

**Town of Hooksett
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

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2
3 The Hooksett Town Council met on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 6:06 in the Hooksett Municipal
4 Building.
5

6 **CALL TO ORDER**

7 Chair Tsantoulis called the meeting of February 28, 2024 to order at (time) pm.
8

9 **PROOF OF POSTING**

10 Chair Tsantoulis provided proof of posting.
11

12 **ROLL CALL**

13 **In Attendance:** Councilor Timothy Tsantoulis, Councilor James Sullivan, Councilor John Durand,
14 Councilor Roger Duhaime (arrived at 6:20 pm), Councilor David Boutin, Councilor Jodi Pinard, and
15 Councilor Alex Walczyk.

16
17 **Absent:** Councilor Keith Judge and Councilor Randall Lapierre
18

19 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
20

21 **AGENDA OVERVIEW**
22

23 Presented by Councilor Tsantoulis.
24

25 **PUBLIC HEARINGS**
26

27 None
28

29 **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**
30

31 Hooksett Municipal Employee - New Hire
32

33 A. Garron: Rebecca Brandy has joined the Town of Hooksett as the seasonal clerk for the Family
34 Services Department. Her start date was February 26, 2024. Gregory Coin is a Paramedic with the Fire
35 Department and he has resigned effective April 6, 2024.
36

37 Councilor Tsantoulis: We have made mention of a couple of Parks and Recreation employees that
38 have been working throughout the winter on a beautification project at the Lambert's Park area along
39 the shoreline. The young men have done a very good job and this is something we can be proud of in
40 Hooksett.
41

42
43 **PUBLIC INPUT - 15 MINUTES**
44

45 Wayne Goertel (School Board Chairman): I am writing on behalf of the Hooksett School Board,
46 as a result of a motion at our February 20 meeting directing me to do so. At our School
47 Deliberative Session on Saturday, February 3rd, Town Councilor Roger Duhaime behaved in a
48 manner that was threatening and unbecoming an elected official. At both the Town and School
49 Sessions, residents pressed for local governments to reduce their budgets for next year, having
50 seen significant increases in their property taxes following the 5-year town revaluation this fall.
51 Public services should be subject to public scrutiny, and the two Deliberative Sessions saw many
52 good, tough, and honest questions from residents. However, many people were taken aback by

53 some accusatory comments. At the School Session, some accusations and personal attacks went
54 unaddressed by our Moderator. Government officials and administrators were sometimes unable
55 to be recognized in an effort to correct erroneous statements. To get a turn to speak, several
56 Budget Committee Members got up from their table and walked out to the microphones set up for
57 public comment. A critical point was when Budget Committee Member Michael Kowack accused
58 Superintendent Rearick of a contractor bias for a proposed \$13.3m lease maintenance project,
59 claiming, "maybe he's your friend". Having been unable to get recognition by the Moderator to
60 address prior comments, Superintendent Rearick interjected to defend himself. In response to
61 Superintendent Rearick defending himself, Town Councilor Roger Duhaime rushed from the back
62 of the gymnasium and literally charged the administrators' table while gesturing and shouting for
63 the Superintendent to stop talking. Councilor Duhaime's behavior crossed a line, literally and
64 figuratively, with its physicality when coming to the front of the room to ensure that our
65 Superintendent would continue to not have an opportunity for rebuttal. Administrative employees
66 should not have to face physical intimidation as a feature of their participation in public meetings.
67 You can view a recording of this portion of the School Deliberative Session on YouTube at
68 <https://youtu.be/ai-23MsLJb0?t=9078>. I want to be crystal clear that Superintendent Rearick and
69 his administrative team have the full confidence of the entire Hooksett School Board. We want to
70 move on from the Deliberative Sessions confident that next year's Sessions will be more positive
71 for everyone involved. Three things need to happen:

- 72
73 1. We believe Councilor Duhaime should apologize to Superintendent Rearick and everyone
74 involved for his actions on February 3rd. The meeting was tense. He made a mistake. It
75 would be another mistake not to acknowledge that fact.
- 76 2. The Town Council, School Board, and our respective administrative teams must collaborate
77 in the upcoming year to better plan and conduct the Deliberative Sessions. We have
78 questions about security and expected police involvement. We can provide more consistent
79 and robust materials, and better educate our community on their opportunities for involvement
80 year-round and not just at the 11th hour.
- 81 3. Local governments need to recommit to setting a professional and welcoming tone, and
82 leading representative government by example. Deliberative Session attendance is down,
83 and most government positions on our March ballots are uncontested or have no candidates
84 running. A more positive environment would encourage new residents to get involved, in little
85 jobs or big ones.

86
87 We have opportunities to serve our town better. Thank you for your consideration.

