

**Town of Hooksett  
Town Council Budget Review Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 1, 2021**

1  
2 The Hooksett Town Council met on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 6:02 in the Hooksett Municipal  
3 Building.

4  
5 **CALL TO ORDER**

6  
7 **PROOF OF POSTING**

8 Administrative Services Coordinator Donna Fitzpatrick provided proof of posting.

9  
10 **ROLL CALL**

11 Councilor James Sullivan, Councilor Clifford Jones, Councilor Roger Duhaime, Councilor Timothy  
12 Tsantoulis, Councilor Clark Karolian, and Councilor Alex Walczyk, and Councilor John Durand,

13  
14 **ABSENT**

15 Councilor Randall Lapierre, Councilor David Boutin, Councilor Clifford Jones.

16  
17 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

18  
19 **BUDGET OVERVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023**

20 A. Garron- Went over his PowerPoint Presentation as presented below:

- 21     ▶ The Town Administrator's recommended operating budget of **\$17,554,225**, (excluding  
22         Wastewater, Library, committees, commissions, and debt) is an increase of **\$275,083** or **1.59%**  
23         from the current FY 2021-22 budget.
- 24     ▶ This recommended budget supports: 1) a new full-time Executive Assistant and additional costs  
25         for IT Tech Support in Administration 2) a part-time Administrative Assistant in Fire-Rescue and  
26         3) a reclassification of a Patrol Officer to a Lieutenant and two replacement vehicles in the  
27         Police Department (*Third Police vehicle, as approved in CIP, is recommended being purchased*  
28         *using ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*).
- 29     ▶ The Administrator's recommendation includes level funding the employee health and dental  
30         insurances. We anticipate receiving the new rates in October or November and will update  
31         Council once known.
- 32     ▶ The budget includes the following staff:  
33         119 Full-time employees, which includes one additional full-time employee and 24 Part-time  
34         employees, which includes one additional employee in the Fire-Rescue Department and a reduction of  
35         three part-time patrol officers in the Police Department.
- 36
- 37     ▶ The **Administration** budget increased in total approximately \$123,000. The increases are  
38         primarily from: 1) adding one full-time Executive Assistant and 2) increasing in the computer  
39         tech support and legal services lines. Last year the Executive Assistant position was part-time,  
40         and we have a need for a full-time admin.
- 41     ▶ The **Assessing** budget reflects an increase of approximately \$500 mainly in office supplies.
- 42     ▶ The **Community Development** budget reflects an increase of \$17,078 from last year. This  
43         increase is due to staff turnover and supports current staffing.
- 44     ▶ The **Family Services** budget reflects a decrease of approximately \$17,000 from the current  
45         year. This decrease is due to a reduction in the welfare line offset by current staffing changes  
46         due to staff turnover.
- 47     ▶ The **Finance** budget reflects a decrease of approximately \$200. This is directly related to the  
48         cost of the GASB 45/75 actuary study that was in last year's budget and not needed in the  
49         current budget. This savings is offset by the additional cost of the new classification pay plan  
50         that identified the Finance Clerk's position to be under the minimum pay scale.
- 51     ▶ The **Fire-Rescue** budget has increased by approximately \$122,000. Changes to the budget  
52         include an additional \$106,000 for union raises approved by the voters, increases due to the

53 reorganization of the department and adding one part-time Administrative Assistant position.  
54 The Rental & Leases line was reduced based on actual cost of hydrant rentals and the new  
55 equipment line supports the regular replacement of hose and PPE gear.

