

**HINESBURG SELECTBOARD MEETING DRAFT**

November 30, 2022

Attending the meeting; Merrily Lovell, Maggie Gordon, Dennis Place, Phil Pouech, Jen McCuin, Nick Baker, Eric Spivak, Diane Barber

Attending remotely; Mike Loner, Alex Weinhausen

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. via zoom.

Agenda Additions or Deletions

none

Public Comment

none

Selectboard Forum

Phil reminded us that he will be resigning as of Town Meeting Day.

Merrily said tomorrow there will be a meeting with Richmond about sharing police services.

Recreation Budget Presentation – Jen McCuin

Jen said the two main increases are youth sports and July 4<sup>th</sup>. Both are due to increased costs. Jen said NorthStar Fireworks notified her in October that the previously \$10,000 minimum is now \$12,000.

Rodney Putnam, member of the Recreation Commission is planning to organize a Calcutta as a fund raiser. Maggie asked how much a Calcutta usually makes. Jen said it depends on the number of ticket sales. Jen said the last one at Cedar Knoll between ticket sales and donations was close to \$8,000. In addition to raising some money it is a fun community night.

Phil said the fields are fantastic and asked how field maintenance is going. Jen said it going well and the work being done shows in the spring and fall when other fields are struggling and ours look great. Phil asked if youth and adult programs are back to normal. Jen said youth programs are really coming back but not so much for the adult due to lack of space. Phil also asked if there are any funds left from the original fund raising. Jen said there are and they will be used toward constructing dugouts.

Planning & Zoning Budget Presentation – Alex Weinhausen

Alex said the big change is in the salary line. There is a decrease in the special projects line.

Alex is projecting additional revenue due to Haystack Crossing.

Phil acknowledged the fact that Alex has been with Hinesburg for 20 or more years. He was speaking with other soon to be Representatives who said their towns have had a lot of turnovers which is disruptive.

Alex said in January he would like to talk with the Board about the Town Common when we have more information on the Fire Station. If the Town wants to do some work on the Common, we will need to put funds in the budget for that. Alex said Todd mentioned possible use of some ARPA funds.

35 Fire Department Budget – Chief Nick Baker

36 Nick reviewed a proposal for staffing increases. Current staffing is 2 full time fire fighter / EMT's , 1  
37 regular part time Chief and 31 non-regular part time members who are paid on call. They have been  
38 getting busier over the past few years and have a harder time recruiting.

39 Nick proposed two new staffing options. One option is to add 2 full time fire fighter / EMT employees at  
40 an increase of \$182,833. The second option is to add 1 full time fire fighter / EMT at an increase of  
41 \$91,441.

42 Phil asked about the call staff pay line on the budget increase from \$35,000 to \$75,000. Nick explained  
43 it a result of combining the EMS and Fire budgets, there is no real increase. Last year they did increase  
44 the hourly wage.

45 Phil asked about revenue from billing for ambulance service. Nick said only the transporting agency will  
46 get payment from insurance. The amount of money spent on EMS equipment and supplies used is  
47 small.

48 Phil asked if the full time employees are able to do other tasks when at the Fire Station. Nick said they  
49 do; they maintain equipment on a regular basis.

50 Merrily said in talking with surrounding departments they indicated when you start hiring full time  
51 people you lose volunteers and soon you have an all paid department. She noted the exception is  
52 Shelburne and Richmond. Nick said he had heard some concern from volunteers of being left out if  
53 there is full time staff. When Hinesburg added full time staff it was integrated very well and the  
54 feedback on this is good. He added the intention is not to phase out volunteers.

55 Maggie asked if the number of volunteers has changed in the last year now that there are full time  
56 positions. Nick said some left and they have some new, the addition of having accommodations has  
57 helped.

58 Dennis commented that the EMT's are the ones who save lives while waiting for an ambulance. He said  
59 last year when working on budgets he felt we were coming to this point with a request for more help.  
60 He does not think people can afford it; we need to cut somewhere. For example, there was talk about  
61 how many police we need, can we make a cut there. Do we want more EMT's or more police officers.  
62 Dennis suggests to wait and see what revenue the new developments bring in. Nick said it comes down  
63 to what service the Town wants to provide.

64 Merrily asked if Nick has talked with Richmond and Shelburne to find out what they think helps maintain  
65 volunteers. Nick said those are ambulance departments not fire departments, their fire departments  
66 are having the same issues. Merrily said we have a lot coming up and we need to take it one step at a  
67 time.

68 Nick said adding 1 full time is being reactive and 2 is being proactive. If we go to 4 total, they would not  
69 be looking at more till we they would have an ambulance.

70 Lodging at the station was discussed, Nick said most local responders stay home it is the out of town  
71 responders who use the dorms.

