

## HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

### Minutes of the June 1, 2021 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Chairman McGrath the meeting of June 1, 2021 at 7:02 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Public Works Director Jess Forrence
3. ATTENDANCE  
Board of Selectmen: David Morin, Kara Roy, Marilyn McGrath, Brett Gagnon  
Staff/Others: Steve Malizia - Town Administrator; Bill Avery - Police Chief; Rob Buxton - Fire Chief; Linda Pilla - Library Director; Lisa Nute - IT Director; Lisa Labrie - Finance Director; Jill Laffin - Executive Assistant
4. PUBLIC INPUT - none
5. NEW BUSINESS

#### A. Board of Selectmen Vacancy

Chairman McGrath recognized Town Administrator, Steve Malizia who said, I prepared a package for the Board's consideration. As you're well aware, Chairman Selectman Coutu resigned at the last meeting. The Board of Selectmen are the authority to appoint a replacement. that's articulated in law. I believe it's 669:63. It doesn't prescribe any method, doesn't describe particularly any time frame, but it does state that you are the appointing authority. The appointment will be till March of 2022, which coincidentally would have been the expiration of Selectman Coutu's term anyway. So whoever runs in 2022 will be running for a full term. They won't be running for a portion of a term. So in essence, what you're considering tonight is the process of how you'd like to go about replacing Selectman Coutu. I've taken a look at the last time this happened. A matter of fact, that's how Selectman Coutu got on the Board in the first place. He was an appointment for a resignation from a Selectman named Doug Robinson. There was a process the board followed basically, there'd be an advertisement or notice put out for applicants to apply for the position. Unfortunately, there's no HLN anymore. So it's going to be at our Web page, Facebook posted in all our buildings and put it on TV. And I would assume if that's how you want to do it, we'll have a due date. Those candidates would submit their applications. And then I would also anticipate that you'll interview each of the candidates. That's what was done previously. So looking at the timeline, things are tight depending on how you want to do it. But, um, I had proposed that we put this out tomorrow. At the back of the packet, you'll see an advertisement or a notice at the very, I think, last page that states that folks shall apply by the 10th of June. That's next Thursday. I know it's a short window, but, you know, we've got to pick a due date at some point in time so that we can get the package prepared and get the information to you folks and to make sure that all the applicants are able to attend a meeting, which I would recommend that you do it on and off Tuesday night, not that we all want to be here more, But I think you should focus on this. I suspect, I don't know, but I suspect you'll get at least more than a handful of applicants. And I think to take the time that you need, you need to just devote an evening to interviewing the candidates and going through their qualifications with them. So I'm thinking the 15th of June would be the date that you would do that. That's the off Tuesday. After you do that, you may either appoint that evening or you may take it under advisement and you may have an opportunity to do it at the very next meeting, which I think is the 22<sup>nd</sup>, it's all in public.

The Town Administrator went on to say, this is a public process. The only thing I would caution is if somebody knows something adverse about a candidate that's maybe harmful to their reputation, we'll

have a citation on the agenda that if we needed to go into non-public, we could. Say you know so and so, was convicted or has this issue. It's just for full disclosure, if everybody w to needs to know but we don't want to do that in public. But that's only as the process is public. The alternative is if you don't appoint someone, um, the Superior Court does upon the petition of a citizen. So any one person can say, hey, I want the court to do it. And I'm not sure that we want the courts dictating how we do things in Hudson. If you read the process in 669:61, it talks about a process. But we have not adopted that ordinance or that section of the law. So that is not material to us here. That talks about a petition of the citizens to have a special election. That is not the process. I confirmed that with our attorney.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said if I may, for the petition, just for my own knowledge, not talking about the way you said that we didn't have initiated the second half of that warrant article, but the first half, to petition the court to appoint someone. Is there an amount of signatures they need? Just for my own knowledge. The Town Administrator replied, According to 669:63, it says, Superior Court or any justice there on a petition of any citizen of the town. So it's a single citizen can petition. I would assume its one citizen or more than one, but minimum of one. OK, take it as a candidate that applies and says, hey, you didn't make a decision, I want you to go court. Selectman Gagnon replied, Understood.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said and just to make clear, that petition is only if we don't act on this? The Town Administrator replied, that is correct. You are the authority. Selectman Roy said it's only if we don't appoint right. So we can act. But if we don't, we reach a stalemate or whatever and then we don't appoint. The Town Administrator replied, I would assume if there's a stalemate that cannot be overcome, that that's the potential fallback. If nobody petitions, we will limp along of course. I suppose that's an alternative to good, bad or indifferent. It does not articulate a date. It does not articulate a period of time. It does not say you have to do it by 10 days, 30 days, 40 days, 90 days. I just try to outline that's where you're at. So I think if the Board is comfortable...Selectman Roy asked what will we anticipate would be in each candidate packet? Town Administrator Malizia replied, an application from the candidates. You'd get the application for boards and committees and whatever else they choose to submit. Selectman Roy asked so could we ask them to submit resumes? The Town Administrator replied if you'd like to? You could. We can modify to include a resume or some sort of other information, whatever you like.

Selectman Roy responded I mean, I just like to have as much information as I can. I think that's just one way to do it The Town Administrator said if that's a consensus of the Board, we can modify the notice to say application and resume. It's up to you folks. The Board was in agreement on this. The Town Administrator then asked Are you comfortable with the dates? I'm not trying to rush you. I'm just trying to sit there and say time tends to be of the essence. Would be nice to have somebody in place by the beginning of the fiscal year. It's not required. I'm just trying to move this along.