- 56 ■ The **Police** budget has increased by approximately \$205,000. Changes to the budget include  
57 an additional \$100,000 for union raises approved by the voters, an additional \$16,000 to  
58 reclassify a Patrol Officer to a Lieutenant, and an additional \$35,000 in overtime. Also, the  
59 budget has a reduction of three part-time patrol officers. These positions have never been filled  
60 and would leave the current two part-time officers funded. If one of the police cruisers does not  
61 get funded by the ARPA funds, I recommend putting in back in the budget.
- 62 ■ Fuel had been budgeted at \$3.00 a gallon, which is almost double the current budget, but is just  
63 slightly more than the FY 2020-21 budget. The Vehicle & Related Purchases line has an  
64 increase of \$53,466 to support the replacement of two police cruisers.
- 65 ■ The **Public Works** budget decreased approximately \$193,000 over the current year's budget.  
66 This budget supports \$30,000 in approved union raises that span all three divisions.
- 67 ■ The **Highway Division** has a reduction of \$326,000 for road reconstruction bringing that line  
68 down to \$300,000. A warrant article recommends adding \$600,000 for maintenance of Town  
69 roads for the next five years. A similar warrant article was approved by the voters back in 2016  
70 and passed (261 Yes to 85 No). The NPDES Stormwater line (aka Municipal Separate Storm  
71 Sewer Systems aka MS4) has been level funded at \$25,000 and there is \$30,000 budgeted for  
72 guard rail replacements. This was looked at as a capital item, but we put it back in as a  
73 maintenance item.
- 74 ■ The **Highway Division** also has funding to bring the custodians up to the minimum pay scale  
75 and \$20,000 for the second half of the Old Town Hall design. The **Parks, Recreation and**  
76 **Cemeteries Division** has increases in water and fuel costs. The **Recycling and Transfer**  
77 **Division** has approximately \$36,000 increase in tipping fees. This increase accounts for  
78 additional trash collections and an increase in the tipping fee rate.
- 79 ■ The **Tax Collector** budget reflects an increase of \$2,500 for postage and office supplies.
- 80 ■ The **Town Clerk and Elections** overall budget reflects an estimated increase of \$15,000 for the  
81 upcoming year. The increase is due to the fact that there is one scheduled State election in the  
82 FY 2022-23 budget year.
- 83 ■ **DEFAULT:** The recommended operating budget is \$375,873 or 2.19% higher than the working  
84 default. The main changes in the default are increases for the union contracts (Police, Fire and  
85 DPW), the repayment of the TIF Sewer & Other Infrastructure bonds approved by the voters  
86 and a decrease of \$300,000 for reconstruction of Town Roads approved by the voters in 2016.
- 87 ■ **In 2018 Chapter 241 (HB 1307)** changed the definition of "Contracts" for default Budget  
88 Calculation. The new law limits "contracts" to only those contracts "previously approved, and in  
89 the amount so approved, by the legislative body in either the operating budget authorized for the  
90 previous year or . . . a separate warrant article for a previous year."
- 91 ■ Estimated revenues, which will impact the tax rate, show an increase of approximately \$450,000  
92 in the FY 2022-23 budget.
- 93 ■ **Increases:** The proposed budget reflects an increase of \$200,000 in motor vehicle registration  
94 and State Meals & Room Tax is estimated to increase \$255,297 in the FY 2022-23.
- 95 ■ The remaining revenue lines are all level fund at last year estimates, which have been reduced  
96 over the last two years based on the economic crisis cause by the pandemic. The hope is that  
97 the economy will improve, and additional revenues can be considered when setting the tax rate  
98 in November 2022.

100 C. Karolian- Under the police budget, it says to reclassify a patrol officer to a lieutenant. Are we taking a  
101 patrol officer out and adding a lieutenant? Or are we talking about a promotion? When we talk about  
102 another police cruiser you want the 3<sup>rd</sup> one to come out of the rescue funds.? Does that meet the  
103 criteria under allowable uses under the rescue funds? The TIF Sewer bond is there currently money  
104 bonded for the project?