72 Diane Barber said on the budget they need to change ambulance service to first response coverage. It  
73 was discovered she was looking at last years documents.

74 Diane asked about the EMS line noting ambulance agency fees. Nick said that was last year also.

75 Todd said he will put the proposed budget on the Town website.

76 Diane asked if we still bill St. George for fire and ambulance. Nick said Richmond sends the bills for  
77 Hinesburg and St. George to Hinesburg for ambulance service which we pay and then are reimbursed by  
78 St. George. For fire service we bill based on their use of our fire service.

79 Todd said at the Selectboard meeting next week they will warn a public hearing for the capital and  
80 general fund budgets to be held likely in the beginning of January.

81 Capital Budget Overview – Todd Odit

82 Todd suggests using \$150,000 of ARPA funds as a down payment on the highway truck replacement.

83 \$125,000 for paving requested for next year which will be added to what was not used this year to give  
84 us the \$250,000.

85 Added a communications line for the Fire Department for future radio needs.

86 Merrily asked about the Local Option Tax idea. This will require a charter for the Town which needs to  
87 voted on at Town Meeting. Todd said it does but will not be happening at the coming Town Meeting.

88 Adjourn

89 Maggie moved to adjourn at 7:35 p.m., seconded by Phil and approved with 5 yes votes.

90 Respectfully submitted,

91 Valerie Spadaccini, clerk of the Board

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1 **SELECTBOARD MEETING DRAFT**

2 December 7, 2023

3 Attending the meeting; Merrily Lovell, Maggie Gordon, Dennis Place, Phil Pouech, Joy Dubin Grossman,  
4 Diane Barber, Mike Anthony, Jon Moore

5 Attending remotely; Mike Loner, Todd Odit, Ben Marks, Chuck Reiss

6 Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. via zoom

7 Agenda Additions or Deletions

8 There will be an executive session at the end of the meeting.

9 Public Comment

10 None

11 Approve Minutes of 11/16

12 Phil moved to approve the minutes of 11/16/22 with any agreed upon edits. Seconded by Maggie and  
13 approved with 5 yes votes.

14 Selectboard Forum

15 Mike L said the DEI workgroup met yesterday. They are starting to work on drafting a possible charter.  
16 They discussed the fact that the Selectboard may want to appoint an official DEI committee.

17 Merrily reported on the meeting with Richmond regarding collaborative policing. She noted that Todd  
18 brought up the public safety survey that Hinesburg will be doing. They discussed if Richmond should be  
19 included or if they would do a public safety survey. Merrily thinks Richmond will be included in some  
20 way. They will not be meeting again till the survey work is underway perhaps in March or April.

21 Phil said he has been approached about interest in a dog park. He advised the individual to continue to  
22 collect information to potentially present to the Selectboard. Phil said he talked with Jen McCuin about  
23 it and she declined involvement as the Recreation Commission is overloaded with work at this time.

24 GMTA Presentation – Jon Moore

25 Jon gave a brief history about the start of the Rt 116 commuter route. They are proposing Hinesburg  
26 annual assessment increase to be 4%. Ridership is still down due to the pandemic and the average is 27  
27 boardings a day. There are four round trips from Burlington to the Town Hall parking area a day.

28 Dennis asked if the riders have to pay for the service. Jon said not currently, since the start of the  
29 pandemic they have been using federal relief funds to offset fare revenue. Dennis also asked if they have  
30 looked into starting earlier as there are a lot of manufacturing companies that start the work day early.  
31 Jon said they have and are always willing to do outreach to local businesses. First bus leaves Burlington at  
32 6:10 a.m.

33 Phil noted that not all municipalities pay a fee and there is a study to look at getting funding from  
34 everyone.

Mike L asked if through their studies and surveys do they know how many riders are Hinesburg residents vs other towns whose residents drive to Hinesburg to ride the bus. Jon said they know just know the boarding point of the rider not place of residence.

Consider Approval of Public Safety Strategic Plan Consultant

Joy reported on the second meeting with MRI and CGR to ask more questions and go over costs. MRI would not be able to include the diversity, equity and inclusion piece we are looking for. CGR was asked if they have worked with smaller communities like Hinesburg. They had and provided some examples. They are also willing to lower the price down to \$71,500. They will not be doing the survey. They rated high in the diversity, equity and inclusion piece.

Diane Barber asked if they don't do a survey how will they know how residents and members of the Police and Fire Departments feel about public safety. Joy said instead of an electronic survey they will come and talk to people in Town. They will be setting meetings to talk with individuals and groups. Diane asked if the Town will vote on what the Board decides to do after getting the information. Will residents have a voice on what is implemented. Merrily said part of CGR mission is to listen to everybody. Phil said he does not think there will be anything specific to vote on but recommendations for the Board and Town Manager.