Selectman Roy said I don't know. I'm still out on that. I think it's a really short period of time for people, particularly in this time of year where people might be out of town.

The Town Administrator replied I think that will only get worse, though, because a lot of people tend to go in July and August. So I think that'll even be more exacerbated by that. I think you have a very short window, in my opinion. I think you really get into the Fourth of July and after that. But that's my Opinion. Chairman McGrath said I think that they've had ample notice. The Town Administrator replied I think the word is out.

Chairman McGrath said I've gotten calls and just this seems to be interest among some of the citizen citizens that want to apply for it. Mr. Malizia then said but in fairness to those to folks that may not be in the political loop, I mean, we are trying to give them some time. My only concern is getting their information here in a timely fashion so you can look at it ahead of time. I don't want to have to walk in on Tuesday night and say, oh, by the way, I got three more and giving them an opportunity to make sure that their schedule is clear so they can come in. I don't think you want to spread this out over more than one meeting. It's up to you if you do. Selectman Roy said well, I think that might go to how many applicants we get, like, it might just not be feasible to do it. The Town Administrator replied Even if we had 15 applicants. I mean, we're devoting this night just to this issue. And I probably

would just do it alphabetically or something that it's, you know, not preferred candidates. Just you're A, you're B, you're C. The Chairman asked are we in a position to make a motion? Seeing no further comment the Town Administrator said, an appropriate *motion would be to accept applications and resumes for the vacant Board of Selectmen position through June 10<sup>th</sup> with candidate interviews to be held on June 15<sup>th</sup> as recommended by the Town Administrator. Selectman Morin made this motion, seconded by Selectman Roy. Carried 4-0.*

#### B. Planning Board Appointment

The Town Administrator said at the last meeting, prior to Selectman Coutu, declaring his resignation, there was a brief conversation and I believe the Board appointed Selectman Morin as the alternate to the Planning Board, but never made a motion regarding the Board of Selectmen member to the Planning Board. You just kind of made an assumption that would just naturally go to Selectman McGrath as she was the alternate? But you really should make the appointment. It should be more formal than that. So what I've recommended here is a motion to appoint someone will go out to the Board of Selectmen member position to the planning board. Again, I'm not aware that it just goes to the alternate in that case. Chairman McGrath asked, any discussion? Seeing none, *Selectman Morin made a motion, seconded by Selectman Roy to appoint Selectman McGrath to the Board of Selectmen member position to the Planning Board. Carried 4-0.*

#### C. FY22 Default Budget

The Town Administrator was again recognized and said as everybody is well aware, the Town's general fund budget did not pass. Therefore, we have a default budget for fiscal year 2022, which starts on July 1st, 2021, and runs through June 30th, 2022. The water budget and the sewer budgets passed. They are not part of this discussion. They got their budgets. That's not part of the equation. It's strictly the general fund. I believe we met or the board discussed this month or so ago. And at that point in time, no action was taken. There was some questions or some concerns. So it's been pending to here to this meeting. I prepared a memo for you and a packet of information. And in essence, what I have in front of you is a packet that articulates or illustrates the default budget delta at \$773,621. That's the amount of money. That's the difference between what we asked for and what the voters approved i.e.: the default. As you go through the packet, you can look at the various spreadsheets. Page three articulates how we got to that default budget number. It shows things that came out and things that were included, in essence, one time expenditures, if we bought something last year that we are not buying again, those types of things come out. We get to the end of a lease for something that comes out. But there are other things that go back in labor costs, benefit costs. Those are all contractual items. Our insurances. We need to make sure that we have the money to do those things because, quite frankly, we're committed to doing those things. And clearly, if you look at the bottom of this worksheet on page three, we had previously items that were previously approved by the voters, i.e., labor contracts with our unions, hiring employees, the firefighters, the truck driver, and laborers, those who approved. So therefore, we get to put those in the default budget. The voters approve that separately. And so the intention is that that's a net that added to our default. As we flip through the pages of some detail here on pages four and five, that if you look at the third column, those are the effective changes. Those are the things that are coming out or that have changed from the general fund that proposed budget to the default budget. This is basically a list of, by department, with \$773,000 was. There's a few departments that because of the way things run, they went up a little. The majority obviously went down because it's a \$773,000 decrease. So this is just at a department level detail of where those monies are.

The Town Administrator went on to say if I go to page seven, spreadsheet on page seven, and basically it talks about the general fund overall budget. And if you look, you'll see you'll see from left to right, I see a department column. That's the department code. You'll see a description. What it basically is, what the department code is. You'll see a default reduction. If you take that list, it adds up to the \$773,621. The next column over is the funded amount that adds up to \$486,036, which is a delta of \$287,585. The \$486,036 is the sum of money or the monies that we are looking at. Those are critical things identified by your Department Heads that we want to try to still accomplish. We want to make the second payment on the on the fire truck that we bought this year in this year's budget. Didn't making it into default budget because of the timing of it. We're going to still do body cameras because that's a critical that's a critical need. And so basically what we looked at, what the departments looked at and what you had been given prior was how can they accomplish that critical need? What is not going to get done? So if you look you'll see some basic recommended action column that basically articulates what, if anything, we're going to do some things we're not going to do. Just that simple. We can't I can't come up with that kind of money. We're not adding any money to the bottom line. We're just shifting money. That's really what we're doing. And we're able to figure out or find \$486,000. Some of that money coming from capital reserve funds because they have that purpose, we're allowed to do that. So the probably the tallest, the biggest thing on his list is \$175,000 for the property re-value that we're planning on doing, constitutionally required to do it every five years. This is year five. We had put it in the budget as an expense, but we had put the revenue coming from the Capital Reserve Fund also on the revenue budget because the budget didn't pass, that money came out. We've got a ruling from our attorney, the NHMA attorney and our auditors that we can still spend that money out of the reserve fund without the appropriation because you are the agency to expand. You can do it. So that's a big piece right there. We also had a warrant article pass this year for body cameras and other police equipment. We can take \$50,000 out of that this year to help pay for that project.

