

**Town of Hooksett  
Town Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023**

1  
2 The Hooksett Town Council met on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 6:00 in the Hooksett  
3 Municipal Building.

4  
5 **CALL TO ORDER**

6 Chair Tsantoulis called the meeting of September 27, 2023, at 6:00pm.

7  
8 **PROOF OF POSTING**

9 Chair Tsantoulis, provided proof of posting.

10  
11 **ROLL CALL**

12 **In Attendance:** Councilor James Sullivan, Councilor Jodi Pinard, Councilor John Durand, Councilor  
13 Randall Lapierre, Councilor Roger Duhaime (6:01), Councilor David Boutin, Councilor Timothy  
14 Tsantoulis, and Councilor Alex Walczyk.

15  
16 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

17  
18 **AGENDA OVERVIEW**

19  
20 **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

21  
22 **6.1 Public Hearing regarding four proposed amendments to the Town's Charter**

23  
24 J. Sullivan- a few months ago we started discussing changes to the Town Charter and a subcommittee  
25 was established. We met 4 times. We held public comment. In the agenda there are 4 proposals for  
26 amendments.

27 **Eliminating Districts**

- 28 • The initial reason for creating the districts was that it was feared that one area of town could control  
29 direct projects to their area, but that has not materialized.  
30 • It would eliminate the 10-year requirement of the Supervisors of the Checklist to rebalance the  
31 districts.  
32 • Reduce the confusion and cost of multiple ballots.  
33 • It gives more flexibility for residents to run for Town Council because there is a limitation of who can  
34 run when there are districts.

35 **Reducing Town Council from 9 to 7 members**

- 36 • Meetings go on longer with more personalities.  
37 • It will be easier to make quorum.  
38 • Seven members still allow for ample coverage on other town committees.

39 **Change the Quorum to a simple majority**

- 40 • Many meetings we have trouble having a quorum and starting on time having to have a super  
41 majority.

42 • Currently with a super majority and a Council of 9 members, 6 are needed to make quorum, if it is  
43 changed to a simple majority, 5 members would be needed for a Council of 9 and 4 members for a  
44 Council of 7.

45 **Increase the Town Council stipend by \$500**

- 46 • Stipend has not increased in a long time and many other Towns have one that is higher.
- 47 • Entice candidates to run and reward them for their time.
- 48 • If the Council remains at 9 members, the increased cost to the Town would be \$4,500 and if it is  
49 reduced to 7 members, it will only be an increase of \$500 over the current budgeted amount.

50 Joan McHugh 14 Jefferson Drive- why the charter change? Is it manageability of the current members?  
51 I have a concern about the kind of service the constituents will receive. I am greatly disappointed in the  
52 attention not paid to the water on Farmer Road. Why is the change made? I am worried that the lesser  
53 number of councilors will be an issue. I wonder if perhaps you will do better bringing in outside help to  
54 help you out. Look at this community and the building proposals coming forward.

55  
56 J. Sullivan- the TA is working with the independent water precinct on Farmer Road, and as far as  
57 building in Hooksett, that is on the Planning Board and not the Town Council. In regard to the # of  
58 councilors. 7 was more manageable at the school board and 7 we feel will be more manageable  
59 number for the Council.

60  
61 D. Boutin- the 7 new will they be elected at District or at large?

62  
63 J. Sullivan- we are eliminating the districts so they would be at large, and everyone can vote for  
64 whomever they want and won't stop anyone from running.

65  
66 Joan McHugh - I was here for the study done back in the 80's, back then they feared not having a voice  
67 and not being represented in their area. We need to consider that this community is at a juncture  
68 where we have more growth.

69  
70 A. Garron- it must be noted that when they started the initial charge on this, they invited the original  
71 charter committee to the meetings. They brought up that the concerns they had back then they did  
72 not feel were the same concerns that are here today. We also had legal go over all this with us and  
73 how best to move forward and with all of that input was what you have in front of you. There was a  
74 great deal of input and thought put into coming to the decision here today, it was not taken lightly.  
75 And as far as Farmer Road since that issue was brought forward it did allow the water precinct to put  
76 that in their capital improvement plan.

77  
78 T. Tsantoulis closed the PH at 6:24.

79  
80 **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

81  
82 **7.1 Hooksett Municipal Employee - New Hire**

83  
84 A. Garron- We have 4 new employees. Richardson, Meagan, Bowler, John A., Aucoin, Gregory D.,  
85 Stringer, Brian C..