Phil moved the Selectboard adopts CGR's revised proposal for the Public Safety Strategic Plan. Seconded by Maggie. Phil said he believes the Town will be using some ARPA funds toward this. Merrily said they are not voting on funding, that discussion will take place next week. Motion voted and approved with 5 yes votes.

Consider Approval of Highway Truck Purchase

Two highway trucks are due to be replaced. Mike A said usually the trucks are replaced on a 10 year cycle, the 2009 was pushed out to purchase the grader. Payment is not due till the trucks are received which will take about two years but we need to allocate funds in the budget.

Phil asked what is the advantage of buying both now. Mike said the 2009 is for this year and the 2014 is for next year in the capital budget.

Todd said we need to commit that we will find \$250,000 to make a down payment on the trucks. We can finance the rest over 5 years. Todd suggests using \$125,000 of ARPA funds.

Maggie said she is disappointed we could not wait another week for this till they meet to discuss use of ARPA funds. She finds it frustrating doing it this way as they don't have the big picture.

Dennis said we can vote on purchasing the trucks and figure out the down payment later.

Dennis moved to approve the purchase to replace the 2009 and 2014 trucks. Seconded by Phil and approved with 5 yes votes.

Consider Approval of Revised FY23 Water Allocations

Todd reported due to updated information from the State on what the wells can produce we have 17,821 gpd available to allocate.

71 Phil asked is the process moving forward to increase the nano filtration capacity along with the other  
72 wells? Todd said we will have to add another train for the additional well. Phil asked when the next well  
73 will need to come on line. Todd said it depends on if we take another look at what we require for use per  
74 day per bedroom.

75 Phil recommended as the water and wastewater commissioners to adopt the revised water and allocation  
76 pools as submitted. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

77 Review Draft FY 24 Operating and Capital Budgets and Warn Public Hearing

78 Merrily noted past budgets being supported by money taken from the fund balance to offset the increase.  
79 We are now working on gradually weaning away from that practice.

80 The Fire Department has been increased by \$25,000 for on call staff pay but is not funding 2 FF/EMT's.

81 Dennis asked how much money would need to be taken off this budget to keep taxes level. Todd said we  
82 would need to cut \$316,000 from the budget.

83 Mike L asked if we are trying to jump from 10% to 15% kept in the general fund this year. Todd said that  
84 was the goal last year. We will not be in a position each year to assume we have \$250,000 to put toward  
85 taxes and have enough left over for emergencies.

86 Phil noted more fund balance can be put toward taxes to be raised when the Board sets the tax rate.

87 Merrily moved to warn a public hearing for the operating and capital budgets at 7:00 p.m. on January 4,  
88 2023. Seconded by Maggie.

89 Diane B commented about the Police Budget and asked if there is money to pay for an on call person at  
90 night. Todd said coverage is 7 to 11 Monday through Friday plus funds to cover overnight shifts.

91 Diane said she would like to see Todd, Joy and Board members help with ideas for volunteer recruitment  
92 for firefighters and not to require cross training for both firefighter and EMS.

93 Phil asked Todd for some recommendations on things we could reduce in the budget.

94 Motion on public hearing voted and approved with 5 yes votes.

95 Consider Approval of Easement to VEC for Landfill Solar Project

96 Phil moved to provide an easement to Vermont Electric Cooperative to extend their electrical lines for the  
97 anticipated solar project as shown on the diagram being out of the Town right-of-way and appoint Todd  
98 Odit as the duly appointed agent. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

99 Consider Approval of Lease Option Agreement with Acorn Solar

100 Phil moved to approve the proposed amendment to the Lease Option Agreement between Acorn  
101 Renewable Energy Co-op and the Town and appointing Todd Odit to sign. Seconded by Maggie and  
102 approved with 5 yes votes.

103 Town Manager Report

- 104 • There has been a verbal offer and acceptance for a third highway employee who will need to be
- 105 trained for a CDL
- 106 • Todd is meeting with the State Police on Friday
- 107 • Evaluation of department heads will continue when schedule allows
- 108 • Expect draft financials of the school year 22 audit soon
- 109 • Looking into getting red solar powered flashing signal lights at the new intersection by Texas Hill
- 110 Rd.
- 111 • Selective bargaining contract negotiations will begin after Town Meeting

112 Approval of Warrants and Payroll

113 Merrily moved to approve the warrants, including payroll, submitted by the Town Treasurer and signed

114 by herself and Maggie. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

115 Consider a Motion to Enter Executive Session Under Provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A)

116 Merrily moved to go into Executive Session Under Provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss a contract,

117 premature disclosure could put the Town at a disadvantage. The meeting will include only Selectboard

118 members. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

119 Phil moved to come out of executive session, seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

120 Phil moved to adjourn at 9:02 p.m., seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

121 Respectfully submitted,

122 Valerie Spadaccini, clerk of the Board

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