The Town Administrator went on to say, so as you look at this list, we can certainly discuss this. We can discuss whatever you like. But in essence, if it has a zero, we're not doing it. We're not making it up. And it's not as critical as the things that have a number next of them. The Highway Department needs a roadside brush cutter. I mean, they need to keep the highways and the sides of the roads clear so traffic you can see the signs. I mean, you get a lot of growth around here. The vehicle with the machine that they have now is I'm surprised it even ran this year. So, again, departments went through their budgets and determined what was critical to their needs so that we could make a recommendation to you. I've included what they had previously submitted. That's the backup information in a nutshell, and that's where we're at right now. They're here to answer questions. But in essence, if you see zero, we're not going to be able to do it. And it's either going to get deferred to next year in most cases or, you know, we're going to try to maybe accelerate a few minor things into this year. But that that's sort of where we're at.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said So a question for my understanding a little bit. I know you talked about contracts are kind of outside of the budget. You know, they've been signed. They're pushing forward, you know, with regards to employment and so forth like that. And you said body camera contracts as well have already been signed and really can't be reverted back. You also noted about really important costs that we need to keep. Are there any contracts that we can actually back out of and maybe pay a fine or fee and break contract? But paying that fee would be a cost savings for the overall contract that aren't an absolute necessity. Have those things been considered?

The Town Administrator replied, so what you're asking is, are there any, when I say contract, you're probably pretty much talking lease payments on equipment that we have. You're not going to break a labor contract? I'm telling tell you right now that that's not going to happen. We're not going to break the we get health insurance. And I say we're not going to break that part of the New Hampshire pension system. We're certainly not going to break that. So, in essence, the contracts that you might have some wiggle room with our lease purchase contracts and at this point with the majority of them, you're probably three or four years into some of them, so if you'd like to break them, we'll give the

vehicle or whatever the piece of machinery is back to the vendor, because that's the that's the consequence. And again, we try to avoid that consequence because we have folks that need these pieces of equipment for their job. I mean, whether it be a fire vehicle, whether it be, you know, some of the small six wheel dump trucks that we had to purchase. I mean...Selectman Gagnon asked are there any contracts that we've just signed? You know, let's say forgive me for an example, say we just said we want to buy a fire truck, but we haven't gotten it. We signed on the dotted line for a contract, but we haven't exchanged money or gotten the item. And we say we want to drop that contract before it's initiated.

The Town Administrator said, I defer to the Chief you just mentioned fire trucks. I don't believe we received the fire truck yet.

Chief Buxton replied, you have not received the fire truck yet. The Town Administrator added But we have taken the other fire truck out of service or will soon be out of service because it's a safety issue with rust and other undercarriage problems. So. I'm not sure it's going to roll to the scene if we do that. Selectman Gagnon replied, Great answer. I was just kind of thinking out loud.

The Town Administrator replied, Thank you. I respect that. And again, you know, that's what these folks looked at. And that's why that's why they're sitting here. We can certainly discuss it. We can deliberate it. We can come up with other ideas. But in essence, we are short \$773,000 from what we asked for. So what these folks tried to do was say, hey, what do I what do I absolutely need to to run my department and to make sure I have those critical, and I call them critical things, taken care of. We can differ on what you think is critical, but this is what they think is critical.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said Last question. And the other thing, too, I was kind of looking into and from my own understanding, you said we can't adjust contracts, employee contracts, but would there be any surplus by any chance if someone left or if people move around, could we expect a surplus, even if we don't touch the contract, that would help us? The Town Administrator replied employees come and go. So if you have a if you have a veteran employee, leave our employee at the top of the pay scale. And presumably, as you promote either someone or you bring someone from the outside, they typically are at the bottom of the pay scale. The one problem with that sometimes is when they leave, they get to cash out their time on the books, their earned time. So that tends to negate any savings you might make. Where you might save something is benefits. So you have someone that takes a full family plan. They leave, you have a young person, younger person come in without a family, you save on the insurance. But I can't predict that. And the inverse can happen. I have somebody who doesn't take the insurance leave and then somebody comes in and they take the whole family plan. And again, I can't predict that either. So it's our best estimate of where we are right now and what we have on the books. But that changes. People come, people go. When we cost out new employees, i.e. for benefit purposes, firefighters, highway public works employees, we put them at the full benefit package, the highest package. Why? Because we don't, it's not a litmus test to work. Hey, do you have a family that's going to cost us more money to hire you? We put it in and the chance that they come in at a full benefit package. If they don't, we save. But then again, people get married, people get divorced, people have kids. It's a shifting landscape. And we're looking 18 months out, up to 18 months.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said but to kind of follow on to that historically, where does that that piece end up at the end of the year? The remaining piece? The Town Administrator replied, typically the Town of Hudson ends up with about a 1% surplus at the end of the year, somewhere between 1-2%. So that could be as much as 700,000. It could be as low as 300,000. And where's that surplus come from? It comes from things like that, but also comes from under spending something or didn't or we didn't pay as much for something, or maybe we didn't have as much our own time or maybe we had more time. It if you look at our budgets, they're fairly lean. If you're talking to a 35 million dollar operation here, you know, 1% is \$350,000. That's pretty lean. That's pretty close, considering you folks spend a lot of time looking at this stuff every year during the budget season to try to figure out what do we need. It's all built from the ground up. I have these employees. They take these benefits. This is the hours I need to accomplish this task or this task or this task.

