

TOWN DELIBERATIVE SESSION – FEBRUARY 4, 2017

TOWN OF HOOKSETT DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES Cawley Middle School Saturday February 4, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Moderator, Don Riley called the First Deliberative Session to Order at Hooksett Cawley Middle School Cafeteria Center at 9:02 AM.

Boy Scout Troop led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

James Sullivan, Chair, Rob Duhaime, John Giotas, Adam Jennings, James Levesque, Marc Miville, David Ross, Tim Tsantoulis, and Don Winterton

Moderator, Don Riley

Supervisor of the Checklist Mike Horne and Bryan Williams

Town Clerk, Todd Rainier

Legal Counsel, Matt Serge

Registered voters – 78 in attendance

PROOF OF POSTING

Proof of posting was provided by the Dr. Dean Shankle.

The Moderator introduced the members of the Town Council in Attendance as well as the Town Staff.

The Moderator thanked the Cawley Staff and the Town Staff for all the work in setting up the meeting.

The Moderator recognized all veterans for their service.

A general overview of the rules and procedures was given by the Moderator and are available in writing in the voter's guide.

BUSINESS

Moderator Don Riley read the Warrant Articles into the record:

To the inhabitants of the Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire, in the county of Merrimack in said state, qualified to vote in Town affairs.

You are hereby notified to meet at **David R. Cawley Middle School on Saturday, February 4, 2017 at 9:00 am** for the first session of the Town Meeting to discuss and amend, as required, warrant articles 3 through 19.

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The final ballot vote for warrant articles will take place at **David R. Cawley Middle School on Tuesday, March 14, 2017**. The polls will be open from 6 am until 7 pm.

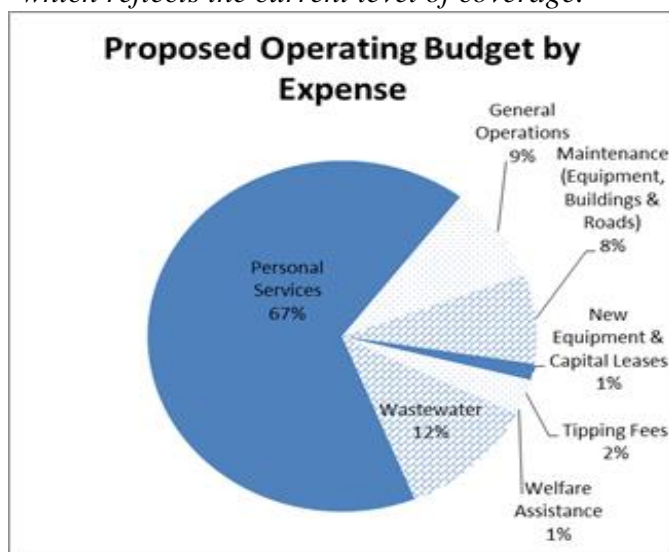
The **estimated tax impact** is provided to give voters an idea of what the individual items will cost if approved. The estimated tax rate impact information is simply an estimate based on a current snapshot in time using the information and revenue projections that are available at the time of printing. The actual tax rate is not set until the fall using actual information known when the rate is set by NH Department of Revenue Administration.

Article 3

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 **\$18,136,705.00**. Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$18,240,669.00, 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 \$6.67. Not recommended by Town Council (0-8), Recommended by Budget Committee (10-0).

A “Yes” vote would approve the operating budget of \$18,136,705 as presented by the Budget Committee. The operating budget does not include raises for employees or new positions, with the exception of Administration, Library and Wastewater which are detailed below. However in each of the departments the employer share of NH Retirement is included. Listed below are the projects, equipment and other items included in the operating budget that will continue to allow for the quality service the residents of Hooksett have come to expect.

*- The **Administration** budget increased in total \$244,108. This budget includes a 5% increase in the Administrator’s wages in accordance with his employment contract, as well as, an increase in the number of part time hours available. In this budget is \$224,335 to cover about 60% of the health insurance increase for the Town and another \$24,000 for property liability insurance, which reflects the current level of coverage.*



*-The **Assessing** budget has decreased \$6,388 largely due to a reduction in the assessor’s contract.*

*- The **Family Services** budget has basically remained level from the prior year. The Town’s welfare line has been lowered by \$25,000 based on the economy. A new request for bus transportation increased the budget by \$25,000; however there is offsetting revenue from a grant of \$20,000 which means the taxpayers will fund \$5,000 for this service.*

*- The **Finance** budget reflects an increase of approximately \$7,000. GASB compliance is needed this year at an estimated cost*

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\$5,000 and an additional \$2,000 is requested for auditing services.

- The **Fire-Rescue** budget has increased by approximately \$78,000. The majority of that increase is due to employer share of NH Retirement. Also there was an increase in rates for fire hydrant rental, and vehicle maintenance has a slight increase to address preventative maintenance issues.

- The **Police** budget has increased by approximately \$70,000. Again the majority of that increase is the employer share of NH Retirement. Wages have increased based on steps in the union contract. The department has some savings in fuel costs.

- The **Public Works** budget increased approximately \$282,000 over the current year's budget. The Community Development Division has a decrease in wages due to re-organization of positions and an increase in health insurance due to employee turnover. The Highway Division's biggest increase is the reconstruction of roads, costing \$300,000, which was approved by the voters last years. Vehicle maintenance costs were decreased by \$20,000. \$20,000 is budgeted for the Old Town Hall's restorations of windows and bathrooms. New equipment and other operational supplies have been kept to a minimum, reduced when possible. The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Division have a \$28,000 decrease in wages and a \$5,000 decrease in electrical costs. There are increases for water and ground maintenance for the field. The Recycling and Transfer Division reflects an increase of \$30,000 from the current year's budget. There are budget increases in both health insurance costs and vehicle maintenance and a decrease in budgeted fuel.