86  
87 **7.2 Hooksett Municipal Longevity Employees (07/01/2022-06/30/2023)**

88 5 Years- Joshua Hebert Public Works 7/10/2022, Kim Langlois Wastewater 8/02/2022, Heather Dresser  
89 Library 8/02/2022, Joshua Preve Police 9/25/2022, Caitlin Curran Tax 10/10/2022, Rob Beland Public  
90 Works 12/11/2022, Regina Howard Fire 3/29/2023, Ricky Demers Public Works 4/23/2023.

91  
92 10 Years- James Bradley Police 10/01/2022, Valerie Lamy Police 10/22/2022, Justin Sargent Police  
93 12/10/2022, AnnMarie Scott Community Development 6/10/2023.

94  
95 15 Years- Brett Hemeon Public Works 7/1/2022, Leann Moynihan Budget Committee 7/9/2022, Elayne  
96 Pierson Assessing 10/16/2022, Mario Desaulniers Public Works 11/19/2022, Donna Fitzpatrick  
97 Administration 3/10/2023, Richard Belanger Police 3/24/2023, Joshua Brehm Fire 6/25/2023.

98  
99 20 Years- Eric Uitts Fire 7/01/2022 20 years, Mark Glisson Library 9/02/2022 20 years, Ernie Coulombe  
100 Public Works 10/23/2022 21 years, Suzanne Fournier Public Works 9/25/2022 21 years, John Clark  
101 Wastewater 11/12/2022 21 years, Jeremy Doyle Fire 02/25/2023 21 years, Jake Robie Police  
102 01/02/2023 22 years, Steven Colburn Fire 07/01/2022 23 years, Tommy Bartula Public Works  
103 06/16/2023 23 years, Scott Tremaine Wastewater 5/24/2023 24 years, Francine Swafford Police  
104 12/11/2022 33 years, Linda O'Keefe Wastewater 10/26/2022 35 years, Brian Towle Wastewater  
105 04/06/2023 36 years, Jay Wilson Police 04/27/2023 37 years, Gary Blanchette Police 09/17/2022 38  
106 years.

107

## 108 PUBLIC INPUT

109

110 T. Tsantoulis- we have recently been having issues with the public input section. I want to read the  
111 following to refresh those of the rules.

### 112 PUBLIC INPUT RULES

- 113 1. Two 15-minute Public Input sessions will be allowed during each Council Meeting. Time will be  
114 divided equally among those wishing to speak; however, no person will be allowed to speak for  
115 more than 5 minutes.
- 116 2. No person may address the council more than twice on any issue in any meeting. Comments  
117 must be addressed to the Chair and must not be personal or derogatory about any other  
118 person.
- 119 3. Any questions must be directly related to the topic being discussed and must be addressed to  
120 the Chair only, who after consultation with Council and Town Administrator, will determine if  
121 the question can be answered at that time. Questions cannot be directed to an individual  
122 Councilor and must not be personal in nature. Issues raised during Public Input, which cannot  
123 be resolved or answered at that time, or which require additional discussion or research, will be  
124 noted by the Town Administrator who will be responsible for researching and responding to the  
125 comment directly during normal work hours or by bringing to the Council for discussion at a  
126 subsequent meeting. The Chair reserves the right to end questioning if the questions depart  
127 from clarification to deliberation.
- 128 4. Council members may request a comment be added to New Business at a subsequent meeting.
- 129 5. No one may speak during Public Input except the person acknowledged by the Chair. Direct  
130 questions or comments from the audience are not permitted during Public Input.

131

132 Keith Judge 49 Farmer Road- I have come here before the Council today, to bring to light a few  
133 concerns that I have about the actions of this Council over the last few years/month/weeks. This  
134 council seems to have an anti-employee and anti-union agenda and utilizes bully tactics to get the  
135 results that it wants. The actions taken by the Council recently have absolutely been to the detriment