These are the materials. When you look at our budget, I think it's somewhere between 65 and 70 % is labor costs. We are a labor intensive business. Anybody will tell you who's worked here. It's labor. We have material, but we're not making we're not a factor. We're not making we don't have raw material widgets. It's our cost of our labor because we provide service, we fire, police, highway users, material, use sand, tar, whatever. We all use gas, diesel. But it's predominantly a labor driven business.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said Yeah, before we get started, we get a report from Mr. Malizia when he does our status financially and our big thing is cars, registrations. I had read a story in the news in reference to a plant that produced all the electronics, had a fire, and that cars were going to be delayed immensely because of this and then the Covid. So just for to confirm that, I talked to some of the dealerships in the area and they have confirmed that we could look at September, October, maybe later. And because we got to go countrywide when we're going to get cars. A lot of the dealerships right now, their dealerships are empty and they got used cars inside the buildings and their sales floors. So that concerns me greatly, too, because of what I'm going to have the income coming in from the new car purchases that's going to cause us a lot of problems.

Selectman Morin then said looking over this in a couple spots here. Oh, start with the Public Works. Jess, if you want to jump up here. I guess we'll start with the stuff that you would like to forego to try to meet some of the proposals you're looking at. DPW Director, Jess Forrence said well, when Steve and I first talked about this, he says you probably want to look at the least essential things to cover the cost of the things that we really need. So I broke down three different areas and the cost of them. But what I felt was inessential with the things that I have here and the cost by not funding them, July 1<sup>st</sup>. is a good way to go? I don't know. But we were looking for the first year's payment on the brush tractor. That is a very, very important piece of equipment, like Steve said, on roadside mowing with branches and leaves and all the rest of it. The second side is guardrails. \$4,000 in that, believe me, with the price of steel and everything else that has gone up, that's not going to get us as far as we thought it would. But we can make that work okay. Little things like time clocks, the landfill, Wi-Fi. The maintenance account, we've got more vehicles and we have older vehicles. So we were looking for that \$10,000 also. So that brought us up to the \$43,096. The way we were going to look at funding that the first proposal was to close Benson's bathrooms. That is a luxury that is not a necessity, unless you're standing at the door. So the breakdown on that was the bathrooms are usually open 36 weeks, both sides of the winter. So the cost savings on that would be Meri-maids. We pay Meri-maids \$245 dollars for the 36 weeks. Brings it up to the \$8,800. The janitorial supplies surprises me from one month to the other. So we pretty good, pretty good Average up to \$4,000. That brought up to that \$12,820. The other way we were going to look at the cost....Selectman Roy was recognized and said Mr. Forrence, I have a question. So I'm looking at this and you have a savings by closing the bathrooms of \$12,820. Then on the next page, the porta pottys would cost \$25,200. So I guess I don't understand where the savings is coming from.

Selectman Morin was then recognized and said and to your point, you talk a little bit about what's been going on in the bathrooms at Benson's, because I don't think the Board's aware in that. I think they need to know. Well, it's in thank God for the company that we have to clean up after these people. We found some pretty disgusting stuff in the bathrooms, people using the sinks for other than washing your hands and not using as a stand-up urinal, but other things. That came back to me by the people that clean and they were upset about it. I was upset about it. So we started looking at it day by day, would go to that the bathrooms in the morning, finding a lot of stuff there. I don't want to say it on the air, but it was it was pretty disgusting. I would give the cleaning company the heads up and they said we would take care of it. They did bring it to our attention that from now on it was going to be a cleaning charge. They were in there to do light cleaning. They weren't in there to pick up the people. And I totally got what they were saying. And the cost would probably be \$50 to \$75 dollars every time they did it in the way I was going to do it as great as this, I was going to have to take a picture of it, send it to me. So it would be verified and then that would go up the cost on the additional cleaning costs. But the people are using it. And I'm saying very few. And I'm not saying girl's side, I'm not saying men side. It's both sides. Pretty disgusting sometimes. What I did talk to Steve on it, I

said, you know, I'm thinking about closing the bathrooms. They're open until nine o'clock, the same time the park is open to maybe closing it at seven or even six to see if we can deter from the place being empty. People have got more of a chance to do this stuff if there's nobody in the park. So if we can knock it down to three hours, you had a pretty good chance of people being in the park and seeing something. So that's where that stands.

Mr. Forrence went on to say, The porta pottys, if I can jump to that, is if we close the bathrooms and we decide we have to have something there, that's what it's going to cost to put porta potty there. Selectman Roy said so are you suggesting we have nothing there? Because I don't understand like, why we'd close the bathrooms? Yeah. \$2,800 and then rent porta potty for a cost of somewhere above \$25,200. Selectman Morin said I told them to give us the options. That's why he did that. Mr. Forrence said, I don't think the people would put up with not having anything there and I wouldn't want to walk through the trails out there with no place to go or one porta potty at the top of the hill that we have Year-Round, especially with the prom that happened the other night in birthday parties, that we still allow it and kids and all the rest of it. So I put the cost and what my savings would be closing the facilities. But the fall back on the heat that we might get, this is what it would cost to fund the porta pottys.

