

Town of Hooksett
Town Council Budget Review Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 06, 2023

CALL TO ORDER- Chairman T. Tsantoulis called the meeting of September 6, 2023, to order at 6:00 pm.

PROOF OF POSTING- Provided by Town Administrator Andre Garron.

IN ATTENDANCE- Councilor James Sullivan, Councilor David Boutin, Councilor Timothy Tsantoulis, Councilor Alex Walczyk (arrived at 6:04), and Keith Judge, Councilor John Durand and Councilor Jodi Pinard.

ABSENT- Councilor Randall Lapierre, Councilor Roger Duhaime

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC INPUT

Joleen C Shambo-46 Gary Ave Hooksett- I have come to you about the proposed plan for the bus storage area on Thames Rd. between the Villages at Granite Hill Condos and Granite Brook Park MHP. All surrounding residents strongly oppose the bus storage parking lot plan. The bus storage area proposal would negatively impact Granite Hill Condos and Granite Brook Park MHP residents' quality of life, human health, public safety, delay to US RTE 3 traffic, cause condo resident's vehicle congestion, create extreme road noise and degradation of private road. The bus storage parking would create noise pollution, light pollution, toxic air pollution, water pollution and would devalue existing homes. A fleet of buses will be a nuisance to the neighboring residents, an eyesore to see every day and a hazard in a residential neighborhood. The towns zoning ordinance article 3 under general provisions page 5 says: any use that may be obnoxious or injurious by reasons of the production or emission of color dust, smoke, refuse matter, fumes, noise, vibrations, or similar conditions, or that are dangerous to the comfort, peace, enjoyment, health or safety of the community or leading to its disturbance or annoyance are prohibited. There shall be no rezoning of land to industrial or commercial use in areas identified as protection properties in Hook Six Open Space Plan the latest version, including aquifer, prime wetlands, wetlands connected to prime wetlands, floodplains and or steep slopes. Article 10. Commercial Districts, page 40. Buffer Zones. Whenever commercial or industrial use abuts a residential use zone or district, a buffer zone shall be provided, subject to the approval of the Planning Board. The buffer is an area where they within a property or site generally adjacent to and parallel with the property line, either consisting of natural existing vegetation or created by the use of trees, shrubs, fences, and or berms designed to limit continuously the view of and or sound from the site. To adjacent sites or properties. The buffer shall not less than 50 feet in width and shall be planted with a dense screen of shrubbery and trees not less than 8 feet in height. At the same time as planting, the screen shall be at least 25

38 feet in width and shall be permanently maintain suitable by the owner. The buffer shall provide
39 a year-round dense visual screen in order to minimize adverse impacts. In order to maintain
40 dense screening, around at least 50% of the plantings shall be evergreens. Existing natural
41 growth may be included as part of the screen. No penetration of this buffer zone shall be
42 allowed. With the approval of the Planning Board, a suitable combination of other elements
43 such as fencing firms, boulders, may be incorporated within the buffer zone.

44 T. Tsantoulis- your comments are now officially recorded. Thank you for coming here to express
45 your concerns.

46 D. Boutin- I am very sympathetic to you. This is a shame, and the Town has done nothing. I
47 haven't seen the TA and Code Enforcement Officer down there. This project should never go
48 forward.

49 Joleen- they are in the process of doing emission and noise tests now. We have to wait 3-4
50 weeks for that.

51 **BUDGET OVERVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025**

52 A. Garron- the total amount needed to be raised for taxation is \$13,735,427. This is the
53 expenditures minus the revenues.

54 J. Sullivan- Why the reduction in revenues from 2024 to 2025?

55 C. Tewksbury- the other would be the wastewater, and we don't have those in yet.

56 A. Garron- The Town Administrator's (TA's) recommended operating budget of \$20,483,852 is
57 higher than the FY 2023-24 budget by \$581,669 or 2.92%. The TA's recommended budget
58 supports the following:

59 1. Union raises approved by the voters for Mid-management and Police union members.

60 2. The Heritage Commission's request to support the Light Up the Village event.

61 3. Increased funds in Assessing to hire a contractor for new construction pickups.

62 4. Additional funding to update the impact fee ordinances in Community Development.

63 5. The Fire budget supports additional funds for water hydrant rentals.

64 6. The Police department's budget includes funds to replace two cruisers at today's cost.

65 7. In the Department of Public Works, there are increases for road salt, highway new
66 equipment, town building heating costs, parks new equipment, old home day costs, cemetery
67 ground maintenance, tipping fees and fuel costs.