- The **Tax Collector** budget reflects a total decrease of approximately \$11,000 primarily due to employee turnover and some cuts to supplies and new equipment.

- The **Town Clerk and Elections** overall budget reflects a decrease of \$13,725 due to the reduction in the number of elections held during this year.

- The **Library** budget increased a total of \$40,317. This includes additional staffing, wages, benefits and books & materials.

- The **Wastewater** budget request has increased approximately \$67,000 due to wages, insurances, tipping fees and \$12,000 for replanting of land that has been cleared. There is a budget decrease in electricity costs of \$5,252.

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Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire					
FY 2017-18 Town Operating Budget					
Appropriation by Department					
Departments	FY 2015-16 Actuals	FY 2016-17 Amended Budget	FY 2017-18 Budget Com Recomm.	Dollar Change	% Change
*Administration	\$ 1,058,766	\$ 1,061,123	\$ 1,305,231	\$ 244,108	23.00%
Assessing	148,760	176,694	170,306	(6,388)	-3.62%
Family Services	117,550	193,823	193,587	(236)	-0.12%
Finance	226,997	224,920	232,286	7,366	3.27%
*Fire-Rescue	3,623,096	3,679,850	3,758,092	78,242	2.13%
*Police	3,878,253	4,392,372	4,461,940	69,568	1.58%
* Public Works	4,088,421	4,542,777	4,824,913	282,136	6.21%
Tax Collector	242,476	271,855	260,540	(11,315)	-4.16%
Town Clerk & Elections	28,354	42,773	29,048	(13,725)	-32.09%
Budget Committee	7,854	8,305	7,778	(527)	-6.35%
Capital Leases	88,056	88,057	67,474	(20,583)	-23.37%
Cemetery Commission	838	1,147	841	(306)	-26.68%
Conservation Commission	1,250	1,277	1,277	0	0.00%
Debt TAN interest	0	1	1	0	0.00%
Library	697,927	712,733	753,050	40,317	5.66%
Wastewater	1,931,988	2,002,935	2,070,341	67,406	3.37%
Grand Total	\$ 16,140,587	\$ 17,400,642	\$ 18,136,705	\$ 736,063	4.23%
Appropriation by Expense Category					
Expense Category	FY 2015-16 Actuals	FY 2016-17 Amended Budget	FY 2017-18 Budget Com Recomm.	Dollar Change	% Change
Personal Services	\$ 10,544,992	\$ 11,773,410	\$ 12,198,545	\$ 425,135	3.61%
General Operations	1,407,003	1,439,931	1,449,296	9,365	0.65%
Maintenance (Equipment, Buildings & Roads)	1,501,941	1,371,107	1,662,674	291,567	21.27%
New Equipment & Capital Leases	294,123	257,184	223,281	(33,903)	-13.18%
Tipping Fees	400,037	431,075	432,568	1,493	0.35%
Welfare Assistance	60,503	125,000	100,000	(25,000)	-20.00%
Wastewater	1,931,988	2,002,935	2,070,341	67,406	3.37%
Grand Total	\$ 16,140,587	\$ 17,400,642	\$ 18,136,705	\$ 736,063	4.23%

* Grants, donations and encumbrances have been removed from FY 2016-17 Budget for budgeting purposes.

A “No” vote would not approve the proposed operating budget and would result in the default budget totaling \$18,240,669 being approved. The operating budget is lower than the default budget by \$103,964. The town’s health insurance rates for 2017 increased by 27.9%. The Town Council asked for the full impact of this increase to be added to the budget \$390,413; however the Budget Committee recommend adding approximately 60% or \$226,585 to the operating budget.

M. Miville motioned to move Article 3 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by D. Winterton.

D. Winterton motioned to amend Article 3 to add \$77,000 to the operating budget the following items:

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\$5,000 for administration's employment testing
\$13,000 for computer new equipment
\$10,000 for assessing professional services
\$5,000 for town building maintenance
\$5,000 for town building electric
\$28,000 for park, recreation and cemeteries full-time wages
\$11,000 for park, recreation and cemeteries electric

Seconded by M. Miville.

D. Winterton: This money is needed for the operation of the town.

J. Hyde, Budget Committee Chair: Regarding the amendment, the Budget Committee recommended the Budget 10-0 and the Town Council didn't recommend. The Budget Committee went through those lines and removed this money because in the past they have not spent that money. Some movement was to remove from these lines and move to insurance because this year the town was behind the eight ball for insurance. This year, after the Council completed the budget they had an increase of 27% in insurance. The Budget Committee, in an effort to cover that increase moved money from other lines that had been underspent to help cover the increase. I point out that year after year the town underspends its budget. You can see that in the book. It is important to note that they underspent by \$999,000 last year which was \$750,000 in unfilled positions. They have started to fill those positions this year. This year, all that money was in the budget. They have hired the police and they are about \$500,000 under so far this year. The Budget Committee said you need an additional \$390,000 in insurance. The town's budget year runs July to June, the insurance year runs January to December; therefore there is an overlap. The Budget committee went over and over this budget. There is a new service in this budget for transportation for people for \$25,000. We looked at if insurance runs January to December and we have July to June, if we fund some of it, half, then in theory they can make adjustments to the plans this year to decrease the dollars. The budget has gone up \$194,000. Everything that the town asked for is in the budget. It is a bottom line budget. They have everything they need to fund everything they asked for. I would not support this amendment.

M. Miville: This motion addresses items that were cut from the budget, not transferred. This has nothing to do with the insurance. These are cuts that the Council believes are needed for the town. We have an ongoing replacement plan for computers. There is \$10,000 for assessing service that is to contract an Assessor to assist our staff. They are cutting electric and they are cutting Park and Rec wages for a position. Everything has to be truth in appropriation. Every dollar in the budget must represent. My question is if you didn't think the positions would be filled, why did you fund it? You have to appropriate every dollar in every line. You can't abstract budget. It is against State Law RSA 32 to not appropriate every line. There are 26 items cut and transferred to other funds. We chose 7 items out of the 26 items cut that we feel are needed by the town. We chose these crucial items that are needed by the town. Employee testing, if we are hiring, then we need to test those individuals

D Winterton: I thank the Budget Committee for their efforts and understand the dilemma represented with the insurance. The \$13,000 for computer new equipment is for servers. That is for records. We need to keep adding to our server base. The last item is the \$11,000 for DPW.