136 of both the residents and the employees of Hooksett. This council seems to have forgotten that it is  
137 supposed to have the best interests of both residents and the employees who provide the residents of  
138 this town with goods and services. For example, over the last 18 months, we have had 1 councilor  
139 absolutely attempt to undress the police chief in an open meeting about the details in front of GE. We  
140 know that the GE issue can be tough to navigate, but for an elected official to look at a department  
141 head like the chief of Police and tell him he needs to fix it and that one of his officers is going to get  
142 killed there and it will be his fault. Actions like that from this council is an absolute embarrassment. We  
143 have another Councilor, who any chance he gets tells the Fire Chief that the Fire Fighters are overpaid,  
144 overstaffed and should layoff and goes as far as states that a fire house should be closed. Taking no  
145 consideration about how that would affect the residents, let alone the resident who may have a  
146 medical emergency at 3am that the Fire Department can/would and does respond to. God forbid  
147 someone has a fire in the middle of the night and there were not enough fire fighters to respond. That  
148 would be a catastrophic failure on the part of this council. We also have a Councilor who goes out of  
149 his way to make disparaging, derogatory and inflammatory comments on social media about Hooksett  
150 employees. He has absolutely attacked the DPW workers, you know the men and women who plow  
151 our roads and pick up our trash. Has also made derogatory comments about the Fire Department and  
152 Police Department. This Council has been made aware of this issue and the actions so has the current  
153 administration and nothing gets done. These three events that I have laid out for you and the public  
154 are not what ifs, these are the actions of this Council, and they are unacceptable. However, those  
155 actions I've listed are not even the worst infraction of this council. Through actions that I've seen from  
156 this council have been unprofessional, disparaging, and flat out wrong, I never would have guessed  
157 that this council would ever entertain breaking the law but that is exactly what happened several  
158 weeks ago in this room. We had a councilor who made a motion to remove me from my job as a union  
159 rep of the DPW. Let me be clear, this is absolutely a violation of NH Labor Law RSA273 A5 sections  
160 a/b/e/g. It is illegal for an employer to interfere with a Union's right to represent its members, and this  
161 Council did just that. They took a motion, a second and voted on it. It was a clear violation of NH State  
162 law, it is unacceptable, and you know it. Lastly, we have a council that is wasting taxpayer money. This  
163 council would rather direct the administrator to spend money on a labor attorney at the tune of \$500  
164 an hour rather than do its job and negotiate a fair deal with labor unions that represent the employees  
165 of Hooksett. This is an absolute failure on the Towns part. There is no reason to waste tax dollars when  
166 all it would take is for the Council to do the right thing and take care of its employees. 20 years ago,  
167 Hooksett was the shining star of the surrounding area. Everyone wanted to work for Hooksett as it was  
168 known to have the best pay, benefits and had a great reputation for treating its employees well. That  
169 has absolutely gone out the window and it is due to the anti-employee and anti-union agenda this  
170 council has displayed. I will leave you with this. You can ignore everything I've said tonight, you  
171 attempt to chalk it up to sour grapes but that would be a costly mistake. I would ask this council to take  
172 a time out, look in the mirror and find to do the right thing for both the residents and the employees. I  
173 know that we can make Hooksett a valued place to live and work again, but if you choose not to and  
174 just continue down this path, you will have a major problem here in Hooksett. Because all of the  
175 residents and employees that I have spoken too have had enough of playing nice in the sand box with  
176 Hooksett just keep getting the same negative derogatory and now illegal actions from this council you  
177 are our elected officials and the choice is yours, but keep in mind, teamsters Local 633 and the other  
178 labor unions that represent employees in this town are ready and willing and able to respond  
179 accordingly and meet you on whatever playing field you deem appropriate. Again, it is not what we  
180 want or is our preferred avenue, but the choice is yours.

181  
182 Lorraine Farrell 5 Lafond Road- what will this TC do from the Trash and Recycling Committee. We are  
183 still paying attention and want some sort of resolve on this matter.

184

185 J. Pinard 11 Morningside Drive- I apologize for not being here at the last meeting. A meeting before last  
186 was a monstrosity. We had councilors leave the meeting, we had councilors yelling, it was  
187 embarrassing. I have worked 23 years in the public sector and that was mortifying. The way that  
188 councilor members criticize department heads. After meetings I am apologizing to department heads,  
189 employees, the administrator because of the way they are spoken to. They are our employees, and  
190 they work for us. We were called out today and we should have been. I 100% agree with Mr. Judge, we  
191 do not appreciate our employees, we do not fight till the bitter end. This council needs to get past their  
192 personal agendas, and we need to do what is right for Hooksett. We need to move ahead. In the past  
193 we never removed councilors for attendance. I look at you tonight and I want to tonight under new  
194 business make a motion to reinstate Keith Judge, because I feel he was removed improperly, and I  
195 don't believe this council followed the propped charter, we have got to look at ourselves, we do not  
196 appreciate what our employees do. Let's get back to the basics, let's get back to appreciating our  
197 employees, let's get back to what Hooksett used to be and be that gold star community.