68 8. The TA's budget supports a new part-time employee for the Town Clerk's office and
69 additional funds for the two federal elections.

70 The TA's recommendation does not include the library's request of \$1,132,495 or the
71 Wastewater's requests. Also, the employees' health and dental insurance rates are level funded
72 until the official rates are known.

73 C. Tewksbury- Page 13 is more what you are used to seeing.

74 J. Sullivan- at the top It says there will be a 2.9% increase and a 2.62% increase in the default.

75 C. Tewksbury- Because the default does not include items 2-8 as listed above.

76 ***J. Pinard motioned to accept the Town Administrators budget as presented; seconded by J.***
77 ***Durand.***

78 ***Vote in favor 6-1***

79 **BUDGET REVIEWS**

80 **7.1. Family Services**

81 Patrici Carusso Family Services Director- we don't have many changes to the budget. I will
82 highlight the changes. The FS Software & Program I'd like to reduce that line and remove Image
83 Silo's and just keep the current program GAP

84 ***J. Sullivan motioned to amend the FS line for Software & programs by \$775.seconded by A.***
85 ***Walczyk.***

86 ***Vote in Favor 7-0***

87 P. Carusso- for Town welfare we kept that line level funded. We do have several homeless
88 people in the community that we are housing.

89 **7.2. Cemetery Commission**

90 C. Tewksbury- this budget is up \$40 and is attributable to training and dues.

91 **7.3. Conservation Commission**

92 Cindy Robertson- this budget is up \$335. We have an increase in postage and printing, and a
93 small \$5 increase in supplies.

94 **7.4. Tax Collector**

95 Kimberly Blichmann- there are no real changes to the budget.

96 D. Boutin- can you explain the decrease in the budget.

97 K. Blichmann- we removed the purchase in the toner, and the company I use for the tax liening
98 and deeding does not charge me if she doesn't have to search 2x. and the longevity bonuses are
99 not in there this year.

100 A. Walczyk- what level of effort and expense occurred in the auction.

101 K. Blichmann- I did not work on it after hours.

102 **7.5 Community Development**

103 Planning & Zoning

104 Elizabeth Robideau Town Planner present with TA Garron to get a feel for the budget process.

105 A. Garron- this budget has increased \$53,635 A portion of that is to update the impact fee
106 ordinance. The last time the ordinance was updated was in 2004-2008, we need to update that
107 to reflect today's costs. In the past we have paid a consultant to review this. Now we have to
108 search for a new firm and hire a consultant to help us.

109 A. Garron- impact fees is a PB matter.

110 Building Inspection & CEO

111 A. Garron- this budget has a \$2,183 increase attributed to wages.

112 **7.6. Police**

113 A. Garron- the Police department budget has an increase of \$133,811. This is a 2.38% increase
114 mostly attributable to wages.

115 J. Pinard- on the fuel costs, were they lower because you weren't fully staffed?

116 Justin Sargent Police Chief- it is also attributable to the new fleet being hybrid. We are saving
117 money on fuel.

118 A. Walczyk- the difference between the TA budget and department budget for education why
119 the difference.

120 A. Garron- that is based on historical usage of that line.

121 J. Sullivan- I see maintenance is up from last year.

122 A. Garron- a few years ago we cut the cruiser replacement down to 1, then brought it back up to
123 3, then 2 again and now back on 2 again.

124 A. Garron – moving to hybrid vehicles we had expected to see fuel saving costs and we are
125 seeing that.

126 D. Boutin- what is the % of savings on hybrid vehicles.

127 J. Sargent- I don't have that figure, but I can provide it at the next meeting.

128 **7.7. Fire-Rescue**

129 Steve Colburn Fire Chief- this budget has a \$57,806 increase which is a 1.15% increase.

130 A. Garron- a part time position was proposed in the dept, but I had removed the request due to
131 lack of information. The chief had presented an warrant article for 2 new fire officers. We are
132 getting to the point that we may need to look at adding more firefighters in the near future as
133 the town grows.

134 **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

135 A. Garron- the CIP was presented back in June and the PB will approve it, and they have
136 approved it already.

137 Public Input- None

138 **ADJOURNMENT**

139 **D. Boutin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm; seconded by J. Sullivan,**

140 **Vote in favor 7-0**

141

142 Respectfully submitted,

143 *Alicia Jipson*

144 Alicia Jipson

145 Recording Clerk

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