88
89 Councilor Tsantoulis: I am going to reserve my comments because Councilor Duhaime is not here. He
90 is expected to be here at any moment. Any further discussion on this matter should include Councilor
91 Duhaime in the conversation. I agree that we as elected officials have a standard that we should
92 portray on a regular basis. I think the proper approach is to learn and keep an open mind as we move
93 forward. You delivered your message; your message was heard and will be responded to. It will
94 probably include a visit to a school board meeting soon.

95 96 **SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS**

97 Kiwanis - Beautify Hooksett Day - April 20 from 10am-3pm

98
99 Bob Willey (3 Morningside Drive): This is the third year we are doing this program. The event is from
100 10-1 and there will be a social gathering after the event at Lambert's Park from 1-3.

101
102 Last year there was a challenge with parking as this event took place at the same time as the regatta. It
103 would be helpful if we could have parking delegated if there the regatta is at the same time this year.

104
105 B. Willey listed the organizations that participated in 2023 and provided a recap and pictures from the
106 2023 event. He mentioned that GS Community Church participates in any and every event in town.

107

108 J Sullivan: These activities are a good way to bring community together. I think that is one of the higher
109 qualities of Hooksett that we come together for these events.

110

111 Councilor Tsantoulis: How would Mr. Willey find out if there is a regatta going on?

112

113 A. Garron: He can submit an application to the DPW through Evelyn Horn. We can make sure there
114 more of an opportunity for parking.

115

116 Councilor Duhaime: My wife is on that board so I can let you know if there is a regatta that day.

117

118 **CONSENT AGENDA**

119

120 None

121

122 **NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

123

124 None

125

126 **BRIEF RECESS**

127

128 None taken

129

130 **OLD BUSINESS**

131

132 Town Council 2023/2024 Goals Update

133

134 A. Garron: There were five goals established last August by the Town Council. The *first goal* is for
135 improved communication and outreach in the community. We are looking at what form of social media
136 would be best in order to communicate. Right now, we use our website. I received feedback from
137 colleagues in other communities. We currently have a quarterly newsletter. Other communities have
138 outreach that they update weekly and sometimes daily. We will be looking for collaborations. Our new
139 website is in the process of an update and should be done by March or April. *Goal number 2* was a 2
140 percent increase to the budget. We will need to have a discussion about what took place at the
141 deliberative session. That was not moving forward with the proposed budget. It was reduced back to
142 the 2023-2024 budget. We are currently restructuring the budget and that will be presented to the
143 Council on March 13. There is opportunity for the default budget being approved. This has bearing on
144 goal number two which is to set the budget increase to no more than a 2%. Right now, we are starting
145 at 3 ½ percent below what the proposed budget was going to be. Therefore the 2% increase leaves it at
146 1 ½ percent lower than we would have been under the proposed budget. There will be discussion over
147 the next several months. We are looking forward to our next budget preparation which is coming up
148 soon and we will need to discuss the approach that will be taken. We will communicate that to the
149 department heads.

150

151 Councilor Boutin: How do you propose to deal with the 1 ½ percent deficit?

152

153 A. Garron: That is the discussion I want to have with the Council. With the proposed reduction in the
154 budget, we need some direction on how we want to move forward with that goal. For the March 13
155 meeting I am going to prepare a budget that would meet the current desires of the public which is a
156 reduction of 3 ½ percent.

157

158 Councilor Boutin: By next summer I can expect you will produce a budget that includes a 2 percent
159 increase.

160

161 A. Garron: Maybe the 2 percent goal is a good place to start and any other consideration the Council
162 wants based on the decision that was made. If that is a goal the Council wants to continue with we will
163 move forward for with it for the upcoming year.

164
165 Councilor Tsantoulis: After the March election the plan is for the Town Administrator to sit down with
166 the department heads and figure out what needs to be done to meet the requirements of that cut.
167 Moving forward the administration will have to figure out what they are going to do to make the budget
168 process work for the next budget.

169
170 A. Garron: *Goal number 3* is to the removal of unnecessary utility poles. That has taken place. I have
171 inquiries into CCI that Eversource purchased. They installed new poles and are in charge of removing
172 the old poles.

173
174 Councilor Boutin: Who is identifying the poles that should be removed?
175

176 A. Garron: CCI.
177

178 Councilor Tsantoulis: Abandoned poles can stay there for a long time and can fall over. We are asking
179 they get cleaned up.
180

181 A. Garron: *Goal number four* is the Council maintaining a quorum. *Goal number five* is connecting
182 riverfront areas with pathways/sidewalks. Hopefully the Planning Board adopts the Master Plan in
183 March or April. I spoke with the Chair of the Conservation Commission and this is a goal they have had
184 for years. We have to be careful of shoreline areas.