105  
106 A. Garron- Yes based on the acceptance of using it under loss revenue.  
107  
108 Police Chief Jennifer Bouchard- We are not adding any positions. It will be a promotion from a sergeant  
109 to a lieutenant. We have 6 sergeants, 2 lieutenants. Keeping the 30.  
110  
111 T. Tsantoulis- I would like clarification on the rescue funds. We have \$1.5 million are we confident that  
112 these funds can be used for this.  
113  
114 A. Garron- Yes, we talked about this a lot, we are very confident that it can be used for this.  
115  
116 J. Sullivan- When we bring it off the table can you just bring up the criteria and allowable uses again to  
117 refresh our minds.  
118  
119 C. Karolian- The formula that the town is using to allocate the funds to buy the car is that being ran by  
120 the feds?  
121  
122 A. Garron- We were all given a handbook , which I also passed along to you all, that covers all the  
123 bases on how and where to spend the money, and how to use the formula.  
124  
125 C. Tewksbury- The federal site had a calculator to figure out what the loss revenue was going to be,  
126 and then the League of cities came up with one based on the federal guidelines. We used both  
127 calculators. I consulted with other communities to see how they were doing it. They want you to spend  
128 the dollars and not save it. They said if loss revenue was how you are going to accept the funds, then  
129 you can use it for any municipal purpose. Any municipal purpose to all seems to mean those that are  
130 on your chart of accounts.  
131  
132 T. Tsantoulis- To make it clear to those watching and in the audience, we are confident that we know  
133 the process.  
134

135 **BUDGET REVIEWS**

136 **Cemetery Commission (Tab 14)**

137 No questions.

138  
139  
140 ***A. Walczyk motioned to approve the Town Administrators proposed budget as presented for the***  
141 ***Cemetery Commission in the amount of \$750.00; seconded by T. Tsantoulis.***  
142

143 **Roll Call Vote #2**

144 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

145 ***J Durand Aye***

146 ***C. Jones Not present***

147 ***R. Lapierre Not present***

148 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

149 ***D. Boutin Not present***

150 ***C. Karolian Nay***

151 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

152 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

153  
154 ***Voted unanimously in favor (5-1).***  
155

156 A. Walczyk- I see that the headstone repairs was requested in the amount of \$5,000.

157  
158 A. Garron- The headstone repairs will fall under DPW, because they will be the ones doing the work.

~~160~~  
162 **Conservation Commission (Tab 15)**

163  
164 Conservation Commission Chairperson Cindy Robertson- The difference was in training and dues as a  
165 decrease. If you look historically, his number is accurate. Last year many did not attend training due to  
166 Covid-19. We did not have members last year attend some trainings. I think the \$1,000 that we have in  
167 place does get used by our members. The scholarship in the last 2-years has not been used as we had  
168 no one go to camp due to Covid-19. We do have someone interested in starting the camp back up  
169 again. It indicates that we have not spent monies last year mainly due to covid and we cannot  
170 guarantee using it in the future if camps are not running. And we removed office supplies.

171  
172 ***J. Durand motioned that we amend the Town Administrators proposed budget for the***  
173 ***Conservation Commission as being presented to increase it to \$12,019; seconded by C.***  
174 ***Karolian.***

175  
176 **Roll Call Vote #3**

177 ***D. Boutin Not present***

178 ***C. Jones Not present***

179 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

180 ***J. Durand Aye***

181 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

182 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

183 ***R. Lapierre Not present***

184 ***C. Karolian Aye***

185 ***J. Sullivan Nay***

186 ***Voted unanimously in favor (5-1).***

187  
188 C. Karolian called the question J. Durand seconded.

189  
190 R. Duhaime- You had some plans for trails last year. Is there anything planned for this year?

191  
192 C. Robertson-No we do not just the standard warrant article for \$10,000 that we typically ask for.

~~194~~  
196 **Assessing (Tab 3)**

197 Town Assessor Jon Duhamel- We are looking at a \$500 increase in office supplies and with what we  
198 are suggesting we believe we can maintain the same level service.

199  
200 ***T. Tsantoulis motioned to approve the Town Administrators proposed budget as presented for***  
201 ***Assessing in the amount of \$212,217.00 for 2022-2023, seconded by J. Durand.***

202  
203 C. Karolian- What is the difference between yours and the TA budget?