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The town is spending money for soccer fields at Peter brook. It would be a crime if we built those fields and then they can't light the field. The Council got hit with the insurance and we are only asking for \$77,000.

S. Perrotta, 22 Joanne Drive: The electric we are referencing, as was explained, was initially planning to open this year and now it won't open until the spring of 2018. The Assessor was reduced because historically it was not used. We did have to take down a Park and Rec position and we were looking at one of three (3) positions that were vacant for 3 years. We reduced the budget so that the taxpayers would have what was valuable to the town.

R. Duhaime: It was a two-year contract for the insurance. Any money on the budget that is not used is put back to the town fund and used to reduce the tax rate. The Council usually agrees with the Budget Committee. We were blindsided by the insurance and we didn't have time to renegotiate it.

John Hillis: I've listened to the Budget Committee and see how they scrubbed the budget and now they want it back in. I would rather not have money from my house held in reserve

J. Hyde: Regarding the \$77,000, Article 19 is \$63,000 and if defeated will be available to cover the \$77,000.

***Mike Sorel motioned to call the question. Seconded by Bryan Williams.
Vote in favor***

***Vote on amendment
Voice Vote – majority No. Amendment failed.***

J. Sullivan motioned to amendment Article 3 to add \$97,000 to the operating budget as follows:

***\$63,000 to Police Health Insurance
\$11,000 to Library Health Insurance
\$23,000 to Wastewater Health Insurance***

Seconded by T. Tsantoulis.

J. Sullivan: As the Chair of the Budget Committee mentioned, after the Council's review of the budget we learned that the insurance which was budgeted for 6% went up actually 27%. The Budget Committee moved \$194,000 to insurance but leaves us short. We looked at how to deal with that increase. The Council established a committee to look into dealing with that. Those meetings are available to be reviewed on the Town website. We are now requiring new employees to be offered only one plan which will save the Town and employees. We also allow current employees to move to this plan which will reduce cost. This increase will only cover 75% of the cost. Even moving to a more consumer driven plan, the \$194,000 added by the Budget Committee, we still need more to cover our costs. To compromise and find savings, we felt it was appropriate to deal with the \$390,000 and increase \$97,000. There will still be a \$90,000 short fall. If we are going to provide the insurance we have all approve of, we need to approve and increase by \$97,000.

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D. Winterton: I also was a member of the sub-committee to deal with the tremendous increase. We have contractual obligation to fund this insurance with our negotiating groups. We struggled whether to mandate to people's lives for immediate changes. We can only work within the Interlocal Trust because of the contract. The committee will meet after the election to work again to save money. When you build a bridge, you build it stronger than any truck to go over it. If we don't fund the insurance, we may have to make draconian changes. We have employees planning their lives based on their benefit packages. I don't think it is right to abandon those today but in the future I pledge to address it.

J. Hyde: Councilor Sullivan explained it effectively. We had several motions regarding this. Initially we voted not to add the insurance money back. We felt that there is money available. They budgeted \$3 per gallon for fuel and that has been underspent. The Budget Committee feels the Town had the money somewhere else in the budget. I am voting against the amendment.

B. Tilton: We funded about 70% of the insurance increase with \$194,000 as a compromise. The \$70,000 that was moved from other lines and went to the insurance. Only 6 months of the insurance year overlaps. We worked hard and this was a contentious debate and we asked for help from the Department Heads and the staff and we didn't get it.

M. Farwell, 24 Grant: I've been to the Committee hearings and it was contentious and everyone had the best intentions. The health insurance will have to be paid. This is reasonable and it keeps the budget below the default budget. I think they need this money and it will be difficult if they don't get it. The DPW has been understaffed because the salaries are too low. We have raised the salaries and should be able to fund the positions.

Peter Bartlett: \$63,000 will affect my budget and I will have to make that up in my budget and make reductions. I will hire all positions that the town has approved. The public safety is imperative. The \$63,000 will have to be made by either a reduction in a position or overtime. We have had some drastic things in this town and the incident at the Underhill school took all our staff. I cannot overspend my budget by law. Please let us put this money back in this budget. I have 3 officers at the academy and I will be at full staff of 30 positions which this town approved.

D. Ross: We need to pay the bill. If we don't fund it, we will cut. Returning money is commendable. We use that money to offset the tax rate. We are trying to be responsible and funding this insurance is primary. We have to pay the bill so let's be honest.

Pat Gosselin: In light of what I heard, I will vote yes but I think we need to make some changes in insurance.

M. Miville: There are real stories behind the budget lines and this is for real people. The reason the Budget Committee couldn't help the committee because it is the Budget Committee's budget once it is passed to the Committee. We have to budget for an entire 12 months. How will we represent the rest of the money? There is actually \$163,000 remaining and we are looking for \$97,000 and we will also look for a better plan. The gas line is a state bid and it is a lower amount than last year. For the Budget Committee or Council to budget is to provide services. It is not appropriate to say it is already in the budget.

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*Tammy Hooker motioned to call the question. Seconded by M. Farwell.
Voice vote in favor.*

*Vote on amendment
Voice vote majority Yes. Amendment passed*

New amended amount for Article 3 \$18,233,705.

D. Riley declared Article 3 moved to the ballot.

Article 4

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$200,000.00** to be added to the Public Works' Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.13. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

Explanation: Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$84,103.75. This savings account will assist the department in purchasing vehicles for plowing and road maintenance, including equipment to replace an aging fleet, which will reduce vehicle maintenance expenses. This reserve allows for the town to replace and add vehicles when needed, which evens the burden on tax payers by planning for the purchase.