185
186 Councilor Tsantoulis: It is a benefit of the town to have riverfront property but with that comes the
187 jurisdiction of the Shoreline Protection Act. We also have a railroad track along the river. We have our
188 work cut out with regard to expanding our usage of the river.
189

190 Councilor Sullivan: As part of improving communication, we should remind people they can sign up for
191 a e-alert. With the clearing out of the area near Lambert's Park you can now see the river. Connecting
192 the riverfront walkway would be good along with a couple of sidewalks.
193
194

195 **NEW BUSINESS**

196 Police Department Radio Antenna Purchase from Emergency Radio Reserve
197

198 Justin Sargent (Chief of Police): I am asking for \$1,175 be spent from our emergency radio
199 communications capital reserve fund. Currently the balance of that fund is \$326,253.07. We are asking
200 for the Ossipee mountain electronics which is a \$225 antenna that needs to be put on the top of our
201 radio tower that is located next to the police department. The rest of the fees are to climb the tower and
202 install the antenna. The current antenna was installed 25 years ago. It is no longer with us and we are
203 currently using a borrowed antenna for our backup radio system which we have utilized in the past. It is
204 imperative that we fix that because it is our fail alert.
205

206 A. Walczyk: Are the funds already allocated for this?
207

208 Councilor Sullivan: It is part of the capital reserve radio program.
209

210 Chief Sargent: I have to come to you for authorization
211

212 ***A. Walczyk motioned to grant \$1,175 be taken out of the emergency radio capital reserve fund to***
213 ***purchase a replacement radio antenna for the police department. Seconded by J. Pinard.***
214

215 **Roll Call**

216 **Councilor Duhaime - Yes**
217 **Councilor Durand - Yes**
218 **Councilor Walczyk - Yes**
219 **Councilor Boutin - Yes**
220 **Councilor Sullivan - Yes**
221 **Councilor Pinard - Yes**
222 **Councilor Tsantoulis - Yes**

223

224 **Motion carries with a vote of 7-0.**

225

226 Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) –Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
227 Agreement between Town and Granite Woods Developer for \$609,170.00.

228

229 Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) –Agreement with Hooksett Village Water Precinct to Fund Water
230 Works Installation for \$225,000.

231

232 A. Garron: We accepted a grant in the amount of \$384,000 from the NH drinking water and
233 groundwater trust fund. This project was removed because initially we didn't have enough money to
234 complete that project but now we do and the work is being put back into the TIF district plan.

235

236 ***D. Boutin motioned to approve the Town Administrators signing Amendment No. 1 to the MOU***
237 ***Agreement between Town and Granite Woods Developer for \$609,170.00 to the contract with the***
238 ***Hooksett Village Water Precinct reimbursed to the town with a price of \$225,000 of those funds.***
239 ***Seconded by Councilor Walczyk.***

240

241 Bruce Thomas (Town Engineer): The original contract was to include and install the water main to
242 complete the loop for the Hooksett Village Water Precinct. Due to the cost of the work, we removed it
243 from the original MOU for Granite Woods because we couldn't afford it. We applied for the \$384,170.
244 Mike discovered the area at the end of Bayview Terrace would be a good place to put a future water
245 crossing which is not included in this project. In order to set up his infrastructure we needed to extend
246 the water main up to Rt. 3A and Bayview Terrace. That extension is for the grant. The extended portion
247 is \$206,450. We rounded it up to \$225,000 for contingencies. The first item is to have a contract with
248 Granite Woods to pay part of the construction who we are under contract with to reimburse them for
249 part this work. The second item is a contract between the town and Hooksett Village to reimburse us for
250 the \$225,000 portion of the work.

251

252 Councilor Sullivan: The total cost is \$609,000. \$225,000 is coming from the Hooksett Village Water
253 Precinct. The \$384,000 is coming from a grant. Is there any additional cost based on the original
254 agreement?

255

256 B. Thomas: We don't anticipate any.

257

258 Councilor Sullivan: When is the riverfront water main crossing planned for?

259

260 Mike Heidorn (Hooksett Village Water Precinct): We are in the design phase. After that we will have to
261 find the money.

262

263 Councilor Tsantoulis: The scope of the project changed because we added piping in the ground. The
264 cost was negated for the town because of the grant. We are not increasing the cost of the TIF project.
265 We are making use of a grant.

266

267 Councilor Duhaime: Why do we want to have Granite Woods do this? We have Parks. Why is Granite
268 Woods managing this?

269

270 B. Thomas: Parks originally gave Granite Woods a bid for the work. It was part of the project and
271 design. We had to eliminate it because the scope of the project was too big. Due to the grant, we can
272 now add it back in.