204  
205 J. Duhamel- There was a reduction in OT, and insurance and FICA and retirement.

206  
207 A. Garron- The deduction in overtime was based on the actual spent.

208  
209 **Roll Call Vote #4**

210 **A. Walczyk** *Aye*  
211 **R. Lapierre** *Not present*  
212 **C. Jones** *Not present*  
213 **R. Duhaime** *Aye*  
214 **J. Durand** *Aye*  
215 **C. Karolian** *Nay*  
216 **T. Tsantoulis** *Aye*  
217 **D. Boutin** *Not present*  
218 **J. Sullivan** *Aye*

219

***Voted unanimously in favor (5-1).***

~~221~~

~~222~~

224

**Tax Collector (Tab 10)**

225

Tax Collector Kim Blichmann- We reviewed and made changes; I have no concerns made to my budget.

226

227

228

J. Durand- You have no issues on the Town Administrators recommendations?

229

230

C. Karolian- The difference between the TA recommendation is \$5,916. My question is why you are recommending \$5,916 less.

231

232

233

A. Garron- The approach that I looked at the actuals and the patterns and the 5-year historical. We look at the amount spent vs amount requested. I leave room in the budget, but it brings it back to an actual closeness to the figures.

234

235

236

237

A. Walczyk- Printing says handwritten what is that?

238

239

K. Blichmann- We have a computer program that prints statements, but we have some that have payment arrangements. We buy those once every couple of years.

240

241

242

***T. Tsantoulis motioned to approve the Town Administrators proposed budget as presented for the Tax Collector in the amount of \$288,695.00 for 2022-2023; seconded by J. Durand.***

243

244

245

**Roll Call Vote #5**

246

***T. Tsantoulis*** *Aye*

247

***C. Jones*** *Not present*

248

***R. Duhaime*** *Aye*

249

***A. Walczyk*** *Aye*

250

***R. Lapierre*** *Not present*

251

***C. Karolian*** *Aye*

252

***J. Durand*** *Aye*

253

***D. Boutin*** *Not present*

254

***J. Sullivan*** *Aye*

255

256

***Voted unanimously in favor (6-0).***

~~257~~

~~258~~

260

**Town Clerk (Tab 11)**

261

Town Clerk Todd Rainer- This is a smaller budget. There were areas we could save in by using the 5-year average. The state election line for 2022-2023 is bigger than the previous year due to a State election. We added an item. We discussed in terms of the deliberative session how it was done this

262

263

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264 year with the professional audio and video. It enhanced things. So, we added that in the budget for the  
265 deliberative session. That \$5,000 is an estimate on what that might cost.

266

267 T. Tsantoulis- We did the video last year because of covid, are the plans of continuing that moving  
268 forward, as a way to enhance the programming of the deliberative session.

269  
270 T. Rainer- Having done it once and seeing how it went was something we want to implement moving  
271 forward.

272

273 A. Garron- The sound and output was great. The \$5,000 was for our half of the audio and visual at the  
274 deliberative session.

275

276 T. Tsantoulis- What do you have that is tangible to support this request.

277

278 T. Rainer- Well I throw the question back; you were there what did you think? Is this something that we  
279 want to implement moving forward?

280

281 J. Sullivan- I would make a suggestion and see what they provided and maybe reach out to the school  
282 system and see what they provide. I suggest that we vote on it now and then come back to it at a  
283 different time.

284

285 A. Walczyk- Do you have an estimate on the e-poll books?

286

287 T. Rainer-No the ones who have been using it have been using it on a loan system. At the state level  
288 the secretary will get involve before there is any implementation of this and will include all the  
289 communities in this buy in. This has been in my budget for a long time.

