

**MINUTES
2023 TOWN OF HOOKSETT DELIBERATIVE SESSION
CAWLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

FEBRUARY 4, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Moderator Todd Lizotte called the meeting to order at 9:00 am at the Cawley Middle School on February 4, 2023.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Members of Boy Scout Troop 292 led the Pledge of Allegiance, and their Color Guard displayed the flags.

INTRODUCTIONS: Moderator Lizotte introduced the Town Councilors in attendance: Vice-Chair Timothy Tsantoulis, Secretary Randall Lapierre, Alex Walczyk, David Boutin, John Durand, Roger Duhaime, David Ross and Keith Judge. He then introduced Town Administrator André Garron, Town Attorney Matt Serge, Finance Director Christine Tewksbury, Executive Assistant Wendy Baker, Town Moderator Todd Lizotte, Supervisors of the Checklist Mike Horne, Barbara Brennan and Kim Daggett, Town Clerk Karina Towne and representatives from the Sewer Department, DPW, Police and Fire Departments.

Moderator Lizotte introduced the Town Warrant and read the introduction.

ARTICLE 1

To choose all necessary Town officers for the year ensuing.

ARTICLE 2

Shall the municipality approve the Hooksett Town Charter amendment summarized below?

Section 3.6, paragraph F: The Council may adopt, amend, or repeal zoning ordinances, historic district ordinances, or building codes after the Planning Board holds at least one public hearing in accordance with RSA 675:7. The hearing must occur within [30 days] of the introduction of a proposed change, and conclude with a vote by the Planning Board on a recommendation. Twenty-five or more voters may petition for an amendment to a zoning ordinance, historic district ordinance, or a building code in accordance with the procedures outlined under RSA 675:4.

The purpose of this amendment is to provide more opportunities to implement zoning amendments recommended by the master plan. The public would have more opportunities to be involved with the amendment process.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked what the Council vote was for this article?

Councilor Duhaime: Stated he is against this article. He is on the Zoning Board and it is hard to keep it staffed as a volunteer board and doesn't feel it will encourage people to want to be on it.

Councilor Ross: Stated it was a split vote.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked if the Council would be opposed to listing their vote on Articles 2 & 3 as it is on all other Articles?

Councilor Ross: Stated that it should be.

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis: Stated there will be a meeting of the Council following the Deliberative Session and they can vote on listing the requested votes on the warrant/ballot.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked how the public will have more opportunities to be involved with the amendment process as stated in italics? He said the public will lose all opportunity in the voting process and is opposed to that.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Asked why there is a need for this? She doesn't believe it would be done quicker and it is not in the best interest of the community. She is not sure the Council will have the time to dedicate the justice this deserves and it is taking away the will of the voters that voted for the Master Plan.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Stated he has been a resident over 30 years. He asked how many Zoning Board members there are? It was answered 5 full members and 2 alternates.

Councilor Ross: Stated this is a power grab by Town Council. He believes it should not be the authority of the Town Council as it is the tax payers property.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Asked if there is a problem with the present system that is in place? Is there a vehicle in place to vet the volunteers of the boards?

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: He doesn't feel Hooksett should adopt a process that is done in cities.

ARTICLE 3

Shall the municipality approve the Hooksett Town Charter amendment summarized below?

Section 11.2, Zoning Board of Adjustments: There shall be a Zoning Board of Adjustment appointed by the Council, consisting of five (5) members each serving a three (3) year term and five (5) alternates each serving a three (3) year term. Such terms shall be staggered. The Council shall fill any vacancy for the period of the unexpired term. The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall have all the powers granted to such boards under state law.

The purpose of this amendment is to follow RSA 673:6, I (a) which allows for the local legislative body to appoint not more than 5 alternate members to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Councilor Ross: Stated this is also a power grab by the Town Council to pack the Zoning Board with its own appointees and he is against this.

