

Hancock Budget Advisory Committee  
February 4, 2014  
Minutes

Present: Lauren Carney, Matthew Hale, Ron Mack, and Pat Payne

Ron Mack called the meeting to order at 6:07

The first item of business was to review and accept the minutes of the January 14th meeting.

The second order of business was to review the proposed warrant articles.

Town Administrator Diane

Kendall had graciously provided updated draft warrant articles (rev 6) to the committee for our review.

Pat Payne reminded the committee that these updated draft warrant articles could potentially undergo further revision and updates right up until Town Meeting day.

The committee agreed to only review articles dealing with direct budgetary impact. Specifically, articles #3, #4, #5 through #12, and #20, per the current draft of warrant articles (revision #6).

On warrant article 3; to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to nine hundred eightyfive thousand dollars (\$985,000) gross budget for the repair and renovation of the Hancock Meetinghouse and to authorize the expenditure of funds raised for this purpose through fund raising, grants and other sources.

There was much discussion around this article. It was clear from the discussion that the HBAC members support preservation of the town Meetinghouse but, given the size of the dollar request, have concerns about the overall cost of the project and its effects on taxpayers. It is clear that a funding request of this size deserves careful consideration and deliberation by all town residents.

The HBAC anticipates that the Meetinghouse Restoration Committee (MRC) will offer details at town

meeting around sources of fund raising and grant opportunities, explain construction costing options, and detail the impact of their request on the tax rate so that voters may discuss, deliberate, and make a fully informed decision before voting on this warrant article.

The HBAC does not wish to offer an opinion on the merits of the warrant article at this time for two reasons; the MRC should be given every opportunity to present their plans to the voters of the town, without prejudgment from the HBAC, and there are enough unknowns at this time that the final specifics of a warrant article may change as town meeting arrives (fund raising, grant opportunities, revised budget estimations, etc).

Warrant article 4; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,970,606 as it's operating budget, inclusive of the Water Department operations. The committee supports this article.

Warrant article 5; to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate \$146,803 for the purpose of retirement of the long-term note issued for Prospect Hill Land. This amount would to be offset by unassigned fund balance funds, with no amount to be raised by taxation, resulting in the town saving the interest costs on the remainder of the long term note. The committee supports this article.

Warrant article 6; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate up to thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000.00) to purchase and outfit a new police cruiser sport utility. Given the age of the current cruiser, and based on information presented in a previous meeting with the HBAC, by Chief Woods, on the need and prudence of purchasing a new cruiser, the committee supports this article.

Warrant article 7; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate up to thirty

thousand dollars (\$30,000) to rebuild the 2003 New Holland LB-75 Backhoe. Based on information presented in a previous meeting with the HBAC, by Public Works Director Kurt Grassett, around the necessity for a functioning backhoe the committee supports this article.

Warrant article 8; to see if the Town of Hancock will raise and appropriate up to eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000) to repair the boat landing at Lake Nubanusit. The committee supports this article.

Warrant article 9; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate up to twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for the purpose for funding a fireworks display on or about July 4th, 2014. Given the patriotic nature of this event, and the goodwill and community support generated by it, the committee supports this article.

The committee discussed articles #5, #6, #7, #8, and #9 and whether or not they were all to be covered by unassigned fund balance funds. The draft version of the warrant articles showed language designating the use of the unassigned funds only for article #5. Another document, showing sources and uses of warrant funding, supplied by the town administrator indicated that articles #6, #7, #8, and #9 will also be asking to use unassigned fund balance funds as well. As the committee is working from a draft document it was noted as such and Matthew Hale would follow up with Diane Kendall for clarification.

Warrant article 10; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the purpose of funding The Grapevine Family & Community Resource Center programs and services for the people of Antrim, Hancock, Bennington and Frankestown. Given the benefit of programs offered by the Grapevine in support of local families the committee supports this article.

Warrant article 11; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) to be placed in the Meetinghouse Capital Reserve Fund. The HBAC committee support for this article is conditional and dependent on the outcome of Article #3. If Article #3 passes, and the need for additional funding is no longer at issue, the committee would not support this article.

Warrant article 12; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund established in 2007. Based on the number of bridges in town, and the vital need that they provide, the committee supports this article.

Warrant article 20; to see if the Town of Hancock will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) for the purpose of funding The Contoocook Valley Transportation Company programs and services for the people of greater Contoocook Valley area. Given the transportation challenges of living in a rural area, and the need for the service that the CVTC, provides, the committee supports this article.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03.

Respectfully submitted,  
Matthew Hale