290

291 ***T. Tsantoulis motioned to approve the Town Administrators proposed budget as presented in***  
292 ***the amount of \$45,246 for Town Clerk and Elections for 2022-2023; seconded by A. Walczyk.***

293

294 **Roll Call Vote #7**

295 ***C. Jones Not Present***

296 ***C. Karolian Aye***

297 ***R. Lapierre Not Present***

298 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

299 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

300 ***J. Durand Aye***

301 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

302 ***D. Boutin Not Present***

303 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

304

305 ***Voted unanimously in favor (6-0).***

306

307 **Family Services (Tab 5)**

308 Family Services Director Peter Flynn- The budget has gone down this year. The salary and benefits  
309 have stayed the same. Supplies have stayed the same. The big change is the direct assistance such as  
310 shelter, utilities, medical supplies. Last year we spent \$18,000. It has consistently gone down. With the  
311 covid payouts from the government that number went down to that \$18,000, and that is not a real  
312 representation of that number. That is all going to change. The governor is going back to the original  
313 methods of unemployment. The housing is changing, and I feel if something changes in the next 30 or  
314 60 days I can come back and seek a change. I have not lived in the position long enough to know any

315 different as far as the budget. I think we are safe with the \$60,000 down from \$80,000. We have put the  
316 VNA in the budget but in the past has not been billed by them, but we will leave it in case we do.

317  
318 A. Garron- Last year we went from \$90,000 to \$80,000. Starting in 2017 we spent \$56k, 2018 we spent  
319 \$62,529 and in 2019 we spent \$45,416, and in 2020 we spent \$18,000.

320  
321 R. Duhaime- Mr. Flynn I think the reason the budget has gone down a few years ago a housing unit  
322 was removed, and a population has been removed using less services.

323  
324 P. Flynn- The direct assistance is the main area, but I am also chartered with assisting in the coordination  
325 of other services that are provided by other volunteer organizations. We just completed the backpack  
326 program we gathered 100 backpacks to various school children. I look forward to the other services that  
327 we provide and getting involved with assisting those programs. I went to a meeting with the Southern  
328 Regional NH Planners. We are the number one town that utilizes that bus service, so it is money well  
329 spent on that program.

330  
331 C. Karolian- Has this position as director historically been a part time position? And has it been 25  
332 hours a week?

333  
334 P. Flynn- They go to Manchester, Goffstown the hospitals, Bedford.

335  
336 ***T. Tsantoulis motioned to approve the Town Administrators suggested budget as presented in***  
337 ***the amount of \$141,210 for Family Services for 2022-2023; Seconded by J. Durand.***

338  
339 **Roll Call Vote #8**

340 ***R. Lapierre Not Present***

341 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

342 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

343 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

344 ***J. Durand Aye***

345 ***C. Jones Not Present***

346 ***D. Boutin Not Present***

347 ***C. Karolian Aye***

348 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

349

350 ***Voted unanimously in favor (6-0)***

351

352

354 **Police (Tab 8)**

355 Police Chief Jennifer Bouchard- The budget is straight forward from last year. 93% is salaries and  
356 benefits, and those totals have already been voted on. Since I have been chief, I have not made any  
357 staff changes at all. I started looking at where I could make improvements. I didn't want to add any  
358 patrol at that time. I looked at where most of the work was and what was happening. This new position  
359 would be an evening shift lieutenant. I looked at what we have for staff and future retirement. We want  
360 to retain the officers that we have. We have 7 or 8 officers who were eligible for sergeant. After the 7- or  
361 8-year period they typically stay. So, we want movement for them to go. It is a salaried position. There  
362 will be a savings for OT.

363

364 C. Karolian- The budget that you prepared for us is top notch and easy to read and easy to explain.  
365 You have it in your budget for 3 police vehicles. 1 vehicle coming from the rescue funds and a warrant  
366 article for a vehicle.

367

368 J. Bouchard- That warrant article would be for a K9 vehicle strictly. We are tight for vehicles. We had 2  
369 officers riding in one car last night.

370

371 Car 1- Fully outfitted

372 Car 2-K9

373 Car 3-Fully outfitted

374 Car 4- Not fully outfitted, does not have a computer, use it as a supervisor car. Next plan is for a  
375 detective use.