Councilor Duhaime: Stated he is the Town Council representative on the Zoning Board and there is a need to get as many volunteers on this Board as possible because it takes years to gain the knowledge and experience so that they are ready when other members retire from the Board.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 4:

Operating Budget

Shall the town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, for the purposes set forth therein, and other appropriations voted separately totaling **\$23,226,371.00**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$22,659,634.00, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town meeting, or by law or the Town Council may hold one special meeting, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Estimated tax rate impact \$6.61. Recommended by Town Council (4 Yes - 3 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 4 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Alex Walczyk, 7 Heritage Drive: Submitted a motion to amend Article 4, Operating Budget, to increase the Assessing Department line item Professional Services \$30,000. This would increase the current Assessing Budget to \$252,948. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion. The Town of Hookset currently has approximately 6,400 properties that need to be periodically assessed and the State recommends every 4-6 years, but if you break it down each year it could take up to 16 years. It has been over 10 years that Hooksett has completed this work. If the Town cannot complete this the State could come in and get a third party to complete the work and they will bill the Town. For the tax rate to be properly set, the Assessing Department and the Board of Assessors need accurate data because with inaccurate data it becomes increasingly hard to manage. In 2020 7 out of the 49 tax map's valuation was \$209 million and before the statistical verification was performed 641 properties were reviewed and the adjusted valuation increased by \$3.7 million bringing the total to \$213 million, the result on the tax base was an increase of revenue of \$85,000 in 2020. Something similar happened in 2021. The \$30,000 increase would help to complete this review quicker and would bring revenue in.

Moderator Lizotte called for a vote on the motion to increase Article 4, Assessing Department line item Professional Services by \$30,000. Motion failed 12 Yes – 14 No.

Mike Horne, 1 Monroe Drive: The line item for Town Clerk is based on the Operating Budget and if this budget fails it would revert to the default budget and the Town Clerk would only be paid

\$5,000 for the year. He wanted to make sure the voters were aware of this because he does not feel it is enough.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked if the estimated tax rate impact was an additional \$6.61?

Christine Tewksbury, Finance Director: The 2023 anticipated Operating Budget cost is \$6.61 as compared to 2022 which was \$6.28.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Would like to also echo what Mike Horne said, that the Town Clerk needs a decent salary or else we won't be able to attract anyone to it. He also asked what the amount of \$3,500 Town Administration employee shirts/uniforms was for and if it was necessary.

André Garron, Town Administrator: This was added to the budget this year for those opportunities that Town Hall staff goes out of the building for various reasons and we wanted them to have something that would identify them as Town of Hooksett employees.

Councilor Duhaime: The Town has Code Enforcement and Town Engineers that are going to job sites and no one knows who they are and this would help identify them.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: Stated they did review this budget and that line should have stuck out to them but it did not and was not addressed individually. Every dollar matters, the Budget Committee meets for 20 straight weeks and everyone is welcome to come and address their concerns before we get to the process of today.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Our town rate is higher than Manchester, who also has a tax cap. I don't understand how people on fixed incomes and elderly can afford any increases.

Wayne Goertel, 33 Park Lane: Wants to point out that anyone that has questions about the tax rate can look on the website on the finance page where the Finance Director has a great set of slides with charts on them that explain everything.

Councilor Lapierre: Has an answer for the person that asked what the Town Council vote was for Article 2 and it was 5-2 with 2 Councilors not in attendance.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street, motioned to remove \$3,500 from the Article 4, Operating Budget Town Uniform Shirts line item. Alyssa Ehl seconded the motion.

Councilor Duhaime: The Town needs to look at a bigger picture with the budget, \$3,500 is just a drop in the bucket.

Councilor Ross: He remembers years ago when he was on the Council they kept the increase at zero. I'm completely in favor of taking the \$3,500 off.

Moderator Lizotte called for a vote on the motion to decrease Article 4, Town Uniform Shirts line item by \$3,500. Motion passed 21 Yes – 5 No.

Councilor Ross: Stated he watches the taxes go up every year and feels badly for the people that can't afford it and the only thing he has seen cut is Family Services. Not in favor of allowing all of the increases.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: The Budget Committee did add \$10,000 back into the Family Services budget.

Harold Kozlowski, 22 Julia Drive: That was a wonderful speech that was given about holding the line on taxes however taxes and budgets are what drive government and what maintain our community and an amendment was just made to add \$30,000 to the assessing budget in order to accurately reflect our tax base and it was voted down. Which means we choose to be in the dark and not spend to find out what everyone's fair share is and would rather say no to everything. Remember that everything at the Federal and State levels of Government kicks down to the local level as well.

Councilor Ross: Feels that the Town has become top heavy.

Sarah Mackey, 39 Joanne Drive: Agrees with Mr. Kozlowski that it doesn't make sense that the Town doesn't want to spend the money to find out what the assessing impact on the Town will be and is unhappy about the commentary going back and forth about the municipal and school budgets and she asked to keep it to what we are here for which is the municipal budget.