Selectman Roy said OK. Just from a very basic it just looks like it's more cost effective to leave the bathrooms open. Mr. Forrence said it is. Selectman Roy then said and I don't know that I disagree with your plan to limit the hours. Right. But for what we're doing here tonight, it just that doesn't seem like it. Selectman Morin said twofold is we have we have the budget and it's now going to cost us even more because they're going to charge us for the special cleaning. And if we bring in the porta pottys and it's probably just because they're trying to make up for Covid they haven't done anything for so long, the concern is how much if we closed the bathrooms. What does that save you? There's no there's no cost with the just because we're closing early. Mr. Forrence said Yeah, it doesn't save any anything. It just hopefully will prevent. Selectman Roy said I just think that that seems like more cost effective plan than because I don't think we can get away with having nothing there. If we didn't have bathrooms, we'd have to have porta pottys. Selectman Morin said we can, but...Selectman Roy said it wouldn't be pretty. It's not something I would want to. Right. Right.

Chairman McGrath asked What about charging for the bathrooms? Either having I don't know... Mr. Forrence said you spend a quarter to go into the bathroom. You still make a mess, you know? So I don't know if that would be a benefit. The Town Administrator added It's still it's still an expense. Even if you take a revenue, unless you put a special revenue fund for the bathroom, the money goes to the general fund. It doesn't matter if you made a million dollars. You still it doesn't help the expense side of things because it's not it's not a revolving fund or anything.

Mr. Forrence then said So the other the other options I hear and number two, looking to make up the money we need to fund the \$43,000 would be reduce the maintenance in parks, playgrounds, town buildings. And if you read further playground, the bark chips that go underneath the swing sets and slides and the playground equipment out there, that's not just regular bark much that you put around your house, it's in actually wood chip. Kid would fall from the top of it, pushed off a slide. Then it usually softens the impact on it, pretty much not that we're in bad shape right now. Every other year we go through and we turn it over like you do around the yard with your mulch. The other thing would be looking to do is cut that cut back down on the looming, the fertilizer, the grassy areas out there. There's a replacement mower that we had in there for replacement. Then there'd be the spring flowers, the fall flowers, and then the big one, the Christmas lights. Selectman Morin was recognized and said you said you turn over the ball at the playground, is that we do it? So you don't recover that every year? Mr. Forrence replied, No, we don't recover. Where are we in that process for next year? Mr. Forrence said its next year. Of course it is. Yeah. Last year, Josh rented the machine to turn it over, and we like doing it every other year. Selectman Morin asked if you turned it over, though, you think you can get by one more year? Mr. Forrence replied if we turned it over again, we wouldn't get by one more year if we had to. Selectman Morin said so if you took every municipal building and the parks where you put bark mulch, if you turned it over would it get us by a year? Mr. Forrence replied

it wouldn't look like it usually does, absolutely. Selectman Morin asked But It would be presentable? Mr. Forrence replied Oh, it definitely would be. Selectman Morin then said Selectman Morin was recognized and said your list of needs. I understand the brush cutter, especially intersections and things of that nature. That's pretty self-explanatory. Guardrails are also pretty self-explanatory. Time clock. Why do you still need that? If we could go and get a punch time clock for now and you could have that and use it. I get the program. We talked about the program. I saw the program. I understand that. But if you feel the need to have a time clock, why can't we do it that way for a temporary time? Mr. Forrence replied going backwards we could definitely do that. the way this new time system is set up, especially through the winter months when you have over-time, double-time, second rate on double-time. It's just a dream. It really is. It saves us so much, so much time and money. Monday morning when the secretaries have to just download the form and download a supervisor's download, look through it, make sure it's OK. Can we? Of course we can. We did it for thirty years. Is it a pain since you've had the new system? Yeah Go without power windows in your car free for a little bit and see what it's like so we can do it. Selectman Morin was recognized and said my question there is we've been doing it. Yeah. So one more year and I mean if you feel you have time clocks now? The Town Administrator said he has this system now. He got rid of the punch card system a year ago. He's using this system. So he would have to compete if they pull the plug and go back to the old system. Selectman Morin said so you have the new. The Town Administrator replied yes, sir. Selectman Morin said I thought we were getting. We were going to get it here. It's right here. I got you. All right. I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

Selectman Morin went on to say Wi-Fi service at the transfer station. I'm going to go to the Christmas lights and flowers. Possibly we could put some type of program together to see if businesses would like to support those for one year, and we could put up a sign in the park donated or sponsored by any business that wanted to sponsor them. And that way they could get some credit, but it would take that burden off us for one year. Mr. Forrence said we could look at it on a Web page, put it on Facebook. Anybody who wants to make a donation. Selectman Morin said an adopt a spot type of deal. Mr. Forrence then said the other thing that I've been following, everything that we had is still showed you that we have 13 over \$13,000 dollars shortage on what we were looking to do to gain. And then, of course, on the third item, the entire 43,096 could be taken out of next year's town wide paving program. The Town Administrator added, that would be the wear cost. I think you identified on three streets. Mr. Forrence replied there was three streets that might be cutting down depending on the cost comes out, it might come down to just two streets that we might not be able to overlay, but we do not know that for sure. But wherever it goes, we would make it work. We would leave no street, you know, unattended or not possible. Let's put it that way. Mr. Forrence replied it helps prevent the backup and the angry residents that we had this Saturday having the Wi-Fi connection so we can log in to what we need to log into to look and see who got a pass Friday. And it hasn't shown up on our computer yet because we just plug it in on Thursday or who come in Thursday afternoon and it doesn't show up on our computer at the landfill on Saturday. So that's one we're going to try and work with. Lisa, we've come so fast, so fast here and just a little bit on be able to do real time on checking these things. When a person comes up and they don't have a pass. What has happened in the in the past is we would give them one ticket and then say for the other two you would have to go back to the Public Works Garage. Well, that same person comes back up again. He has no ticket. On a computer we have here it shows that we've only given one ticket. Sometimes the girls in the office don't get it, their pile of tickets to process by the end of the following week. So this would be done in stone instantly and it would help us out a lot. Selectman Morin said and I understand that. And I got involved in this weekend's problem. My question is, though, aren't they supposed to be coming to the dump with the three tickets? Mr. Forrence answer, Correct.