376 Car 5- fully outfitted

377 Car 5 and car 9 are scheduled for replacement.

378

379 J. Durand- car 8 only has 8,000 miles.

380

381 J. Bouchard- Those are our hybrids that we got last year.

382

383 J. Durand- Cars can handle more mileages these days and seems these cars are being turned over  
384 sooner than later.

385

386 J. Bouchard- You are also not going to an emergency call, and I would not go to an emergency call in a  
387 car with 130,000 miles on it.

388

389 C. Karolian- When I look at car 6 it doesn't seem to be any major work being done. When officers get  
390 involved in a pursuit, high speed chase, do we have a policy to check the vehicles after.

391

392 J. Bouchard- We shy against a pursuit. We don't like it. If it did happen Mario would then check it after.

393

394 R. Duhaime- I want to cut your budget. Where can you give me a savings?

395

396 J. Bouchard- There is nothing that is pumped up. I won't use all the fuel; you can cut that. With all the  
397 new growth in town it has increased a large amount on the department. The town is growing and all the  
398 new business and that has cause and increase in extra work on our officers, and I have not increased  
399 my personnel. You are putting a lot on the department by the town getting busier with business an  
400 homes.

401

402 A. Garron- We really went through this budget with a fine-tooth comb. We are also looking at innovative  
403 ways to get back on track. We have looked at hybrids and saved on fuel and maintenance. My  
404 proposed budget is still \$100,000 less than what was requested. The cars are also passed on to other  
405 departments when the PD is done with them.

406

407 J. Sullivan- If we look at the 2 contracts that is \$206,000 from voter approved contracts. So, if you take  
408 that this year's budget is only \$68,000 more. The budget is certainly fair compared to last year, was still  
409 larger than what is presented today.

410

411 ***T. Tsantoulis motioned to approve the Town Administrators proposed budget as presented in***  
412 ***the amount of \$5,217,661 for the Police Department for 2022-2023; seconded by A. Walczyk***

413

414

415 **Roll Call Vote #9**

416 ***J. Durand Nay***

417 ***D. Boutin Not Present***

418 ***C. Jones Not Present***



419 **R. Duhaime Nay**  
420 **C. Karolian Nay**  
421 **A. Walczyk Nay**  
422 **T. Tsantoulis Aye**  
423 **R. Lapierre Not Present**  
424 **J. Sullivan Aye**

425  
426 **Vote failed 2-3**

427  
428 J. Sullivan- At the point if the plan was successful, 2 vehicles in the budget, 1 from other funds, and 1 on  
429 the warrant article. If we take one car out of the operating budget. At this point I am going to approve a  
430 budget that is reduce by \$51,000 from the suggested budget. \$5,166,661.00.

431  
432 **J. Sullivan motioned to reduce the Town Administrators suggested budget for the Police**  
433 **Department by \$51,000 to a total budget of \$5,166,661 suggested by the Town Council;**  
434 **seconded by R. Duhaime.**

435  
436 **Roll Call Vote #10**

437 **C. Karolian Nay**  
438 **T. Tsantoulis Aye**  
439 **R. Lapierre Not Present**  
440 **C. Jones Not Present**  
441 **D. Boutin Not Present**  
442 **J. Durand Aye**  
443 **A. Walczyk Nay**  
444 **R. Duhaime Aye**  
445 **J. Sullivan Aye**

446  
447 **Voted in favor (4-2).**

448  
449  
450  
451 **ADJOURNMENT**

452  
453  
454  
455  
456  
457 **Chair Sullivan motioned to adjourn at 8:29 pm. C. Karolian seconded the motion.**

458  
459 **Voted unanimously in favor (6-0).**

460  
461  
462 Respectfully submitted,  
463 *Alicia Jipson*  
464 Alicia Jipson  
465 Recording Clerk

466  
467  
468 Please see subsequent meeting minutes for any amendments to these minutes.