J. Levesque motioned to move Article 4 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by R. Duhaime.

We have a balance of \$84,000 and this is for future trucks for plowing and road maintenance. This is a fund that was established so when we need a truck for the fleet, we will have the funds

D. Riley declared Article 3 moved to the ballot.

Article 5

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:

Estimated increase over prior year

Fiscal Year	Salaries	Benefits	Estimated Increase
2017-18	\$151,550.00	\$22,442.00	\$173,992.00
2018-19	\$ 97,960.00	\$32,442.00	\$130,402.00

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$173,992.00** for the current fiscal year; of this amount \$15,578.00 is authorized to be withdrawn from the Ambulance Revenue Fund, and the balance of \$158,414.00 to be raised from general taxation. Such sum represents the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over

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those that would be paid at current staffing levels. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.10. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

Explanation: *The Firefighters have been working without an agreement since June 30, 2015. This agreement addresses many issues, mainly employee retention. Due to low pay, Hooksett Fire-Rescue has experienced difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified candidates. In addition, this agreement contains significant concessions by the firefighters in health insurance co-pays.*

Donald Winterton motioned to move Article 5 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Adam Jennings

D. Winterton: This was not brought forward last year. They were without a contract since 2015. Our new Chief came on and was successful with helping as well as Assistant Chief Colburn. If we don't pass this, they now contribute 8% and if this passes they will contribute 15% in the first year and 16% in the second year. This is beneficial to the town. They come to the town and do their job and have not had a pay increase in 3 years.

P Gosselin: What are the salary increases in percentages?

D. Winterton: They are 3% in year one and two.

John Hillis: This has some health insurance co-pays. I'm not sure how to approach this. If it doesn't get passed what are the ramifications.

D Winterton: I would think the ramifications are it would be hard for Chief Burkush to retain and hire. If passed, there are other provisions, we have recreated longevity to make it more attractive and retain employees. We would have to go back to bargain but we can't do anything for another year and would function under the expired contract.

N. Forrest: How many fires have we had and how many houses destroyed?

Chief Burkush: We've had 12 structure fires in 2016 and a couple significant on Johns and Casey Drive. We have had a couple wildland fires as well. We have had only minor job related injury. We did transport 850 people by Ambulance for medical service. I support this agreement because there are significant health care concessions. They now only pay 8% and it will go to 15%. One issue that the town has faced is we hire firefighters and train them at \$30,000 per persons and then they leave. We want to retain. We also have management language which is beneficial and a paramedic training program.

Keven Sousa, Morning Side: This is very editorialized. It says underpaid. What is the comparison to surrounding towns? There is no transparency.

Chief Burkush: Starting firefighter pay is \$17/hr. and we require that they be certified prior and they must have a 2 year degree. The last firefighter went to Salem for \$22/hr.

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Valerie Silva: I had the worst type of heart attack and because they got to the house on time and because of the personnel on the truck, I am alive.

N. Forrest: There have been a lot of fires in Oregon and California. Has anyone from Hooksett gone to California to help?

Chief Burkush: Not this year but we have had some in the past.

D. Winterton: Regarding transparency, the entire contract is available on the town website.

Carol Harris, 5 Nancy Lane: I can't believe you can get anyone to take that job for \$17/hr. If you are going to spend to train, let's keep them.

D. Riley declared Article moved

Matt Broderick: I motioned to restrict reconsideration re-consideration of Article 3. Seconded by M. Farwell.

P. Gosselin: I don't think we need this motion.

J. Hyde: I wasn't planning on reconsidering everything but I don't like shutting anything down.

M. Farwell: I remember when people would leave the meeting and there are only a few people left in the room and these 7 people want to change the budget number. This is an attempt to make sure that what we voted on at 9 am will come out at 12 pm.

Vote 2/3 in favor by a voice and hand vote

Article 6

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$142,819.00** for an increase in salaries and benefits for non-union full-time and part-time Town personnel.

Fiscal Year	Salaries	Benefits	Total
2017-18	\$118,173.00	\$24,646.00	\$142,819.00

Estimated tax impact is \$0.09. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

Explanation: This article would provide a 2% cost of living wage increase to all non-union employees and a discretionary wage adjustment pool of \$47,606. There are 67 full-time and 24 part-time employees; including Police, Library and DPW employees. This article does not include the Town Administrator's position, seasonal or Wastewater employees.

Timothy Tsantoulis motioned to move Article 6 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by David Ross

M. Sorel: Could someone clarify the discretionary wage adjustment.

M. Miville: There is a 2% cost of living with an extra 1% for the Administrator to use for merit or wage adjustments for those on the lower scale.

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M. Sorel: The amount is 3% of the salary and who decides where the money goes.

M. Miville: All the employees get 2% with the remaining amount at the discretion of the Administrator.

D. Riley declared Article 6 moved to the ballot.

Article 7

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$120,000.00** to be added to the previously established Capital Reserve Funds and to apportion the sum among several funds as listed below:

Fire Apparatus	\$ 50,000.00
Air Packs & Bottles	20,000.00
Emergency Radio Communications	<u>50,000.00</u>
Total	\$120,000.00

Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.08. Recommended by Town Council (6-1), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

***Explanation: Air Packs & Bottles** - Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$202,100.18. The purpose of this article is to save for the replacement of all air packs and breathing air bottles in year 2020 at an estimated cost of \$300,000.00. The current air packs were purchased in 2005.*

***Explanation: Fire Apparatus** - Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$260,140.47. This request is to save and offset costs for the future replacement of the following fire department vehicles: engines, tankers, ladders and forestry. This is an ongoing request as these vehicles can cost anywhere from \$100,000 to \$800,000 individually.*

***Explanation: Emergency Radio Communications** - Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$87,381.87. Estimated year of purchase is 2024. These funds will be used in the future to purchase and replace the existing emergency radio communication system. Our radio system was replaced in 2014 after a lightning strike caused extensive damage. The police department was able to replace a major portion of the system with the funds that had been building in this capital reserve along with what the insurance covered. The town spent \$383,000. The police department anticipates the system will need replacing in ten years when the company, Motorola, no longer supports repairs or parts. The anticipated replacement cost is approximately \$500,000, so building this fund at \$50,000 a year for ten years will help ensure the town does not have to bear the burden of a major expense all at once.*

James Sullivan motioned to move Article 7 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Timothy Tsantoulis

J. Sullivan: The explanation under the articles is for those here and is included in the guide but will not appear on the ballot. This is for air packs for the Fire Department. These are items needed and have appeared for the last 10 years.

