, Chairman McGrath. Good evening, everyone. As you can recall, about a year ago the State decided to put this feasibility study on the Ten Year Plan. The understanding at the time was that this was going to be 100% covered by the State. As they get into the weeds and working through the process, we've been informed that their understanding is that this is not any different than any other Ten Year Plan project that's been going through the town, similar to the Lowell Road widening, which requires a 20% match. That's been clearly identified by the State we need a commitment by the Town. They've been they've been provided with information that we simply can't do that now because we're into a new fiscal year. So the only way for us to do it is through a warrant article in March of 2024. They understand that. And with that said, I'm here in front of you tonight to ask you if you wish to put this as a warrant article in March or just simply say no. With that said, I'm ready to take any questions.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and asked does this only study the portion of what was known as the Circumferential Highway, or does it is it a feasibility study for traffic in that area in general? Mr. Dhima replied it is basically a feasibility study that's going to do traffic, environmental, and the cost related to the segment from Lowell to 111, not the entire segment, which is from Lowell Road over the river back to Route 3 or Nashua. So this is simply the southern leg they call it, which is 111 to Lowell Road. That is the only segment that the DOT has right of way right now dedicated for this project. The rest of the segment from 111 to 102, 102 to the river and beyond the river in Litchfield side, it's not there. So the only segment we're talking about is the feasibility study related to Lowell to 111. The idea is to get the traffic off the side streets and dedicate them through this corridor to get them basically for what are they trying to go, which is 93, 111, directly to Route 3.

We are trying, you know, to look for other ways of funding this, but there's nothing available as of now. Doesn't mean we're not going to continue to try but you know, with the state. But as of now, it appears that they need some kind of commitment from us to basically say, are you willing to provide a match? Yes or no. If we don't, I think this goes away. It gets off the ten year plan, the \$800,000 committed to this, probably go to another project. And I'm not sure what's going to happen after this. I don't know if it just stays on or they just get rid of it altogether and start unloading maybe the right of way they have. I have no idea. We don't know. We do not know. But that's kind of where we at. So what is the wish of the Board?

Chairman McGrath said, I have a question for you. First, the original Circumferential Highway didn't that not only went over into Nashua, but it also extended into Merrimack over near, I think it's called is Harris Pond Development. That was the condominiums behind it, and it's right on the Merrimack town line. Mr. Dhima replied I'm not sure what I do know that it was going to do basically a full loop from Route 3 to

Hudson over the river to 111, to 102 to Litchfield over the river and then back into Nashua again. It could have been close to the Merrimack Nashua line, I'm not sure. But somewhere along those lines, the idea was to basically provide some kind of alternative. But yeah, you could be right. I think. Chairman McGrath replied, I think it was. And I think that the condominium development wasn't quite done, but they were talking about that and that they put it right in line for the the Circumferential Highway. So it's that was the I think that that was the original intent of Circumferential. Mr. Dhima replied my personal opinion about the Circumferential Highway is that it will probably never happen because it's just simply too expensive to go over the river. So I think that's why the Town kind of narrowed down to what the scope of this would be in the past to basically just simply pursuing relief for the Hudson side, which is basically 111 to 3A. That's the main challenge we have out there. Route 111 coming in through Lowell Road, get over the river. And that's the only thing that can really entertain because that's the only portion they have for right of way. You do not have right of way from 111 to 102.