273
274 Councilor Duhaime: Is there a cost savings?
275

276 B. Thomas: If someone else did this work it would cost more. This is based on the unit price of a large
277 project.
278

279 Councilor Duhaime: Did Underwood Engineering design the blue portion?
280

281 B. Thomas: Yes.
282

283 Councilor Duhaime: Did water works pay for that design?
284

285 M. Heidorn: We split the cost. It was minimal because they had already done most of the work.
286

287 Councilor Duhaime: Is it an 8" main?
288

289 M. Heidorn: The vision it to create a 12" loop around the entire village area. This would be the southern
290 leg of it as it crosses the river.
291

292 **Roll Call**

293 **Councilor Boutin - Yes**

294 **Councilor Walczyk - Yes**

295 **Councilor Durand - Yes**

296 **Councilor Duhaime – Yes**

297 **Councilor Pinard - Yes**

298 **Councilor Sullivan - Yes**

299 **Councilor Tsantoulis - Yes**
300

301 **Motion carries with a vote of 7-0.**
302

303 ***Councilor Sullivan motioned to allow the Town Administrator to sign an agreement with the***
304 ***Hooksett Village Water Precinct to fund the Water Works installation for \$225,000. Seconded by***
305 ***Councilor Boutin.***
306

307 **Roll Call**

308 **Councilor Walczyk - Yes**

309 **Councilor Duhaime – Yes**

310 **Councilor Durand – Yes**

311 **Councilor Sullivan - Yes**

312 **Councilor Pinard - Yes**

313 **Councilor Boutin - Yes**

314 **Councilor Tsantoulis - Yes**
315

316 **Motion carries with a vote of 7-0.**
317

318 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
319

320 Public: February 14, 2024
321

322 ***D. Boutin motioned to approve the February 14, 2024 public Town Council minutes. Seconded***
323 ***by Councilor Pinard. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.***

324

325 Non-Public: February 14, 2024

326

327 ***D. Boutin motioned to approve the February 14, 2024 non-public Town Council minutes.***
328 ***Seconded by Councilor Sullivan. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.***

329

330 **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

331

332 A. Garron: The Sewer Commission suit against the Hooksett Budget Committee was ruled in favor of
333 the Town of Hooksett.

334

335 The health officer needs reappointment. Three Councilor's signatures are required.

336

337 ***Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve the reappointment CEO Dana Pendergast as Health***
338 ***Officer and Joseph Stalker as Deputy Health Officer. Seconded by Councilor Pinard. Motion***
339 ***carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.***

340

341 **TOWN COUNCIL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

342

343 None

344

345 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

346

347 None

348

349 **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

350

351 Councilor Sullivan: The Heritage Commission meeting was yesterday and work continues with the vote
352 approved second sequel to the history book. Discussion revolved around since 1967 which will be the
353 scope of the update. We have a contact with Ms. Moore. We talked about celebrations since 1967. We
354 received a demolition request for the old Texaco station on Rt. 3A. There will be a public hearing to see
355 if there are alternatives to the demolition. Regarding Planning Board, they approved the reuse of the old
356 Regal Cinema on Rt. 3A to be the new home of Manchester Harley Davidson. That will increase the
357 footage of the building to 46,000 sq. feet. Progress is proceeding with a storage facility for RV's and
358 boats on By-pass 28. That will be approximately 100,000 sq. feet. The Board is holding off on concerns
359 on whether Hip Peas was in violation of their site plan and Hip Peas will be presenting the Board with a
360 revision of their site plan. There was discussion the two apartment buildings built just south of the
361 Brickhouse. The front will be split off from the developer and there will be a two story revised office
362 building. The Master Plan hopefully will be ready next month. There will be climate control indoor
363 storage in the old Kmart.

364

365 Councilor Walczyk: Recycling and Transfer met last night. Cardboard has gone up \$5 a ton. Trash has
366 gone up \$4. The transfer station has three part time positions available. They are fully staffed
367 otherwise.

368

369 Councilor Tsantoulis: We haven't received any recent nominations for the Hooksett Youth Achievers. I
370 think that is something that people should pay attention to in order to recognize the good things the
371 youth are doing.

372

373 **PUBLIC INPUT**

374

375 Councilor Tsantoulis: Councilor Duhaime, we had a presentation that involved you. We did not
376 comment because you were not here. It had to do with the school board. It was determined that you
377 and I would have a discussion.

378
379 **Adjournment**

380
381 ***Councilor Boutin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 pm. Seconded by Councilor Durand.***
382 **Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.**

383
384
385 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION NH RSA 91-A:3 II**

386
387 **ADJOURNMENT**

388 **NOTE:** The town website may have attachments to these Town Council minutes for
389 documents referred to in the minutes, reading file materials, and/or ancillary documents that the Town
390 Council has signed as agent to expend as a result of the Council's prior approval of the documents.

391
392
393 **PUBLIC INPUT**

394
395
396 /s/ AnnMarie Scott
397 AnnMarie Scott, Recording Secretary
398