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Norm Forrest, Pine Street: What is in the fund currently?

D. Riley: There are 3 separate balances, \$500,000 each.

P. Gosselin: I don't see the \$50,000 for the radios.

C. Soucie: The deposits are for last year and not for this year yet.

Chief Bartlett: We had a lightning strike that destroyed our radio and we had money in our CIP and we got money from insurance and we were able to replace the majority of the system. That system is under warranty. This is to build for future replace when it is needed in 10 years for ½ million dollars.

D. Riley declared Article 7 passed to the ballot.

Article 8

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$100,000.00** for the Visionary Plan for Sewer and/or Other Infrastructure Improvements on the west side of Hooksett. The sum to come from fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. Recommended by Town Council (6-2), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

***Explanation:** The Town's Master Plan recommends a plan to develop Route 3A exits 10 and 11. These funds will be used for a detailed visionary plan of Route 3A focused on sewer and other infrastructure improvements. The plan will answer questions about potential build out and weather infrastructure improvements would attract commercial development that will increase property taxes. The plan will look at the feasibility of a 60/40 town/business model to help with cost of infrastructure improvements.*

Donald Winterton motioned to move Article 8 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by James Sullivan

D. Winterton: This is coming from fund balance so it is needed to be voted on because the west side of the river does not have the needed infrastructure for development. This will look at if it is viable. We need this to develop restaurants, hotels or hospitals. We need to spend money to make money. This will give us solid data to say this makes sense. I ask for your support and this will come from fund balance.

Cindy Robertson: The fund balance, we were concerned with the tax rate. If the money doesn't go to this, will it be used to offset taxes?

C. Soucie: The fund balance has been used historically to reduce tax rate. We used \$500,000 this year for the tax rate. You can use this fund for this. You can't change it this year. We use it for emergency situations like the discs.

P Gosselin: I agree with this but why couldn't we use the fund balance for the insurance increase?

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M. Miville: We were advised and considered using fund balance to cover the insurance increase. This increase for insurance couldn't not come from fund balance because the State would deem that we already had the opportunity to budget for this, so it would not be an emergency.

John Hillis: I'm not ready for development on the west side and more traffic and noise. There is development now has not reduced our property taxes. Does the money from current development go into a fund for development or reduce taxes because it hasn't been reduced so far.

D. Winterton: The first issue is noise from development. With development, there are regulations. The \$100,000 is to see if it makes sense. All taxes go into the general fund. The Exit 10 TIF went to the infrastructure and now it is paid off. The intent for this is 5 years from now your taxes are less. One thing we do control is what kind of industry we have for the town. Towns spend a lot of money on economic development. Bass, Walmart and Market Basket may leave because they are on septic. We have Exit 10 and Exit 11 which is valuable real estate. We need to think forward. This won't impact the town for the next 3-4 years.

J. Hyde: I was one of the 2 votes on the Budget Committee that was not in favor of this Article. This goes back to a general concept. Bass, Walmart, Market Basket, came here without us. They are multi-billion dollar companies. If they want it they can put it in. There are restaurants and medical facilities on the west side. I would like to see that \$100,000 to offset the tax rate. If they want a line they can pay for it. That is capitalism and I don't believe in corporate welfare.

M. Sorel: 54 Cross: I believe the first Master Plan was done in 1950 and in that plan and 2 subsequent plans it said that the west side would remain a rural area of the community. Then there Exit 11 and Exit 10 were developed as gravel pits I reject that the businesses will move out because of failed septic systems. We have a Route 3 in Hooksett that is sewer and developed and does the town want another Route 3 on the west side. I think sewer would help Exit 10 and 11 but I don't think we need it at this time. I think this could be better spent.

Terry Pfaff: We have a nice balanced tax base. We are stable. We did a TIF for Exit 10. I think this seed money would help that stability. Look at your Planning Board and the impact fees.

C. Soucie: On the town's website is a summary of the Exit 10 district and what value it produces.

R. Duhaime: I don't represent the west side but they are taxpayers and they should get services. As the TIF District would grow we were to look into sewer. These business, half a million goes into taxes and what services do they get? They don't get trash, sewer or schools. This is a bad time to ask for this but it shows good will on the part of the town. We will encourage businesses that they will get something for their tax dollars.

D. Ross: I voted against this because it is \$100,000 just to look at something with no solid results. The State is going to be doing road changes including the rotary at Hackett Hill. We also have topography challenges. This is \$100,000 that is not to be raised and this is your tax money. This is unnecessary and I'm afraid people will vote for this and it promising nothing. It doesn't include anything substantial and I think this is a bad idea this year. We have a lot of commercial property and there is a lot of vacant property with sewer and we should work to develop that.

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J Sullivan: The Council grappled with this Article. It was originally \$649,000. How do we as a town as a gateway to the North, which we are, we have Exit 9, 10, and 11 that have the potential for development and some without sewer. Administration looked at this and they indicated that \$100,000 will answer questions. We need to grapple how to look at growth in the exits in Hooksett and if comes from additional taxation or previously raised taxes. It gives us the ability to see how it will work and I think it makes sense.