Selectman Morin asked so if they don't have a ticket if either they didn't sign up and they didn't get one or they forgot it and I know what took place this weekend. But if they don't have a ticket, the hour rule is in the town. You don't have a ticket, you don't get in. So why are we letting that go? Mr. Forrence said it is a judgment call when the supervisors are there. If you have a gentleman shows up and he's got a pickup truck, his own personal pickup truck and it's loaded. A resident of town, you kind of look at it real hard. Selectman Morin said you told the guys to. I get it. I talk to the guys this



weekend. They were upset. They were very concerned. They actually felt bad they said, we're going to just let people in this weekend. I'm good with that. But again, I get what you're saying. I'm not standing there. But when they go when they go into the DPW, because I do it every year, I'm handed three tickets right then and there. Yeah. So I got my ticket. So I show up with my ticket. Computers shouldn't matter, either got a ticket or you don't have a ticket. That's what I'm asking. Mr. Forrence said correct, you're absolutely correct. Yeah. If you if you show up at public works and you don't have a ticket, then you haven't received one whether you left it on the kitchen table or not. That is, you can take a ride back home and get it.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said I think that's why you're here, that Wi-Fi is not only for your use, correct? Is that my understanding of it, Lisa? IT Director, Lisa Nute said yeah, there are two connections up there. One is at the firing range, which allows them a phone and Wi-Fi there. And the other one is in the storage building. But I came up here to make sure you had all the information before you make a decision on this. To answer select Selectman Gagnon's question about, you know, are there contracts we can break? We did with Checkmate here in Town Hall. We sent the equipment back. I asked them to please sever that contract, not theirs (DPW). They've already been using it. We just started using ours. We did pay for an electrician. We were able to get out of that one. This one is a three year contract we signed with Comcast. It required us to have Comcast do some installation construction. They were willing to pick up the astronomical cost because that, the connection was only done at West Road. They did the construction to bring it up. They dug underground to get into the firing range and they did some construction there at that building. I have not looked at what it would cost to break this contract, but I'm almost certain you're going to end up having to pay for the construction because they wanted to make sure I signed that three year contract before they obligated any maintenance people on that job.

Selectman Morin was again recognized and said Yeah, just, you know, on the last one. Equipment maintenance. What's that entail? Mr. Forrence responded, equipment maintenance is with the new two new vehicles that we had looking at the past, what we've spent on the vehicles, the vehicles getting older. And it just doesn't cover vehicles. It covers all the rollers, covers the paving machine. It covers everything. So with the cost of everything going up, it was what we presented to the Board, presented to the Budget Committee, which passed, except didn't make it through the Town meeting.

Selectman Roy said so I just want to be clear that's just routine maintenance? Mr. Forrence replied routine maintenance, not buying anything. Selectman Roy then said Right, and it's not like major repairs. Mr. Forrence replied, this is additional. So the VaCon truck just went down yesterday, no Thursday. I don't know what the hydraulic motor is going to cost on that this late in the year. So it's going to take a big bite out of anything we have left. Selectman Morin asked are these numbered in the order that you would like to see first, second, third and fourth are just random. Mr. Forrence replied, it was just random. The things I put together on what how I would cover it. And the last one, Article three was would be the painless way of doing it. Selectman Morin then asked OK, so out of them all was going to be like the most? Mr. Forrence responded, I think realistically in how the numbers look, I think coming out of town-wide paving would be the easiest thing to do. Selectman Morin replied, All right. I'm good, thank you.

Chairman McGrath asked anyone else? Seeing no further questions for Mr. Forrence the Chairman then said we don't need to do anything with this? Thank you Jess. The Town Administrator said so in essence, what we're trying to do again is you had a conversation, that's what the departments did, was to look at what they found to be critical. And again, just to reemphasize when it says funded amount, that column, that's what we're looking to do the zero amounts we're not looking to do or to defer doing it. For example, there's a project to begin the design of the, we call it the bridge, but it's a large culvert under Central Street, right where it kind of hits Lowell Road. It's actually Lowell Road. It's something that we need to get to at some point in time. It's not something that we think is going to collapse next year or the year after. But we've been very diligent. We did a culvert on Central Street. We've been very diligent with the maintenance of those projects. That's got a zero here because I don't have the fifty thousand. One caveat, It's potentially possible that this money that the feds are