198

## 199 **SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS**

200

### 201 **9.1 Ian Keyes, Block 5 and Leann McLaughlin, Project Coordinator: ARPA Request - Necessary** 202 **Technology Upgrades**

203

204 L. McLaughlin- The Administration budget encompasses requests for technology updates but  
205 incorporating all of these recommendations would substantially raise the budget. Block 5 offers  
206 insights and suggestions on essential upgrades for all town-operated technology. Enclosed are timely  
207 recommendations that require attention. The total cost for the current recommended projects  
208 amounts to \$37,631.98. Projects include Town Hall Server Room Upgrades \$7,770.00 Transfer Station  
209 Network Upgrade \$3,413.03 Public Works Network Upgrade \$4,925.60 Town Hall VMWare Licensing  
210 Upgrade \$11,479.62 Town Hall Switch Upgrade \$10,043.73 Additional information for each project is  
211 included in the backup documentation. The ARPA Subcommittee heard the request on September  
212 13th and voted to move the request to the full Town Council.

213

214 A. Walczyk-are the TH switches needed or is it want vs a need?

215

216 Ian Keyes- we currently only have 1 switch.

217

218 R. Duhaime- will this be a savings in the budget?

219

220 L. McLaughlin- yes it will be.

221

222 R. Duhaime- was this placed out to bid?

223

224 A. Garron- no we went to bid for our provider, and this was a direct recommendation from the IT  
225 provider. The reason this was recommended to come from ARPA was to use excess funds to tend to  
226 issues that keep getting passed by due to having to address other areas first.

227

228 ***D. Boutin motioned to allocate up to \$38,000.00 of ARPA Funds for the necessary technology***  
229 ***upgrades which includes the Town Hall Server Room, Transfer Station Network, Public Works***  
230 ***Network, Town Hall VMWare Licensing, and the Town Hall Switches; seconded by R. Lapierre.***

231  
232 **Roll Call Vote #2**  
233 ***R. Duhaime Aye***  
234 ***J Durand Aye***  
235 ***J. Pinard Aye***  
236 ***R. Lapierre Aye***  
237 ***A. Walczyk Nay***  
238 ***D. Boutin Aye***  
239 ***J. Sullivan Aye***  
240 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***  
241  
242 ***Vote in favor 7-1***  
243  
244 **9.2 Jude Nuru and Dan Weeks, ReVision Energy - Solar Array Options**  
245  
246 ***A. Walczyk motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to negotiate a Power Purchase***  
247 ***Agreement (PPA) contract with ReVision Energy for a solar array at the Old Landfill Site with an***  
248 ***option to transition to a Turnkey Contract prior to Notice to Proceed; seconded by D. Boutin.***  
249  
250 **Roll Call Vote #3**  
251 ***D. Boutin Aye***  
252 ***J. Pinard Aye***  
253 ***A. Walczyk Aye***  
254 ***J. Durand Aye***  
255 ***R. Duhaime Nay***  
256 ***J. Sullivan Aye***  
257 ***R. Lapierre Nay***  
258 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***  
259  
260 ***Vote in favor 6-2***  
261  
262 D. Weeks- we don't have any further info to bring but we can discuss it if needed.  
263  
264 J. Sullivan- until we agree to purchase it there is no town outlay correct?  
265  
266 D. Weeks- yes, this is a power purchase agreement which is a form of lease but there is no obligation  
267 to purchase but an option to purchase in the future.  
268  
269 R. Lapierre- when the Revision Purchases then you are buying it from them at a rate they set.  
270  
271 A. Walczyk- I think the turnkey solution makes the most sense. This was the best of both.  
272  
273 T. Tsantoulis- we have a presentation before us as far as the Town's responsibilities and ReVision. The  
274 only unknow that I believe we have is the agreement with Eversource.  
275  
276 D. Weeks- yes, but that can be addressed within the PPA rate.

277

278 R. Duhaime- we talked about the sewer dept, and they use a lot of electricity. Did we discuss transfer  
279 of power?