Chairman McGrath asked it is it going to be just one way only? Like going from from the Sagamore Bridge across, but not reverse of that? Mr. Dhima replied it's a two way street. It's a two way street. What they envision is Albuquerque (in Litchfield) layout, two way street, one lane on each direction, 30, 35 miles an hour with probably a ten foot multi use path for recreational use alongside of it. And they did not, from what I can tell, they did not envision any bridges over this that would be at grade basically intersections on the side streets that we have. That is what we have been thinking of. And they there's not going to be a highway. They don't have the money. There's no money for that. Chairman McGrath asked no tollbooth? Mr. Dhima replied no tollbooths. Chairman McGrath replied because that's the last one that they were talking about it was a full highway, double barrel they call it. two lanes on each side. This is basically more like a regular road. Chairman McGrath asked like a residential road? Okay. Mr. Dhima replied it's simply a very long one, connecting Lowell to 111. Chairman McGrath replied, but I mean, I think that not that it's....people are not going to be happy with it if they're not going to be happy with a roadway going through. But it's less intrusive than a highway going through. And so it may be a little bit more acceptable. I don't know that. But. Mr. Dhima replied, and I think they'll be the only thing that might even even be entertained as construction cost feasibility, because I don't think they'll be able to even entertain anything beyond that. Again, this particular piece we're talking about right now is simply the feasibility, which is basically, is this even feasible? We can go through the exercise and find once and for all that maybe it is feasible and maybe it's not. And again, they'll look at all the pieces. This will also probably include, you know, doing some kind of preliminary layout about what it will look like, maybe a 25% design on it, but does not does not include like full design of this corridor. If you want to call it that, It's just simply like, does this still make sense? Obviously, this was in the books in the 60s. Here we are 60 years later. Does it still make sense, yes or no? And that's what they'll be looking at through this. If we commit to it, if we don't commit to it, I don't know what they're going to do. They'll probably take it off the books, as I said.

Chairman McGrath asked, anyone else have any questions? Selectman Dumont was recognized and said I don't really have a question but more of a statement, I guess, I guess, that everybody in town has been asking for a solution to traffic. There's no other option that's been brought up. The thought to give it to the voters to see if they want to decide if it's even feasible, it sounds like the right path to me, so.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said yeah, I'm kind of on that same road. I mean, remember a year ago? I think it was over a year ago when we were asked if we wanted to submit a letter of support, We decided at the time not to, and it doesn't mean that we didn't support it one way or the other, but it was just us making that decision. And in my mind we were not the ones qualified necessarily to make that decision. Now there's an opportunity for the citizens of this town to weigh in. And we've had when we did the master plan study, one of the topics was the Circumferential Highway. There was divided support for and against it. So in my mind, this is the opportunity for the town to set up and say, do we want this or not? And if the citizens vote no, then then that's the will of the people. And if they vote yes, the same. That's my thought.

Chairman McGrath asked, Selectman Morin, do you have anything? Selectman Morin replied, no, I have the master plan right in front of me. And I also have the information of the traffic study that supported that the intersections would lose traffic. And what gets me is this is what the people wanted, the master plan. People wanted the traffic study. They got it. This is the information that's coming out of it that we should at

least look at it. And I got to say, somebody 70 years ago saw we were going to be in the spot that we are in today, 70 years ago, and we're still dealing with it. And before Green Meadow and all this construction, what was our biggest topic? Traffic. So I think we should put it to the voters and let them decide.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said Yeah, I just you know, I am very much an advocate of the voters having a choice. So I guess we could go there, although I would point out that the community has not had the stomach for this project in the 70 years that it's since it's been it's been introduced. So I mean, it goes where it goes. But um, yeah, I am a firm believer in letting people have the voice.

Selectman Morin made a motion to recommend raising the required funds through a warrant article in March of 2024. Selectman Morin then said, I'm sorry, there's no price attached to that motion. Mr. Dhima replied it would be for 1,275,000. Selectman Dumont said no \$200,000. The Town Administrator said we'll give you a warrant article when get to do the warrant. Right now we need to just let DOT know we're going to do that. You'll get the formal article as we do the budget because. Selectman Morin replied okay so this is correct. There doesn't need to a? Got it. The Town Administrator replied you'll vote again when you get to the warrant. The motion was seconded by Selectman Dumont. Chairman McGrath then said, So I'm just going to make a comment. First of all, I think that this is being, I think that the term Circumferential Highway is a misnomer. I think that, you know, if it's a two lane road, it's more like a residential road that has a lot of traffic on it. So people can, you know, can judge it based on really what it is. It's not it's not a highway. It's a two lane road. And I was always, always from the moment I heard when I first got on the Planning Board a number of years ago, Lenny Smith, who this fire station is named after, was all excited telling me about the Circumferential Highway. That was my first introduction to that. I was opposed to it then. I've been opposed to it. This makes it a little bit more acceptable that it's a two lane road and it's not a highway. There aren't going to be toll booths. But I do think that the voters ought to be able to make the decision for themselves because they, a lot of them sit in that traffic. Every day, multiple times a day. So I think that I think that we in our duty, we need to put it before the voters and let them decide. So so I'll be voting in the affirmative for this for the first time. Seeing no further discussion a roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0. Mr. Dhima replied, thank you, Have a great night. To which Chairman McGrath replied thank you, Elvis. Mr. Dhima then said I'm sure you'll be happy at the commitment. More work for them. Thank you. Have a good night.