J. Hyde: What will this bring us?

Dr. Shankle: I started in Planning as the Regional Director in Keene. I tried to figure what can be done. We need to look at the regional market. This is adjacent to the Village District. We need to do a regional market analysis and see if there is one on 3A which has river front property. I called it a build out study. We need a graphical representation based on our market niche.

We need to look at specific sites. It doesn't make sense to spend 18 million on a sewer project if there is only one restaurant that can go there. Once we have what is possible, then we decide on the implementation strategy if there is one.

Pat Burton, University Circle: We moved here three (3) years ago from Massachusetts because it was so beautiful with the rivers and streams and trails. We live off Route 3 and it is a used car lot. There is development on Route 3 and behind us are apartments. They are putting more apartments south on Route 3 and a large project across from the cinema. North to Allenstown there are large developments. Route 3 is a dangerous road. More development is something I cannot support.

A. Jennings: I don't support that. I think those developers came without sewer and were not promised sewer.

Robert Sweet, 76 Pheasant Hill Road: This \$100,000 looks like pie in the sky. We have development at Exit 10. They built it without us spending money. I don't support this.

***Linda Kleinschmidt call he question. Seconded by M Farwell.
Vote unanimously in favor***

D. Riley declared Article 6 moved to the ballot.

Article 9

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$90,000.00** to be added to previously established Capital Reserve Funds and to apportion the sum among several funds as listed below:

Parks & Recreation Facilities Development	\$ 15,000.00
Town Building Maintenance	<u>75,000.00</u>
Total	\$ 90,000.00

Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.06. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

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Explanation: Parks and Recreation Facilities Development - Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$94,934.54. The town continues to grow and we are forced to deal with aging structures, building updates and additional recreation areas that will need to be addressed. The Town has a list of items that need to be addressed within the next five years. Since addressing the lighting at Donati, the next project will be building updates to the Parks and Recreation building at Donati Park. The building is used to house the trucks, equipment and materials that are located at the facility and is used daily. The building has not been updated in over 15 years, while the Parks Division has grown.

Explanation: Town Building Maintenance - Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$110,248.95. This fund assists the Department of Public Works in addressing the needs of town buildings for unexpected situations and large projects. Since this fund was established in 2008, it has been used to:

- Replace the water main at the Public Library
- Conduct masonry work and window replacement at the Safety Center
- Replace the main steps at the Public Library
- Replace the truck lifts at the Highway Garage
- Correct issues (mostly electrical) identified by the Department of Labor's safety inspection
- Mold Remediation at the Court House
- Repairs to the Salt and Sand shed
- Lighting and ventilation upgrades to the highway garage
- Replaced 75% of the roof at 35 Main Street Town Hall.
- Replacement heater and exchanges at the Safety Center
- Replacing major components to the elevator at the Public Library

The Town has \$26,000,000 worth of buildings to maintain. Contributions to this fund yearly will help repair items in such a manner that it would not be a major impact to the taxpayers all at once. It is imperative that the Town pass this article to address future needs of the community.

John Giotas motioned to move Article 9 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Marc Miville.

J. Giotas: This is to put money aside for building maintenance and any major repairs.

M. Miville: This is to start putting money aside for large ticket items. The target plan is to improve the Donati buildings and create more storage rooms and build bathrooms. We like to have \$250,000 in the fund for maintenance.

D. Riley declared article 9 moved to ballot.

Article 10

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$78,269.00** for the salary and benefits to hire a full-time recreation director.

Fiscal Year	Salary	Benefits	Estimated Increase
2017-18	\$47,476.00	\$30,793.00	\$78,269.00

Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.05. Recommended by Town Council (4-3), Not recommended by Budget Committee (3-7).

Explanation: To hire a full-time employee whose would be responsible to plan and manage a comprehensive town-wide recreation program including day camps, special events and other

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programs as added. The position will oversee the Fun in the Sun summer camp and explore and initiate recreational events and programs for all ages. The position would be supported by tax dollars. All program operations, including additional staff will be paid for by the Recreation Revolving Fund.

Robert Duhaime motioned to move Article 10 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Adam Jennings.

R. Duhaime: This is to hire a full time coordinator for recreation. We are growing. The activity is being coordinated now by HYAA and is not always well coordinated with the town. This will improve activities in town.

M. Sorel: The Benefit amount is 65% more than the salary amount. Why are the benefits of 47,000 65% more?

C. Soucie: The benefits are \$30,000 which includes a family medical plan plus retirement.

M. Sorel: The \$31,000 is 65% of the salary. That seems like a high percentage.

C. Soucie: It includes NH retirement, and a 2 person plan for medical and dental and employment taxes, disability and life insurance as well.

M. Sorel: I can take the salaries in town and add 65% and get to the costs?

D. Riley: No it depends on the health plan.

M. Sorel: Is it the norm?

Dr. Shankle: Each component is a percentage. Some are fixed costs. Considering our wage rates, we probably have people making more in benefits than wages. There are some that take no insurance so it would be less.

C. Soucie: Different employees take different benefits and contributions to retirement are different.

P. Gosselin: I think this is a good thought but in light of the budget, we should hold off another year. Did the Council consider this before or after the insurance increase? I'm on the HYAA Board and I think there are opportunities for us to work more closely with the Town before we get a full time employee. We have the college available with the possibility of getting an intern to help with this.

J. Hyde: The Town Council vote was close. The Budget Committee debated this and understands that new employees cost a lot of money. We debated whether it was necessary. We have great programs that don't require a coordinator; we have HYAA, churches, and scouts. What is this person going to do beyond what is being done by volunteers?

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Cindy Robertson: Where did the salary amount come from if we have firefighters at \$17; why is this at \$47,000. The Administration put in a minimum salary for salaried employees established by the Obama Administration which is \$47,000 so we don't have to pay overtime.