280

281 D. Weeks- its unique in this landfill opportunity. It is behind the metering installation directly powering.

282

283 **CONSENT AGENDA- NONE**

284

285 **NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

286

287 L. McLaughlin- we did advertise for the vacant councilor seat. We will be reviewing those applications  
288 on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, the deadline to submit applications is October 9<sup>th</sup>. Right now, there are 2  
289 applications, I am also requiring anyone who applies attends that October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

290

291 R. Lapierre- you said there was a deadline, was that based on filing the vacancy within 30 days?

292

293 L. McLaughlin- no I just threw out a date and gave them 2 meetings to meet that deadline.

294

295 R. Lapierre- our Town Charter says that we must fill a vacancy within 30 days and if we can't do that  
296 then we need to hold a special election. Whatever deadline we come up with that is where it should be  
297 derived from.

298

299 ***J. Pinard motioned to reappoint K. Judge back to the seat of Councilor at large; seconded by R.***  
300 ***Lapierre.***

301

302 **Roll Call Vote #5**

303 ***J. Sullivan Nay***

304 ***J. Pinard Aye***

305 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

306 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

307 ***R. Lapierre Aye***

308 ***J. Durand NP***

309 ***D. Boutin Nay***

310 ***T. Tsantoulis Nay***

311

312 ***Vote in favor 4-3***

313

314 J. Pinard- section 3.2 qualifications of a councilor. Only voters who at all times during their term of  
315 office are and remain residents of the Town shall be eligible to hold the office of Councilor. Eligible  
316 candidates will be registered voters and will have resided in Hooksett for at least one year immediately  
317 before the election. Councilors elected from districts must be legal residents of that district at the time  
318 of election. If a Councilor shall move from his/her said district and shall remain a resident of the Town,  
319 he/she shall remain the elected district's Councilor until the next election. The Council is the sole judge  
320 of qualification for office. A majority of the Council may, after investigation and hearing declare a  
321 vacancy if a member is ultimately convicted of a violation of the Town Charter. Council may also  
322 declare a vacancy if a member has missed three (3) regularly scheduled meetings in sequence or has  
323 missed one quarter (1/4) of all meetings within one (1) calendar year, or has interfered with

324 Administration, or falsified records, misapplied Town funds or property, or has been ultimately  
325 convicted of a Federal or State crime as a felon. Prior to my being appointed you had 2 councilors  
326 investigated and removed for attendance. 2 weeks ago, with all due respect to J. Durand, this was done  
327 in 5 mins without an agenda item. That meeting 2 weeks ago was out of control in general. With that  
328 said I think it is the right thing to do to reappoint Mr. Judge. I to have work commitments. And I may  
329 even be under consideration to be removed. After having 2 weeks to sit down and think about this I  
330 think we did this incorrectly.

331  
332 T. Tsantoulis- I too questioned the appropriateness of the action and the vote that took place as there  
333 was no hearing. Part of my thought process coming here was continuity in how we respond to issues.  
334 We did not investigate the process as we should have. I'd like to remind people here that we volunteer  
335 our time here, we are paid a small stipend but does nothing to cover our time here and we have said  
336 here before that we are not here for the stipend.

337  
338 R. Lapierre- I have made it clear that voting off councilors should not be in our abilities. I think elections  
339 have consequences If the voters have questions about councilor abilities let the voters decide. In the  
340 past we have written letters of warning to councilors that were in violation of the attendance or other  
341 areas of the charter as a first step prior to removal. If you recall when Councilor Ross was here, and he  
342 participated in his own removal was a farse. If he wanted to no longer be on the Board then he should  
343 have removed himself. If someone feels that they cannot do their duties then they should resign  
344 themselves and it should be in our power to encourage them to do so, but taking votes to remove a  
345 democratically elected representative without an agenda item when the individual is not even here in  
346 person is shameful. Had I thought this had any chance of passing I would have said these things, but as  
347 Councilor Pinard pointed out we spent 5 minutes on it.

348  
349 J. Durand- as far as being shameful not bringing it up when the person is here, that person is not here  
350 enough to bring it up. The rules are the rules. We all know when signing up that we meet every other  
351 Wednesday night and every Wednesday in September. If you cannot commit to it then don't run for  
352 the office and don't take the seat. We all could be working but we made the commitment.

353  
354 J. Sullivan- I firmly believe that if you join any group you need to participate. The charter and the  
355 people expect people to serve and attend. The voters choose you to run. If you are not at the  
356 meetings, then you are not there to vote and participate.