C. Request to Explore Website Donation Button - Benson Park Committee

Chairman McGrath recognized Jack Madden, Chairman of the Benson Park Committee. Mr. Madden began by saying, Good evening, Ms. Chairman. In I think it was last winter, Selectman Morin at the time was the selectman liaison, and he came to the Committee asking if the Committee could develop some sources of revenue to go toward the park. So it took us several months. We came up with four different alternatives. The alternatives in included the first one, which is the one that I'm requesting, and that is the use of a fundraiser button on the Town's website. I'll explain that a little bit more. The second one was sale of Benson Park calendar or note cards with different Benson Park scenes on it. The third was modifying the reservation form that we had for people to use the park at a group of 15 to 50, allow it to reserve a specific spot for a fee. And then the fourth one was a food truck event, something similar to which had been held in years past at Holman Stadium, where we would have all different food trucks from different vendors come in and there'd be some mechanism by which we would raise funds from that.

Items two, three and four all require approval of the State based upon the deed by which the State sold or I guess sold it to the Town as a park. So that's our governing document. The first item that we were requesting permission to explore the mechanics of how to do it are it's the use of a donation button on the town website whenever you make a payment.

Now, all of you have seen this kind of thing. When you make a donation \$100 to a particular charity online, they say, Oh, help divert the defray the cost of the credit card by adding \$3.50 onto there. So boom, you click the button and it adds \$3.50. So that's kind of like the concept we're saying is whenever anybody goes to the website where they pay their dog fee registration for the car, pay their taxes, anything where the

individual is paying the town, something, we just have a series of buttons off to one side and \$25, \$50, \$100 and other, so that if somebody wanted to make a donation toward Benson's Park for purchasing items for maintenance of the park and so forth, that they could do that.

So earlier in the spring, I provided this information to the town manager, Mr. Malizia. He ran it by the lawyer and the lawyer says, Yeah, this is feasible to do. So what I'm now doing is coming to the Selectmen and requesting your permission to look into with the various town departments of what we would have to do in order to make this happen. Once we've done that, we would then come back and say, okay, this is what we have to do, this is what what different departments would have to do, what it might cost, and then, then request your permission to actually move forward and execute establishment of the donation button.

Chairman McGrath asked, anyone have any questions? She then replied I do. I have a question. Mr. Madden replied yes, ma'am. Chairman McGrath asked how many people approach you and want to donate to Benson's? Do you get requests like that or? Mr. Madden replied we don't normally get a directed request for donation. We we have had for the park in general a couple of times in the last year. We more frequently have people who want to donate money for the dog park. And that's partially because there's a little box out there at the dog park where, you know, people put in donations and that helps cover the cost of cutting the grass. And, you know, the volunteer does it. He has to buy a new lawn mower blade a couple of times a year because he winds up trying to mow the rocks that are in the dog park. But, you know, we don't get a lot of people pounding down the doors, donating money. Chairman McGrath replied I was just curious.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said I understand if if they're going to pay their car registration, they can hit the button because there's a fee. What if somebody wants to donate without doing other town business is there still going to be a fee? The Town Administrator replied they can send a check in. they can bring money in. Selectman Morin replied with your button...The Town Administrator replied that's just another supplement to what people can already do now. It just makes it easier for them. Mr. Madden replied I mean, we can explore that particular page just donate to Benson's Park. Selectman Morin replied that was my concern if somebody wants to donate with their credit card, but then they're going to get charged a fee on top of it where if they're already doing business, they're going to pay the fee anyway. That's not an issue. Mr. Madden replied right, right. The Town Administrator added that's part of the feasibility of when you look at the practicality of things.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and said no, I just want to say I thought it was a great idea. Obviously, being a part of the Committee the past couple of times has been talked about so I think that it should be explored. And one of the things that I actually, as you were just talking about, that I thought up is the option of when someone makes a payment just for them to "round up" something to look in if it's only a couple of dollars here and there. But if everybody's doing it, they might be more apt to do that instead of just looking to donate. But just an idea. Selectman Guessferd commented like a Round Up America thing. Selectman Dumont replied yeah, round up for Benson Park or whatever. If your bill is 57 bucks, you can round up to \$60. You can collect a little bit here and there, but you can look into the donate button doing the separate page. But either way, I think it's a good idea. Mr. Madden replied thank you.