releasing to us, we may actually pivot and use some of that money there. So that may be something we could accomplish under that \$2.6 million dollars million worth of funding. But again, in this case here, we didn't put it in the budget. We have to be careful supplanting. So that's sort of something we have to stay away from, you know, something we've budgeted or whatever, we're not supposed to supplement our budget, but that would be a project that we would seriously look at doing. It also extends to water and sewer projects. But again, those funds are in good shape. So I know it's a lot to look at, but what we're trying to get to is we've got a default budget. We've got some priorities. We think they're priorities. Do we have the Board's blessing to go forward with this list? And things may adjust during the year. Quite frankly, something may work out in our benefit. Hopefully we may have some negatives. Hopefully not. But this is what we're trying to get to. We're just trying to put a line in the sand so we can figure out from a budget perspective what we're giving each of the departments to at least begin to work. We've been in three default budgets in the past. I think I can remember the years, I think was a few years back, but not that long ago. And we had two back to back default budgets. So that was quite a challenge. And we went through this exercise at that point in time and basically did the same exercise. A lot of the things that you see that make up the 773, a lot of that came into the budget because the Board, when they deliberated, these were things that were outside of the normal budget. These were extra requests, things that the departments identified as that they needed. And that's why they got in in the first place. This wasn't just they didn't just randomly get in. And there was a discussion with this Board and you added a lot of these items. So what we're just trying to do is salvage what we can and recognize what we can't do. So, again, that's why it's in front of you. That's why we're here. We can certainly go through whatever detail you'd like, but in essence, we're just trying to get to a bottom line to be able to give a budget going forward to these departments.

Selectman Roy was recognized and said So I guess going forward, and I know that you give the revenue and expenses every month, do you adjust any of this for us in the default budget scenario, like you come to us and say, hey, you know, this happened and we don't need to spend this or we're gonna? The Town Administrator replied well, we'll certainly keep an eye on that. So what what's going to end up happening is when we prepared budgets, we had a department head column. Here's what we proposed. Came to the Board of Selectmen, comes into a Board of Selectmen column. You either add things or you take things out. We present that to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee then goes through and I believe added 20 some odd thousand dollars, I think, in the Police budget for some of the equipment that we're talking about. Now, we're at the town meeting column and the town meeting basically said, you're not getting \$773,000, so I need to adjust. We need to adjust those columns to reflect where we're going to be heading into the year. And all we're saying is some of this we're going to move we'd like to move from column eight, you know, from this cost center to this part of the cost center. Not going to change everybody's purpose. We're not adding any purposes. We're just trying to make it work for each of the departments. So Police basically got their bottom line is their bottom line, but they may spend it a little bit differently based on the critical need save. Same as Mr. Forrence. He may trim \$43,000 from the paving. Out of, 900,000 and something thousand. That's not a huge number. It's basically a couple, maybe three streets of finished course paving. The roads paved. It's not a dirt road. It's just it'll have to wait a year to get the final wear course. We have a fire vehicle, a fire truck that we need to make a payment on who is identified as is an important need when the Board approved it back in December time frame.

The Town Administrator continued saying, we have some accounts, time contingency accounts that we have a crew time fine. So when people leave, we could pay out of that fund. That's got a balance of over \$800,000 in it. We're not taking out of the fund. We're just not going to add to the fund this year or we're not going to pay out of that line item. Simple tradeoffs. It's like if you have a home budget and your roof goes, you might not be able to buy that car this year. You might have to wait another year or you might not be able to change your furnace if i you know something happens to your house. So that's what we're doing here. In essence, we are trying to take care what we think are the important critical items that this Board actually deliberated, discussed and put in the budget. They're not wish lists. They're not they're not spending more than were appropriated for. It's just we're not going to do this. Instead, we're going to do this. I wish we didn't have to do this would be so

much, life would be so much easier if we got the budget. We didn't. That's the reality. We also do not have the ability to transfer from a warrant article back into the budget. That is, you cannot do that. That is illegal. You could go the other way if you needed to. For example, for some reason, you were a little short on a warrant article you could transfer into it, but you cannot go the other way. So any of that discussion is off the table. And as you recall, the police expansion and renovation and the retaining wall at the station also did not pass. They cannot be done. Quite simply put, they can't be done. Those were not approved by the voters, but the voters approved here was basically a budget. It has purposes. We are not changing the purposes. We have a police purpose. We have a fire purpose. We have a DPW purpose, IT purpose, library purpose. We're not funding something that didn't exist. We're just looking at in and amongst the accounts under that fund. How are we going to accomplish this? So I know there's a lot here. And again, this is really our chance to discuss this because the new fiscal year will be upon us soon.

So if we don't spend something, yes, of course we'll keep track of it. And just to make a point about registrations for vehicles, I respect that we always try to be last year, we pulled in 5.8 million dollars' worth of car registrations, last fiscal year. This year on track to do that, our budget for next year is 5.4.. So we've scaled it back. We're always trying to be careful that we don't get ahead of ourselves because I can't predict who's going to register what, for cars and if for some reason it falls short, the town has a healthy undesignated fund balance for a reason, it's to help us weather difficult times. So if revenue drops, we have that money to help us keep the tax rate fairly stable on the Town side of the ledger. That's what that's what the whole point of that is.

Selectman Gagnon was recognized and said Thank you, Madam Chair. So if I understand this correctly on page seven, I think you've already stated this, but just say it out loud so I understand here the default reduction column, that was everything that we wanted in the budget, the \$773,621. Obviously, we didn't get that correct. The funded amount. You said you see zeros here. We're not going to fund those anymore. But the other positive amounts you are you. Do you consider critical and you're funding through? I see in the notes here other areas, so that's where you talked about moving funds from one area to the other because you find this is critical and that adds up. The Town Administrator said, Let me correct that. The department's find them as critical. It's not just me. These are your professionals telling you this. Selectman Gagnon said Thank you. Thank you for that correction and for that that you've funded \$486,000. And are you saying that you still need the \$287,000? The Town Administrator replied no. I'm telling you, the \$287,000 is not going to be funded. We cannot make that up. That's the delta between the \$773, the \$486 and hence the zeros. Yeah. We're not going to do those. That adds up to the \$287,585. We can't do it. We don't have the money. Selectman Gagnon then said got it. And so, then my target becomes this \$486,036, that is what you've deemed as what we need to come up with. And you don't.