357  
358 R. Lapierre- No one is saying that you can't make a motion, the point was we didn't do an investigation,  
359 we didn't give K. Judge the chance to speak on his own behalf like we did for everyone else.

360  
361 J. Pinard- I brought this up because I felt we did it inappropriately. I feel we should rectify the steps in  
362 the process and then follow the steps as they are outlined. We did not give the fair chance of the  
363 individual that we were going to be discussing this. We didn't get a formal record from the secretary  
364 about his attendance.

365  
366 J. Sullivan- under section 10 if an individual in the audience by consensus of the board can allow an  
367 individual to speak.

368  
369 It was the general consensus of the board to allow K. Judge to speak.

370



371 K. Judge- I'm not going to sit here and make excuses for my absence. My work life does interfere with  
372 my attendance. I did at the last missed meeting call Chair Tsantoulis that I was on my way and the  
373 Chair stated that we had a quorum and that my attendance was not required. Mr. Durand's vote was  
374 not due to my absence, it is the fact that I am a union rep. He has publicly attacked what I do for a  
375 living.

376  
377 T. Tsantoulis- asked that J. Durand be removed from the meeting J. Durand left meeting at 8:01.  
378

379 ***T. Tsantoulis motioned to table the appointment pending further legal review seconded by J.***  
380 ***Sullivan.***

381  
382 **Roll Call Vote #4**

383 ***A. Walczyk Nay***

384 ***R. Lapierre Nay***

385 ***J. Pinard Nay***

386 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

387 ***J. Durand NP***

388 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

389 ***D. Boutin Nay***

390 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

391

392 ***Vote fails 3-4***

393

394 K. Judge- thank you for taking the time to review the issue and I will abide by whatever the legal advice  
395 is.

396

397 A. Garron – My charge is to consult with legal and see if was the reinstatement vote legal and if it was  
398 legal will he need to be re-sworn in.

399

400 **BRIEF RECESS 7:50 pm**

401

402 **OLD BUSINESS**

403

404 **13.1 Town Clerk/Assessing Office Renovation - HVAC Update**

405

406 A. Garron- we had discussion awhile back on this. The placement of the wall would place a HVAC on  
407 one side of the wall. The other alternative would be to add \$400 to buy a window unit. The wall is not  
408 the issue but splitting of the HVAC unit.

409

410 J. Sullivan- the \$27,000 is for the HVAC?

411

412 A. Garron- yes and the wall has already been voted on.

413

414 L. McLaughlin- if you go into the Assessing or TC office you will see that there is one unit that will stay  
415 on the assessing side. They are on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, so it does not get excessively hot. I don't think either

416 option is a bad option. I think this is a fairly old unit and in the near future you may be replacing it  
417 anyway. It is really up to you.

418  
419 ***J. Sullivan motioned to add \$400.00 to be funded through ARPA to add a window air conditioning***  
420 ***unit to allow the Town Clerk's office air conditioning; R. Duhaime.***

421  
422 ***Vote in favor 7-0***

423  
424 **13.2 Town Council 2023/2024 Goals Update**

425  
426 R. Lapierre- I couldn't attend the goal setting meeting, I did submit my suggestions. One of my goals is  
427 to improve cell service. As part of the infrastructure was to improve cell service.

428  
429 T. Tsantoulis- the Town does not have a lot of say what we can do with cell towers.

430  
431 R. Duhaime- we did approval once for a cell tower for zoning then it sold, I don't think the new owner  
432 was notified it could be a cell tower. I think it should be something that should be investigated.

433  
434 **NEW BUSINESS**

435  
436 **14.1 ARPA Request - Administration Office Optimization**

437  
438 ***J. Sullivan motioned to approve the Administration Office Optimization project with a cost not to***  
439 ***exceed \$23,000 to come from ARPA funds; seconded by D. Boutin.***

440  
441 **Roll Call Vote #6**

442 ***J. Durand NP***

443 ***R. Lapierre Aye***

444 ***D. Boutin Aye***

445 ***J. Pinard Aye***

446 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

447 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

448 ***R. Duhaime Nay***

449 ***T. Tsantoulis Nay***

450  
451 ***Vote in favor 5-2***

452  
453 L. McLaughlin- On June 23, 2023, the ARPA Subcommittee convened and deliberated on the  
454 Administration Office Renovation proposal. They decided to advance the project to the full council,  
455 contingent upon receiving cost estimates for the flooring and air conditioning system. This will include  
456 electrical and lighting. It will really divide that room up and give more privacy and deviation between  
457 the 2 employees who have different roles.