Chairman McGrath then said okay, so is there a motion to authorize the Benson Park Committee... Selectman Roy interjected from the phone saying so, Madam Chair, if I could. Chairman McGrath replied, sorry, I forgot about you Selectman Roy. Selectman Roy then said I actually think it's a great idea too. I also think that maybe we eventually start to pursue some of the other things where we have sort of community events like a like a food truck event or something like that. I know there's more hoops to go through for that, but maybe that's something we can think about doing in the future. Mr. Madden replied yes, ma'am. Our thought was let's get the donation button up and running, see how it goes. And then the next step would be to explore the others and what the Town's Board of Selectmen would have to request of New York State DOT for permission to do them. And that's, as you said, there's a few more hoops that have to go through for that one. Selectman Roy replied yeah, but I think it's a gem. I think the park is a gem and I think that we can exploit it for, for the community, for the benefit of the community and have have a

number of events there. So I like where we're going with this. It's a good start. So thank you. Mr. Madden replied Okay. Thank you, Miss Selectman Roy.

Chairman McGrath asked, so anyone wish to make a motion to authorize the Benson Park Committee to research the practical work required to place a Benson Park donation button on the town website. Selectmen Dumont made this motion and Selectman Morin seconded it. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

D. July 2023 Revenues & Expenditures

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Administrator Steve Malizia. The Town Administrator began by saying Not much to report given it's the first month of the year and we're still being set up, such as purchase orders for some of the various things we do. So really being pretty one month into the year, there's really nothing trend wise, though I will say interest continues to perform well. Our bank interest, we're doing almost \$70,000 this past month, which is fantastic. Our budget for the year was \$25,000. So just to put that into perspective, that helps to certainly contribute to the Town's surplus. It's hopefully excess revenue if it keeps going. But right now it's really pretty early to make any other judgments about where we are budget wise. So we are thankful that we got a budget. So that's that's key.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said we haven't heard from the Trustees of the Trust Fund in a long time. We probably should get them in. Just a review of what we have and where things are at. Selectman Guessferd added how we're managing it. Selectman Morin added we could do that for the next meeting. The Town Administrator replied I have no idea if they're available, but we can ask them.

9. Board Liaison Reports/Other Remarks by Selectmen

Selectman Roy: Yeah. The only thing I have is I was happy to hear from Mr. Malizia that the work on Liberty Field is well underway. And by the spring, we should have, we should have a usable field back there. So I think that's some good news for the Town. Chairman McGrath asked, is that it? To which Selectman Roy replied, that's it.

Selectman Dumont: Not too much. Just that Benson Park cleanup was this past Saturday. The next one is on the 16th of September. Obviously always looking for people to come down. The Friends of Benson are holding a family fun day on the ninth. It'll be all day long, so I'd encourage everybody to come out and take use of it and enjoy the day.

Selectman Guessferd: Okay. Planning Board meeting tomorrow night. Two of the plans we're looking at. We've been looking at the 84 Lumber over on Sullivan Road. We may or may not be making a decision tomorrow night on that. There is a second one that's received some attention. There's been a there's a plan or application for a change in use down on South Lowell. Well, actually, I don't know if it's South Lowell Road or River Road. It's but you know where the veterinarian used to be and they moved over to the other side. Chairman McGrath replied that's not River Road. That's Lowell Road. Selectman Guessferd replied okay. Because it goes down to Dracut, it right at Dracut Road. It switches over. Chairman McGrath replied at the Dracut Road intersection it changes. Selectman Guessferd went on to say, And there's a there's a vape shop that is looking to apply there that has applied there, to it's a change of use from from veterinarian to veterinarian services to retail. So there's been some concern about it. The Board's going to see it again tomorrow night. So we'll see where that ends up going on that. Let's see. Rec - soccer is just getting started. We're now getting into the fall. Fall sports are coming up soon. So they're going to be running. The 550 kids are registered in the soccer. Well, there's going to be a

unified soccer league again for the second year in a row. It was successful last year. So that's a good thing. It's really a very good thing. Adult softball, women's ended, men's are going to be in a couple more weeks. They'll be finished up summer programs. The program was just an amazing success this summer. They closed out the year with a field trip to Canobie Lake. They did also, I think they had a Red Sox game. I saw a couple pictures from that. But it was a it was a very good and I think I said before they had record attendance this year in the in the rec league.