Councilor Duhaime: Stated he has been on Town Council for 3 years and has wanted to go through each department's budget line by line and he doesn't feel it has been done.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 4 moved to the town ballot.

**Moderator Lizotte read Article 5:
Fire Union Contract**

To see if the town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hooksett Town Council and the Hooksett Permanent Firefighters Association Local 3264, IAFF which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2023-24	\$121,571.00	\$40,342.00	\$161,913.00

and further to raise and appropriate **\$161,913.00** for the current fiscal year; of this amount \$11,366.00 is authorized to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Revenue Fund, and the balance of \$150,547.00 to be raised from general taxation. Such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those

that would be paid at current staffing levels. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.07. Recommended by Town Council (4 Yes – 2 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Lapierre motioned that Article 5 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Durand seconded the motion.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Asked for an explanation of the step system increases and if this is a 1-year agreement?

André Garron, Town Administrator: This is a 1-year contract that includes the creation of a step chart which was not a part of their past contract but was negotiated as part of this contract and also includes placement on the chart as well.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Asked if the \$3,000 lump sum was going to be in place of overtime?

André Garron, Town Administrator: Answered that lump sum is not for overtime, it is for longevity pay. Currently it is paid as \$.80 on their salary but is being changed to a lump sum and is consistent with every other contract we have.

Wayne Goertel, 33 Park Lane: Shared an experience with the Hooksett Fire Rescue that he had and hopes next year a three-year contract can be agreed upon.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked if this contract contained an Evergreen Clause. It was answered that it does not.

Councilor Ross: This 1-year contract is a significant increase and will remain in the default budget. He feels they should remain at their current rate.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Asked what happened if this article is voted down?

Christine Tewksbury, Finance Director: The only time it becomes part of the default budget is if it passes this year. If it fails they would not receive any increases July 1st, they will remain in a status quo and a special town meeting would be needed to negotiate cost items only.

Councilor Ross: Stated I was mis-informed and would like to have clarification.

André Garron, Town Administrator: As stated by the Finance Director, the current contract ends on June 30, 2023 and if this article fails, there will be no contract in place to begin on July 1, 2023.

Councilor Judge: The employees would go into a status quo category and would operate under the current terms of their collective bargaining agreement but they would not receive any monetary items in the old contract. Also a point of clarification on the 12 step chart, it is a win

for both sides because they can assess the next few years and will be able to better understand and budget.

Councilor Duhaime: Stated he really likes his Fire Department and believes they should have raises but he does not support this because these raises are higher than any other departments in town.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 5 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 6:

Non-Monetary

Shall the town, if ARTICLE #5 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address ARTICLE #5 cost items only? (Majority vote)

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Point of order that all articles should be shown in the Voter's Guide.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 7:

Non-Union Raises

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$120,638.00** for an increase in salaries and benefits for non-union full-time and part-time Town personnel.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2023-24	\$100,838.00	\$19,800.00	\$120,638.00

Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.06. Recommended by Town Council (6 Yes - 1 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 7 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Lapierre seconded the motion.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Asked if the COLA was 2.2% and the merit of 1.8%, total up to 4%, correct?

André Garron, Town Administrator: Answered correct.

Mike Horne, 1 Monroe Drive: Asked why these increases are not in the regular budget?

André Garron, Town Administrator: Answered that historically it has always been a warrant article.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 7 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 8:

Police Union Contract

To see if the town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hooksett Town Council and the Hooksett Police Union Local 46, NEPBA which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

<u>Estimated increase over prior year</u>			
<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2023-24	\$ 66,839.00	\$ 26,073.00	\$ 92,912.00
2024-25	\$ 59,273.00	\$ 19,240.00	\$ 78,513.00
2025-26	\$ 70,019.00	\$ 21,360.00	\$ 91,379.00

and further to raise and appropriate **\$92,912.00** for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.04. Recommended by Town Council (6 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 8 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Lapierre seconded the motion.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Asked about how the increases will be each year for this contract as it looks like it will be approximately \$262,000 over the 3 years?

André Garron, Town Administrator: Answered yes that the cumulative amount is correct and each year the percentage is 4.15% for year 1, 3.53% for year 2 and 3.76% for year 3.

Councilor Ross: He is happy with this reasonable contract and is in favor of this article.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 8 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 9:

Non-Monetary

Shall the town, if ARTICLE #8 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address ARTICLE #8 cost items only? (Majority vote)

Moderator Lizotte read Article 10:

Police Supervisors Union Contract

To see if the town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hooksett Town Council and the Hooksett Police Supervisors Union Local 633, Teamsters which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2023-24	\$ 44,978.00	\$ 14,508.00	\$ 59,486.00

and further to raise and appropriate **\$59,486.00** for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new

agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (6 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Lapierre motioned that Article 10 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 10 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 11:

Non-Monetary

Shall the town, if ARTICLE #10 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address ARTICLE #10 cost items only? (Majority vote)

Moderator Lizotte read Article 12:

Merrimack Riverfront Trail System Phase 4

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$385,000.00** for the purpose of constructing Phase IV of the Merrimack Riverfront Trail with \$35,000.00 to come from Conservation Fund; \$20,000.00 to come from Conservation Land Improvements Capital Reserve Fund, \$80,000.00 from NH Parks and Recreational Trail Program Grant and \$250,000.00 from general taxation. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the Phase IV of the Merrimack Riverfront Trail is completed or by June 30, 2028, whichever is sooner. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.12. Recommended by Town Council (9 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (7 Yes – 1 No).

Councilor Walczyk motioned that Article 12 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Stated she is Chair of the Conservation Commission and wanted to impress to the community the importance of trails in NH that bring new people to town and also provide a quality of life to those that live in town. The trail runs along the Merrimack River and it is the last Phase of a plan that has been worked on for the last 10 years. The town has received \$80,000 in a State grant to put towards this last phase that takes the trail to Allenstown who is also planning to continue their trail down to Hooksett's to meet up with it. If completed, it will be 4 miles from the dog park to Allenstown and back. She encourages everyone to support this article to complete the beautiful trail.

Alyssa Ehl, 27 Barberry Street: Stated this is frivolous right now and money that doesn't need to be spent as well as later Article 24 will ask for more money to replenish the fund that some of these funds will be taken out of.

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Stated that like everything, things get more expensive year after year and wants to point out this is a one shot deal to get this project finished. If the article fails and it comes back on the warrant next year it will have a 3% increase. Another option is

that the people vote to stop where the trail is now and complete it as is. She doesn't feel that is the way to go given what has been invested so far in the last 10 years. Article 24 that was previously mentioned is used for many other things and is asked to be replenished every year.

Mike Horne, 1 Monroe Drive: Asked if this article fails, will the Town still receive the \$80,000?

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Answered that we will not get the \$80,000 and is unsure if an extension would be granted.

Mike Horne, 1 Monroe Drive: This might not be the year, maybe the amount can be amended down a little.

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis: Stated this is a quality of life for residents and attracts others to Hooksett along with 9 years of work that benefits everyone, not just a small group.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: Thanked everyone for their time and service. Asked if the \$80,000 grant was contingent upon passage of this warrant article?

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Answered it is unclear because they have not asked for an extension, but it is safe to say we wouldn't receive it if the article fails.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: Asked how was the \$250,000 amount arrived at?

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Answered that the Conservation Commission obtained a firm cost projection from Stantec and then they worked the Finance Department on how to break down where all of the funding would be best to come from to minimize the amount coming from taxation.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: Asked how is the trail an economic investment as stated?

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Answered when non-residents come into Hooksett to use the trail, they may stop for food or to shop.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: At a previous Conservation Commission meeting it was said there is \$199,000 leftover from Phase 3, is that figure accurate?

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Answered it is approximately \$191,000 that is leftover from 2 years ago to complete Phase 3 and the reason that money is still available is because there is still work to do to alleviate flooding issues. The plan is to put in three culverts this year and if that money is not used it will revert to the general fund.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: Asked if this article passes, do the taxpayers have assurances that none of the money will go towards killing wildlife as it was this past year?

Moderator Lizotte answered that the Conservation Commission has indicated that the money is going towards the costs associated with the engineering of the project.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road, motioned to amend Article 12 to have \$125,000 come from general taxation and \$125,000 come from unreserved fund balance. Mike Horne seconded the motion.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Stated he believes there is \$125,000 that can be used from the unreserved fund balance and it cuts down the tax rate impact from \$.12 to \$.06 and still accomplishes the goal of the warrant article.

Christine Tewksbury, Finance Director: Stated currently 5.4% is what the town has in unassigned fund balance which equates to over \$3,000,000. The policy of Town Council is to keep 5% unassigned fund balance so it appears there would be enough for \$125,000.

Kathy McClean, 64 Dale Road: Stated she will be voting no on the article and read a lengthy letter on her reasons.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Stated that this is a lot of money and the danger is if it fails we lose the \$80,000 potentially from the State. Could the \$125,000 be reduced even further to assure residents would vote for it and the \$80,000 wouldn't be lost?

Councilor Ross: Stated the fund balance is already low, it should be at 8% to be fiscally responsible. If the funding is cut, then the job just doesn't get done.

Virginia Kozlowski, 22 Julia Drive: Stated she is in favor of the amendment.

Wayne Goertel, 33 Park Lane: Stated we might be tying the hands of the Town Council later in the year when there may be a potential need of the \$125,000 unreserved fund balance.

Councilor Duhaime: Stated it is important to preserve trails and the prices are always going to keep going up.

Councilor Ross: Stated the fund balance is part of the Town's economic health and having a fund balance that is already as low as it is, is not fiscally responsible.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked what the Department of Revenue recommended percentage is for the unreserved fund balance?

Christine Tewksbury, Finance Director: Answered that we use a recommended range from 5% to 8% on all appropriations for the school, the town and for the county. The Council's policy is a minimum of 5% with a target goal of 8%.

Moderator Lizotte called for a vote on the motion to amend Article 12, to \$125,000 from general taxation and \$125,000 from unreserved fund balance. Motion passed 14 Yes – 12 No. Moderator Lizotte declared Article 12 moved to the town ballot.

**Moderator Lizotte read Article 13:
Capital Reserve Funding – Fire Apparatus**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$250,000.00** to be added to the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.12. Recommended by Town Council (9 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 13 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Lapierre seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 13 moved to the town ballot.

**Moderator Lizotte read Article 14:
Capital Reserve Funding – Town Building Maintenance**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$200,000.00** to be added to the Town Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.10. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (7 Yes – 1 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 14 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Durand seconded the motion.

Councilor Ross motioned to amend Article 14 and reduce the amount to \$100,000. Alyssa Ehl seconded the motion.

Councilor Ross: Believes it will have a better chance to pass at \$100,000. He thinks it has only been \$100,000 asked in the past and \$200,000 is too much.

Jim Michaud, 11 Laurel Road: Asked wasn't the Town Council unanimous on this vote? What has changed?

Councilor Ross: Answered, the budget.

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis: Stated the vote recognizes 8 councilors and there are 9 councilors which means someone was absent for the vote.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: He supports this amendment, there were no funds drawn from the reserve last year and it has a high balance now.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: \$800,000 is not a lot to sustain all of the buildings owned by the town. Once it reaches a certain comfortable amount is when spending will happen. This leaves funds in the reserves for emergencies.

Germano Martins, 17 Stevens Drive: Stated this is the kind of savings that we can't afford not to support. Vote no on this amendment, it would be a very expensive mistake.

André Garron, Town Administrator: Reminded the Council of two projects coming, evaluating the library roof and after a recent storm there is damage at the Safety Center that this money will be utilized for. These funds are helpful to put aside to address issues like this and hope to continue with this capital reserve contribution.

Moderator Lizotte called for a vote on the motion to decrease Article 14 by \$100,000. Motion failed 10 Yes – 17 No.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 14 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 15:
Capital Reserve Funding – DPW Vehicles

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$200,000.00** to be added to the Public Work's Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.10. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Lapierre motioned that Article 15 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Vice-Chair Tsantoulis seconded the motion.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: Stated this is another article that is good for planning.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 15 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 16:
Capital Reserve Funding – GIS Digital Parcel ReCompilation

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$100,000.00** to be added to the Town Wide Digital Mapping Systems Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.05. Recommended by Town Council (5 Yes – 4 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 16 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Councilor Ross motioned to amend Article 16 and reduce the amount to \$100. Alyssa Ehl seconded the motion.

Councilor Ross: Stated it is a place to save money and it is not critical.

Kathy Lawrence, 57 South Bow Road: Stated she is a town employee and she uses the GIS system every day, it is a very important tool for all of the employees and the residents. She is able to look at properties with residents and developers. The current GIS is aged and not fully accurate.

Virginia Kozlowski, 22 Julia Drive: Asked why not zero out the article?

Councilor Ross: Answered because he doesn't think they want you to zero it out and that it would change the intent of the article.

Virginia Kozlowski, 22 Julia Drive: I disagree with zeroing out warrant articles because there is a small minority of the voters here and people are watching online, but more people will come out to vote and they should have the final vote, not this tiny little group.

Cindy Robertson, 33 Autumn Run: Asked since there is a higher amount needed to fund the project and the ask is only for \$100,000, will there be another warrant article next year to ask for more?

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: Answered yes, it will be recurring until it is properly funded.

Lee Ann Moynihan, 4 Short Avenue: Sees the value of the GIS system, but thinks the Town can hold off on this for now and agrees with the amendment.

Alan Brennan, 29 Pleasant Street: Once again the tax payers gave the fund \$100,000 last year and nothing was spent. Asked if there are any plans to use last year's and this year's \$100,000?

Councilor Lapierre: Explained the total cost of the project is \$537,000 and is tentatively scheduled to be done in fiscal year 2025/2026.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: Stated that in the summer meetings, where they plan out where all of the funding will come from for the capital projects, the Town Planner mentioned that it might be possible to collaborate with another town to reduce the cost of this as well as do it sooner.

Councilor Ross: The system exists, it's not perfect and neither will the update be perfect. We don't need this.

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis: Spoke on the importance for saving in these Capital Reserve funds.

Moderator Lizotte called for a vote on the motion to decrease Article 16 to \$100. Motion failed 9 Yes – 15 No.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 16 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 17:

Capital Reserve Funding – Drainage Upgrades

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$100,000.00** to be added to the Drainage Upgrades Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.05. Recommended by Town Council (6 Yes – 1 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Durand motioned that Article 17 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Judge seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 17 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 18:

Capital Reserve Funding – Fire

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$77,500.00** to be added to the previously established Capital Reserve Funds and to apportion the sum among several funds listed below:

Air Packs & Bottles	\$ 27,500.00
Fire Rescue Tools & Equipment	<u>50,000.00</u>
Total	\$ 77,500.00

Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.04. Recommended by Town Council (7 Yes – 1 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 18 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 18 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 19:

Police Tasers

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$68,000.00** to be used to purchase police tasers including accessories and training equipment. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Durand motioned that Article 19 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Vice-Chair Tsantoulis seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 19 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 20:

Capital Reserve Funding – Emergency Radio Communications

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$62,500.00** to be added to the Emergency Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Boutin motioned that Article 20 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Vice-chair Tsantoulis seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 20 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 21:

Capital Reserve Funding – DPW Parks & Recreation Facilities Development

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000.00** to be added to the Parks & Recreation Facilities Development Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.02. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Judge motioned that Article 21 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Walczyk seconded the motion.

Councilor Duhaime: Would like to see this article passed and wants to have a park on the west side of the river.

Councilor Judge: Echoed Councilor Duhaime’s comment.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 21 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 22:

Capital Reserve Funding – Automated Collection Equipment

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000.00** to be added to the Automated Collection Equipment Capital Reserve previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.01. Recommended by Town Council (7 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 22 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Walczyk seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 22 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 23:

Capital Reserve Funding – Revaluation

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000.00** to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.01. Recommended by Town Council (7 Yes – 2 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Vice-Chair Tsantoulis motioned that Article 23 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Walczyk seconded the motion.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 23 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 24:

Capital Reserve Funding – Conservation Land Improvements

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000.00** to be added to the Conservation Land Improvements Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.01. Recommended by Town Council (8 Yes – 0 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Walczyk motioned that Article 24 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Boutin seconded the motion.

Councilor Duhaime: Feels the \$30,000 is not enough and hopes to see it increase in the future.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 24 moved to the town ballot.

Moderator Lizotte read Article 25:

Police Detail Fund

To see if the town will vote to change the percentage of revenues for Police Special Details for public safety services deposited into the Police Special Detail Revolving Fund from 100% to 80%? Such revenue and expenditures shall be accounted for in the Police Special Detail Revolving Account, already established. (2/3 ballot vote required). Recommended by Town Council (6 Yes – 2 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (8 Yes – 0 No).

Councilor Lapierre motioned that Article 25 as read be placed on the Town of Hooksett official ballot. Councilor Walczyk seconded the motion.

Brian Soucy, Budget Committee Chair: Detail money has been locked in to be exclusively used for Police Details only. This will generate 20% of those revenue dollars to go back to the town to offset the tax burden.

Moderator Lizotte declared Article 25 moved to the town ballot.

Councilor Ross: was asked by Planning Board Chair, Tom Walsh to convey his complete opposition to Article 2.

Moderator Lizotte declared the meeting adjourned at 11:48 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy A. Baker

Wendy A. Baker

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Karina Yanez