458  
459 J. Sullivan- I think it is vital to break up that space, this is what the ARPA money was meant for.

460

461 R. Duhaime- I like my employees. We are doing new security upgrades, new offices. We have to stop  
462 somewhere; we have taxpayers to attend to. I think we need to stop somewhere.

463  
464 J. Sullivan- if you have suggestions on how ARPA funds should be spent then send your suggestions to  
465 the ARPA committee.

466  
467 **14.2 Exterior Ballistic Vest Carrier ARPA request.**

468  
469 ***J. Sullivan motioned to accept the purchase of exterior vests and uniforms to be paid with ARPA***  
470 ***funds in the amount of \$10,836.00; seconded by D. Boutin.***

471  
472 **Roll Call Vote #7**

473 ***J. Pinard Aye***

474 ***R. Lapierre Aye***

475 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

476 ***A. Walczyk Aye***

477 ***J. Durand NP***

478 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

479 ***D. Boutin Aye***

480 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

481  
482 **Vote in favor- 7-0**

483  
484 J. Sargent- it is an exterior vest vs wearing a vest under your shirts. It has the ability to attach things to  
485 it. It takes the weight off the hips. I left this process up to the patrol men to decide the best one to buy.  
486 We are pretty much squared away to go ahead with this project. Chief Bouchard before she left asked  
487 me to look into this. It is important. This will be useful to officers who have back issues. There are some  
488 other things that are involved in this. Since they have attachment capabilities, we are also seeking body  
489 cameras in the future. We have smaller officers who have less real estate on their hips and having the  
490 external attachment capabilities will be helpful.

491  
492 **14.3 2023 MS-535 Financial Report of the Budget**

493  
494 ***R. Lapierre motioned to authorize the Town Council to sign the 2023 MS-535 Financial Report of the***  
495 ***Budget for period ending June 30, 2023, as presented; seconded by A. Walczyk.***

496  
497 **Vote in favor 7-0**

498  
499 C. Tewksbury- the unassigned fund balance increased by just over 1 million dollars.

500  
501 **14.4 Hooksett's Goal #2: Tax Rate Planning**

502  
503 C. Tewksbury- Last year's goal was to Balance the use of (unassigned) fund balance annually to  
504 maintain a low tax rate while building the (unassigned fund) balance amount to the recommended 8%  
505 or higher. In government accounting, fund balance is the difference between operating assets and  
506 liabilities resulting in a surplus or a deficit. The reasons why we keep unassigned fund balance is, 1) In

507 government finance, the retention and use of unassigned fund balance assists in measuring the  
508 financial health of the chief operating fund known as the general fund. 2) Unassigned fund balance can  
509 be used for emergency expenditures. 3) Helps with credit rating. 4) Helps with fluctuation in collection  
510 of property taxes. 5) Can be used to stabilize the tax rate. In March 2023, I presented to the Council a  
511 two-step strategy to meet this goal. Step 1 - set a minimum growth percentage. Step 2 - set a level  
512 amount to apply to the tax rate. It was recommended that the Council wait until late summer to set  
513 the minimum growth percentage and amount to apply to tax rate once we know what the change in  
514 unassigned fund balance was for June 2023.

515 Option 1

516 1) set minimum growth percentage at .75%

517 2) set level amount to apply to tax rate up to \$400,000

518 Step 1: UFB must be at 6.18% before any UFB is used to lower the 2023 tax rate. Step 2: Apply up to  
519 \$400,000 to lower the 2023 tax rate.

520 UFB not used will increase to the percentage held, which will be used as the starting percentage for the  
521 2024 tax rate. In this example, \$194,691 would be added to the UFB bringing the amount held to an  
522 estimated 6.5%, which is 1.07% higher than the prior year.

523 Option 2

524 1) set minimum growth percentage at .75%

525 2) set level amount to apply to tax rate up to \$300,000

526 Step 1: UFB must be at 6.18% before any UFB is used to lower the 2023 tax rate. Step 2: Apply up to  
527 \$300,000 to lower the 2023 tax rate.

528 Any UFB not used will increase the percentage held, which will be used as the starting percentage for  
529 the 2024 tax rate. In this example, \$294,691 would be added to the UFB bringing the amount held to  
530 an estimated 6.67%, which is 1.24% higher than the prior year.