Senior programs as a field trip. This Thursday, they're going to go out to the Isles of Shoals and lunch at Warren's in Maine. So and then they're working diligently on the rest of the fall lineup for the Rec program.

Sustainability met last night. Like I said, there was there wasn't much talk about the solar farm, but there there's the big the big thing with them is this is waiting for the approval of the of the Electric Aggregation Plan. It sits with the Utilities Commission right now. So it should be approved by the time we have our workshop with them. And we can then decide how we're going to handle it moving forward.

Chairman McGrath then said question for you, Laurie, at the Senior Center, how is she doing? Selectman Guessferd replied you know, I don't have any updates on on her. Chairman McGrath replied, okay. I mean, I saw something that she's out sick, so I was just not curious about what the what the condition is. Selectman Guessferd replied sure. Just how is she? Yeah. I'll make an inquiry. Chairman McGrath replied Thank you.

Selectman Morin: Nothing tonight.

Chairman McGrath: Nothing for you. And I have nothing. Plus, I can't speak, so it's probably just as well.

10. Remarks by Town Administrator

Town Administrator Steve Malizia was recognized and said, Very brief. Not to steal Mr. Gasdia's thunder, but school starts on Monday, so be aware. Be aware. Traffic will change. There'll be students out there. There'll probably be some new drivers out there. So, everybody, just a word of advice Monday, pay attention. Be careful. The students are back Monday. Chairman McGrath then said, but plus the Police Department in the school at the Memorial School are changing the? The Town Administrator replied that would be at a public hearing which will be on the 12th and the 26th, I believe. So that's coming. But I just wanted to this was particularly timely. You'll probably repeat it, but it's timely just so people are aware that traffic patterns do change. Just be aware there's going to be a lot of young kids and again, new drivers, particularly in the area of Alvirne. You've been warned.

11. Remarks by School Board

School Board member Gary Gasdia was recognized and said, It's going to be shorter than it was because I don't have to say the school starts. Right. So a couple of things. So school is starting Monday, traffic patterns, all that good stuff. But things kicked off last week. Football practice, other sports were in session. Band camp was last week. Marching band was in the Londonderry parade. They were in, I believe, Allenstown this weekend. There's a whole bunch of back to school events coming up next week as well. So just for anyone out there with kids in school walks the calendar for picture day, curriculum, nights, all that stuff, hiring.

We're doing pretty good on teachers. We're about ten short, mainly in the middle school. The big thing is our Paras. We have 47 openings. We decided to convert 12 to full time vacancies. So hopefully that will attract some people. But if anyone is interested in being a para, we definitely need help there.

And then we'll end on a good note. The state found some extra money for us and they it's about \$740,000 and we had the choice of using it or sending it back to the taxpayers. We voted to just send it back. Chairman McGrath replied, oh, good for you. Mr. Gasdia continued saying So when it all flows through the tax rate, whatever the tax rate happens to be, it's \$0.15 less than it would have been had the state not found the \$740,000. Chairman McGrath replied well kudos to the School Department for doing that. Thank you. Thank you, Gary.

12. Nonpublic Session

Motion by Selectman Guessferd at 7:57 p.m., seconded by Selectman Dumont to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

Nonpublic Session was entered at 7:57 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 9:34 p.m.

Motions made after nonpublic session:

1. Selectman Guessferd made a motion, seconded by Selectman Morin to authorize the Director of Community Media to hire Kristen Parziale as an intern in the Hudson Community Television-Alvirne High School CTE Television Intern Program with a compensation rate of \$14.00 per hour. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.
2. Selectman Guessferd made a motion to adjourn at 9:34 a.m. this was seconded by Selectman Morin. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:34 p.m. by Selectman Guessferd seconded by Selectman Morin. A roll call vote was taken. Carried 5-0.

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

Marilyn McGrath, Chairman

Dave Morin, Vice Chairman

Kara Roy, Selectman

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Dillon Dumont, Selectman