The Town Administrator replied in our opinion, what we're doing is transferring funds from something we're not going to do to something we're going to do. So we're not we're not, we're not adding any money. And the only exception to that is the Assessing money coming from a capital reserve fund. So that's, for lack of a better word, free money. There's going to be an element of the police, what you might call it, body cameras, \$50,000 is coming from a newly established capital reserve fund that helped us out. That's why we had that warrant article. That was a great thing that that passed. If that didn't pass, we'd have more difficulty. So a simple example is, for example, we decided that the board decided to go to all full time dispatchers in the PD. We used to have some part timers doing weekend shifts. Can't get those people anymore. And if you do, they're not properly trained in their skills and how to shot the last regular part time or retired last year. So the Chief had a proposal. I worked full time as we're going to have to in there at any at all times. And the delta between what the part time pool was and what the full time pool, because full timers get benefits, part timers don't was \$55,000. So how is he going to make that up? He has an officer going to be deployed in the military who makes more in the military and will not be getting paid a salary here for nine months to a year. So because we're not paying that salary, I can transfer the money off to dispatch and cover that \$55,000.

Selectman Gagnon then said and one closing question then you have already seen what I'm seeing here, what I'm understanding. You have already done the work. So you said you needed \$486,036 you've made the or you proposed the transfers to do that. You're saying that you're cutting out \$287,585 and you're asking us tonight to accept these notes as, as your movement of cups. The Town Administrator said so the recommendation, would be to approve the default the fiscal year 2022 default budget transfers as recommended by myself and the Department Heads. That's, that's what we're looking at. Selectman Gagnon replied, Thank you for that.

Chairman McGrath asked anyone else? Anyone want to make a motion?

Selectman Morin said Before we do that or anybody else want to come up and add anything or change anything or anything to that effect?

Chief Avery was recognized and said I'm not Going to add anything or change anything, Selectman Morin. But I made a few of the Chairman and Mr. Malizia aware that a federal grant became available for body worn cameras on, I believe it was Friday morning. Unfortunately, they're only going to give the award to 80 police departments in the country. And it's going to be based on poverty rate on cities throughout the United States and upon we're checking we're at like 9.6% poverty rate here in Hudson. I don't anticipate us achieving that federal fund. So it was worth a try. We're going to still apply for it and try it. Captain Bianchi has already been assigned it. I think it's like 35 pages long and He will start working on that tomorrow. I have nothing else.

Selectman Morin said so just so I'm clear that everything that the Department Heads felt doesn't need other than the zeroed out stuff, we will still be moving forward with.

The Town Administrator replied we are going to accomplish those needs with this. With this, with this transfer list. Yes. And again, this is from your Department Heads. These are things that they looked at very carefully. And again, I don't know about all, but some of us have been through this exercise a couple or three times, so it's not fun. We met on it and this is where we're at. We're trying to do the best we can to make sure that, you know, the citizens of this Town are served as they become accustomed to. And we realize we have budget constraints.

Chairman McGrath said so recommended motion is to approve the 2022 default budget transfers as recommended by the Town Administrator. Does anyone care to make that motion? Selectman Roy said I'll make the motion. Thank you, Selectman Roy. Seconded by Selectman Gagnon. Seeing no discussion a vote was taken. Carried 4-0. Thank you very much, Mr. Malizia and Department heads.

Selectman Morin was recognized and said now that we're done that I have a question. The Comcast at the dump, what one thousand...how much is that Comcast at the dump? Selectman Roy responded \$1,583. Selectman Morin said so we here tried to save some money and make sure these people get everything they need. And I know it's a minor thing, but I only get eight dollars a week but if we can take that out of what I get that's going to save some money cannot be done? The Town Administrator replied If you'd like to make a donation, we can certainly talk to our Attorney to see how we would do that. Selectman Morin said can you please do that. The Administrator replied if you want to do a donation of some sort. The board would have to accept it. We could figure out how we could handle it. Selectman Morin laughed and said I mean, I can't pay for the fire truck, which I would rather do But if we can do that, if it's going to help out, The Town Administrator said If you would like to send me something real quick and I'll speak to our council, Selectman Morin said Because that's the only thing on the budget that I could probably afford with the eight dollars a day that I get.

Chairman McGrath asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Selectman Morin said No, but I would like to put on to the next meeting the bathroom, see what we're going to do with that so we can talk about that because we got to stop what's going on in there one way or the other. Chairman McGrath replied you know I've got to tell you that without knowing the particulars, I'm disgusted beyond words. The

Town Administrator and Selectman Morin both replied it's disgusting. The Chairman replied, I don't I don't want to hear the details. I don't. So spare me Selectman Roy said Think I think Mr. Forrence is right, that if we limit the hours. The Town Administrator replied the odds of getting caught a greater for the hours that you're there, quarter nine, most people are gone, but you're still there at six. Oh, right. Maybe not going to engage in that kind of behavior. Selectman Roy said And I don't I don't know how early they opened, but even adjusting it that way. So, again, it's just a limited time. The Administrator replied I suspect it's more towards the latter part of the day.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. by Selectman Gagnon by Selectman Morin. Carried 4-0.

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

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Marilyn E. McGrath, Chairman

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David Morin, Selectman

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Kara Roy, Selectman

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Brett Gagnon, Selectman