531

532 ***J. Sullivan motioned to recommend updating the Fund Balance policy as follows: "5.3) Minimum***  
533 ***growth percentage – The Town shall increase the unassigned fund balance each year by .75% before***  
534 ***applying an up to level of \$300,000 to the tax rate until unassigned fund balance reaches 8%;***  
535 ***seconded by D. Boutin.***

536

537 **Roll Call Vote #8**

538 ***R. Lapierre Nay***

539 ***R. Duhaime Aye***

540 ***J. Sullivan Aye***

541 ***A. Walczyk Nay***

542 ***J. Durand NP***

543 ***J. Pinard Nay***

544 ***D. Boutin Aye***

545 ***T. Tsantoulis Aye***

546

547 ***Vote in favor 4-3***

548

549 C. Tewksbury- if we do decide to move forward with this, we will not need to come to you to set the  
550 tax rate. Because now I know what you want to do, I have that strategy to do that process.

551

552 A. Walczyk- why does that change the process on how we approve.

553

554 C. Tewksbury- because approving this recommendation that is the process and the direction. Why  
555 would you need to come back to discuss if you set a process and then come back to change it.

556  
557 A. Walczyk- things change and we should be allowed 1 more time to address any changes if need be.

558  
559 A. Garron- this gives us a stable approach to the goal.

560

#### 561 **14.5 Proclamation for the 2023 Hooksett Citizens of the Year, Wayne & Sally Gehris**

562  
563 *J. Sullivan motioned to authorize a councilor who is attending to present a Proclamation to the 2023*  
564 *Hooksett Citizens of the year, Wayne and Sally Gehris; seconded by J. Pinard.*

565

566 *Vote in favor 7-0*

567

#### 568 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

569

570 *T. Tsantoulis motioned to amend the August 23, 2023, meeting minutes that were approved on*  
571 *September 13, 2023, to reflect the corrected tally for lines 504-512 to reflect that a 4-4 motion failed*  
572 *vs carry; seconded by R. Lapierre.*

573

574 *Vote in favor 7-0*

575

576 *J. Sullivan motioned to approve the public minutes of September 6, 2023, as amended; seconded by J.*  
577 *Pinard.*

578

579 **Line 307 Councilor Pinard name spelt wrong.**

580

581 *Vote in favor 7-0*

582

583 *R. Lapierre motioned to approve the public minutes of September 13, 2023, as amended; seconded*  
584 *by D. Boutin.*

585

586 *Line 291- should be TIF vs TIB*

587 *Line 408- there was an abstention with no reason recorded and I did state my reason and my reason*  
588 *was that I felt the TA had the authority to make this decision.*

589

590 *Vote in favor 7-0*

591

592 *R. Lapierre motioned to approve the non-public minutes of September 13, 2023; seconded by D.*  
593 *Boutin.*

594

595 *Vote in favor 6-0*

596

#### 597 **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

598

599 A. Garron- Old Home Day was postponed to Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023, due to weather concerns. Sunday  
600 September 17th at the 2023 NH Fire Service Committee of Merit Awards Ceremony held at the Capital  
601 Center for The Arts in Concord. Unit Citations are presented to all members of a company or group,  
602 operating together, who perform meritorious service at the scene of an emergency incident. Unit  
603 citations were presented to the following:

- 604 • FF Balise
- 605 • FF Beals
- 606 • FF Hurlburt
- 607 • Lieutenant Miller
- 608 • FF Rondeau
- 609 • Lieutenant Uitts

610 We did sign a new Court Lease Agreement

611 Year 1 & 2's lease payments is \$80,112 annually. This is a 1.5% increase.

612 Year 3 & 4's lease payments is \$81,720 annually. This is a 2% increase.

613 Year 5's lease payments is \$83,352 annually. This is a 2% increase.

614 The Highway Safety Committee is discussing upgrading Street signs and Street lights to make the  
615 streets safer.

616

617 **TOWN COUNCIL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS- None**

618

619 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE- None**

620

621 **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

622

623 J. Sullivan- the PB workshop making updates to the rules of procedure. Alo discission on possible  
624 zoning changes.

625

626 **D. Boutin left the meeting at 9:13 loss of quorum occurred, and the meeting ended.**

627

628

629 Respectfully submitted,

630

631 ***Alicia Jipson***

632

633 Alicia Jipson

634 Recording Clerk