B. Ehlers: Is there a current job description? Is a degree required and what kind of background is required.

D. Shankle: Our DPW Director called surrounding towns and there are minimum requirements. What is the person going to do? We now have a number of programs that are being overseen haphazardly like Fun in the Sun that has grown from 40 to 120 kids weekly and is being run by part time people. You have HYAA and others and no one is coordinating with the town. Over the last 10-15 years this town has done a tremendous job of accumulating conservation land and we now have a river front park and we have taken 25% off the tax rate. We should invest and try to make it generate cash for us either through tourism or somehow. My primary care doctor in Merrimack says he watches eagles nest by the river. There are a lot of things we could do better and sell better. People at visioning meetings have asked for this. Ultimately the people will decide.

Heather Rainer: The Library is being asked for more and more programs. We are asked to do Zumba for kids and yoga for kids. There is a need in this town.

B. Tilton: I support the concept but I voted against this. My wife supported this originally but when she saw the figure for the salary and the cost, she thought the costs were off the chart.

?, Pheasant Hill: Recreation is needed but the salary is out of line. It could be put together step by step possibly starting as part time in the beginning.

J. Hillis: We have a lot of recreation that is working and these numbers are high.

D. Ross: It is not the whole town's responsibility to take care of a few of the town's children. You are already paying for the facility, the lights etc. . . To grow our government to add this employee is not the right thing to do. This is a bad idea. We can possibly get two (2) employees part time for this money or get an intern from the college. This is a want and not a need.

D. Riley declared that Article 10 move to the Ballot

Article 11

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:

	Estimated increase over prior year		
Fiscal Year	Salaries	Benefits	Estimated Increase
2017-18	\$ 59,043.00	\$14,016.00	\$ 73,059.00
2018-19	\$ 94,172.00	\$20,977.00	\$115,149.00
2019-20	\$116,915.00	\$18,544.00	\$135,459.00

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and further to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$73,059.00** for the current fiscal year, such sum represents 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 \$0.05. Recommended by Town Council (8-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

***Explanation:** The passing of this article will ensure the implementation of the negotiated agreement between the town and the police officer and dispatcher collective bargaining unit (NEBPA Local 46). This negotiated agreement offers police officers and dispatchers reasonable pay increases over a three year agreement as outlined in the above matrix, while shifting some costs associated with medical insurance back to the employees. Additionally, this agreement provides for longevity pay rewards for specific milestones achieved such as years 6, 9, 12, 15 and 25 as the employees stay and grow with the community. This level of institutional knowledge and practical experience is invaluable to this community and will aid in quality employee retention. The entire proposed contract can be seen at www.hooksett.org.*

Robert Duhaime motioned to move Article 11 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Donald Winterton

R. Duhaime: This is something that the Council negotiated. It includes moderate increases and if we want to retain these employees we need to make it desirable.

D. Winterton: Negotiations went well and his is a 3 year contract and they agreed to contribute 16% in year 1 and 17% year 2 and 19% year 3. We adjusted the longevity so that we won't lose long term officers. We looked at competitive salaries. We are losing officers to Allenstown. We now can attract quality people. The issues are about crime, speeding and drugs.

J. Hyde: The Budget Committee noted concessions on the police side for percentage increases but they were tied to increases in salaries that offset that.

Chief Bartlett: Some of the increases come from the wage scale. The wage scale is a commonly used scale. This contract combines the patrol and sergeant scale into one. We are also going to tie the cola increases to the Consumer Index for cost of living. The other thing we did is the longevity incentive. It is in years 6, 9, 12, 15 and 31. This will help me keep employees with institutional knowledge. The larger communities don't deal with that. We can give an incentive at crucial levels of seniority. Officers are now required to commit to 36 months upon training. We spend a lot of money to train and hire so they must commit to 36 months upon hire. We did a comparison study and we are currently below the salaries of Allenstown and Litchfield. I think this is a fair compromise.

D. Riley declared Article 11 moved to the ballot

Article 12

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000.00** to be added to the Drainage Upgrades Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (6-4).

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Explanation: Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$247,446.85. It has been determined that various areas throughout the town have failed drainage pipes due to aging. Many of these pipes, and in some areas swales, were not installed to handle the amount of water that they are taking on, especially since the town has been experiencing more storms with higher volumes of water than in the past. This is helping to deteriorate the roads as well. These funds will help address issues and begin upgrades as necessary. During the last two fiscal years, funds have been used to repair Sherwood Drive and Grant Street.

James Sullivan motioned to move Article 12 to the Ballot. Seconded by David Ross.

J. Sullivan: This is an established fund to deal with the drainage in our road network. It has been used on Hale, Grant and Sherwood. It is a valuable tool for DPW to maintain our roads.

D. Riley declared Article 12 to the Ballot

Article 13

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000.00** to purchase a Fire Command vehicle for the Fire-Rescue Department. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (8-2).

Explanation: With the passing of this article, the Town will replace a 2001 Chevy Impala with a new command style 4x4 vehicle. The Impala has over 99,000 miles on it and will be removed from the Fire-Rescue fleet and recommend to be scrapped. This vehicle is used for emergency responses and daily operations to meet the needs for the Fire-Rescue department mission. The replacement vehicle is essential to safe operation at emergency incidents for on-scene personnel and involved bystanders. The vehicle, like other emergency response command vehicles, may sit with the engine running; at idle, for hours in order to electrically supply safety lighting, radios or other data devices being used.

David Ross motioned to move Article 13 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Marc Miville.

D. Ross: It is replacing a 2001 vehicle.

J. Hyde: I saw a Tahoe and Explorer n the lot today. What are those vehicles? Are they command vehicles and can they be repurposed?

S. Colburn: The two (2) that are here today are command vehicles. This is replacing a 2001 and we have a 2004 and a 2005 with over 120,000 as well. We have an aging fleet and this is to keep it up to date.

Carol Harris: The impala which has over 99,000 miles was scrapped? Does that mean destroyed?

M. Miville: It goes to State auction?

Carol Harris: Does it get thrown away or could it be donated?

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Dr. Shankle: It depends; sometimes we repurpose them in the town for staff. If we don't need them, we will trade them in.

J. Hyde: How many command vehicles do we have? What are they used for and how many do we really need?

S. Colburn: We have four (4) command vehicles. This one is the spare and is used for training. We do not have a backup vehicle when we have one go out of service. We have to carry a lot of equipment.

Bob Sweet: You now have four (4) command vehicles and one is a spare. When did you use four (4) vehicles this year? Four (4) vehicles seem like a lot.

S. Colburn: These are used every day by staff. They use them to go to training and medics going to classes. They are on the road every day.

D. Riley declared the article moved to the Ballot.

Article 14

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000.00** for the purpose of refurbishing Hooksett Fire Engine 5, a 2006 E-1 Typhoon Pumper. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.03. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (10-0).

***Explanation:** This vehicle is in need of some preventative maintenance to address rebuilding the apparatus pump, replacing old lighting system with higher efficiency and longer lasting LED lighting and other electrical system upgrades and maintenance, as needed, along with body restoration and coating to address all ongoing corrosion issues. Addressing these issues will prolong the life of the vehicle another eight to ten years, and improve the safety provided by this engine. This vehicle has 78,000 miles and 5,660 hours of services. It has reached its midpoint of expected service life. To insure confidence in its operations and to aid in controlling future maintenance costs, refurbishing high cost apparatus keeps the fire department fleet safe and operationally sound, while also preserving the vehicle image that the Town expects.*

Marc Miville motioned to move Article 14 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by David Ross.

M. Miville: This engine is different because we want to save it. It is a 2006 but it needs to be refurbished. This is an upgrade. It has 78,000 miles on it.

D. Riley declared Article 14 moved to the Ballot.

Article 15

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 Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.02. Recommended by Town Council (6-1), Recommended by Budget Committee (9-1).

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***Explanation:** Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$82,600.02. The town estimates the need to replace barrels and the automated collection vehicles in 2020. These funds would be used to offset future costs of replacement.*

James Levesque motioned to move Article 15 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Robert Duhaime

J. Levesque: This is an ongoing fund for our automated collection. This is a savings account to buy new vehicles.

D. Riley declared Article 15 moved to the Ballot.

Article 16

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 \$0.02. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (9-1).

***Explanation:** Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$61,360.59. The State of New Hampshire (State Constitution Part 2 Article 6) requires that all cities and towns perform a revaluation every 5 years so that all properties can be brought to current market value and contribute an equitable portion of the total tax burden. This request saves for the next revaluation update which is required in 2018 at an estimated cost of \$149,703.*

James Sullivan motioned to move Article 16 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Marc Miville.

J. Sullivan: It is required by State for revaluation which is due in 2018 and will be funded whether it passes or not.

M. Miville: Just because you vote no, doesn't mean we won't revalue the property. It is required by law.

D. Riley motioned to move Article 16 to the Ballot.

Article 17

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** to be added to the Master Plan Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.01. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (7-3).

***Explanation:** Balance held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$21,282.02. The fund is to provide a savings account, to be added to as necessary, that will allow the Town to update its Master Plan in a manner compliant with RSA 674:3 "Master Plan Preparation", which states in Sec II that revisions to the plan are recommended every 5-10 years. The Master Plan was last updated in 2004. Several areas of the plan are outdated. The following chapter has recently been updated: Economic Development and Energy. It is the intent of the Planning Board to perform draft updates, chapter by chapter, at monthly work sessions with input and assistance from Town staff and interested citizens. Chapters include: land use,*

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community facilities and services, population and housing, roads and transportation, economic development, conservation and natural resources, recreation, education, natural hazards and goals/objectives. Once the draft update of all chapters is complete, public information/input meetings will be held. The Master Plan update funds will be available for a consultant to assemble the draft chapters into a cohesive report. The update of the plan is critical to the long-term development of the Town. The Planning Board, ZBA, Conservation Commission, and Town Council need clear, accurate information upon which to base their decisions. Period studies that bring this new information into the Master Plan create an atmosphere of good planning, informed decision making, and provide critical data for the voter.

John Giotas motioned to move Article 17 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by David Ross.

J. Giotas: The Master Plan was last updated in 2004 and the State recommends we do that every 5 to 10 years. This is our blueprint for the town. This allows for the impact fees as well.

D. Riley motioned to move Article 17 to the Ballot.

Article 18

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** to be added to the Conservation Land Improvements Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated tax rate impact is \$0.01. Recommended by Town Council (7-0), Recommended by Budget Committee (7-3).

Explanation: *Balance held by Trustee of Trust Funds as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$10,154.47. The Town of Hooksett has over 1,000 acres of conservation land for which it is responsible for managing. Most of the conservation properties do not have formal access or trail networks. The intent of this Conservation Land Improvements Capital Reserve Fund is to improve recreational access via trails development and management and developing formal access points.*

David Ross motioned to move Article 18 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by Adam Jennings.

D. Ross: This is an ongoing project and is part of our trail system.

D. Riley declared Article 18 move to the Ballot.

Article 19

To see if the town will vote to discontinue the Feasibility Study for Southern Leg of Parkway Capital Reserve Funds created in 2005. Said funds, with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the town's general fund.

Explanation: *This is a housekeeping item that requires the town to vote to close capital reserve funds that are no longer needed. All funds remaining in the accounts will be deposited into the Town's General Fund. Balance held by Trustee of Trust Fund as of December 31, 2016 for this fund is \$63,504.72.*

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Timothy Tsantoulis motioned to move Article 19 to the Official Ballot. Seconded by James Sullivan.

T. Tsantoulis: This is to return money back to the general fund. The money has been sitting there for the Southern Park Feasibility Study and we are no longer going to use it so it will be returned to the General Fund.

D. Riley moved the Article to the Ballot.

D. Ross motioned to adjourn at 12:30. Seconded by J. Sullivan.

D. Riley declared the Deliberative Session closed at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan