The Hancock NH Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) became active for the first time since 2015. The BAC is comprised of town residents, appointed by the Town Moderator, and is independent of the Selectboard and town officials. The Hancock BAC is purely an advisory committee per RSA 32:24.

The BAC members began their review in September, 2018 and met, as a group, 15 times over the following months. Two of those meetings were with the Selectboard. The minutes of each meeting are posted on the town website at hancocknh.org.

All department heads were invited to meet with the BAC to offer insights and/or explanations of their department’s budget or requests.

The BAC reviewed all aspects of the budget, while being mindful of the balance required in considering the needs of the town departments, the town employees and tax payers, as well as ensuring fiscal responsibility.

The BAC completed its review of the budget through interviews with a number of department heads and the Selectboard and a review of the town/department financial processes. This is a final report of recommendations and support/non-support of warrant articles and the overall budget, which will be decided at the March 16, 2019 Hancock Town Meeting.

After review and discussion, the BAC has identified key areas of ongoing importance that should be addressed by the Selectboard for 2019. These areas should be incorporated as long-term policies and goals for town wide planning and for selected specific departments. The areas are listed below.

The need to proactively address the employee related health and safety of all employees including medical services and safety equipment.

- Needed work-related immunizations and post exposure/injury follow-up, at no cost to town employees
- Adequate protective gear
- Obtain bids from occupational health facilities to provide services

The need for a town-wide, integrated, interdepartmental communication system.

- Obtain an estimate to establish such a system
- Once established, eliminate the currently paid cell phone stipends
- Coordinate and integrate planning and integration of town telecom and first responder/Department of Public Works (DPW) communication systems
- Integrate this system with the telecom planning process
- Make an updated departmental communication system a priority
The need for disciplined planning and budgeting to achieve level spending in any given tax year.

- A working Five Year Capital Improvement Plan, updated annually
- Develop town-wide level spending budgeting
- The need to have a designated grant writer (or writers) to actively pursue federal, state and other targeted grant funding for the various town departments
- Ensure the grant writer has support to identify any/all grants and has continued support through the process with the appropriate departmental heads

The need for ongoing planning to coordinate across departments tasks, services, equipment and employees utilized.

- A work force study, reviewed at least every other year, to determine if the correct number of work hours are assigned to each job description, and work tasks, and make any necessary adjustments to staffing
- A contracted services study within and across each department in order reduce duplication
- Put a town wide process in place to contract needed services or equipment due to infrequent need of or lack of emergency equipment/services
- Ensure the correct amount and type of administrative assistance is provided to each department head
- Establish department specific training programs and a long-range commitment by employees, once they are trained, to ensure level funding of training programs

The need for long range vehicle and equipment usage analysis.

- The departmental vehicle replacement policy should specify frequency and standardized specifications concerning the timing and type of vehicle to be purchased; to ensure the town bidding process is followed, including the required number of bids received prior to purchase
- The need for town and individual departments to have a vehicle usage and maintenance policy, specifically emphasizing the prohibition of use of town vehicles for personal, or non-work related reasons
- The need for annual level spending to replace equipment and all tools
- Require department heads to track equipment and tool use, via an inventory of departmental tools, at designated intervals

The need for a new technology system that is town/departmental wide.

- Define processes for regular maintenance vs. replacement
- Ensure a process is in place to back up all computers weekly
- Ensure all town owned computers are the same, with identical virus software and operating technology
The BAC also had concerns with specific departments. The Selectboard should give due consideration to the following issues that will arise in the future in an effort address them, prior to a crisis happening.

**Water Department:**
- Growth/future supply and disinfection
- Capital Improvement Plan for Delivery System Infrastructure
- Investigate funding sources for infrastructure improvements

**Cemeteries:**
- Correct mapping and preservation of existing plots on an ongoing basis
- Provision for the preservation of monuments and stones

**Fire/Ambulance, Police and Public Works Departments:**
- Ensure all departments collaboratively plan for future emergency response and any needed resources

In addition, attached to this document is a consensus of the current warrant articles to be discussed and voted on at the Hancock Town Meeting on March 16, 2019. The BAC has indicated in this document whether they recommend, do not recommend, or have no opinion on each article. The full report is attached.

There are only three articles that BAC does not support, at the present time.

**Article 06: Greater Downtown Public Wi-Fi**

While the BAC fully appreciates the exceptional, in-depth, work of the Telecommunications Committee and the desire for downtown wi-fi, the committee cannot support this article in 2019.

With the current increase in the overall budget, the BAC feels this item, while desirable, should wait for another fiscal year. Additionally, any telecom planning should be coordinated with town emergency response departments, communication plans, and implementation.

The BAC feels the need for inter-department communications is a more urgent need to ensure that all town departments (Fire, Police, Ambulance, and Public Works) can communicate with each other, regardless of the area of town. This is essential in any emergency situation for the entire town and town employees’ safety.

Part, or all of the cost, of installing an inter-departmental communication system could be recouped, in a relatively short time, with the elimination of cell phone stipends currently paid to town employees.

**Article 09: Independence Day Fireworks Display**

The BAC agrees that town fireworks should be financed by local fund-raising efforts and not add to the tax base of the town due to the increased town-wide spending this fiscal year.
Article 16: Hundred Nights, Inc.

The BAC agrees that since the Town Welfare Officer meets the needs of our citizens, through local channels, the services provided by Hundred Nights, Inc. are unnecessary at this time.

The BAC would like to thank the Selectboard, and all town employees and volunteers, who have assisted the committee in their review of the budget and related financial items. It has been enlightening and an honor to serve the town in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

The 2019 Hancock Budget Advisory Committee
Article 01: To Choose Town Officers
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 02: Operating Budget
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.600/thousand-dollar evaluation (Operating Budget Only, without any additional Warrant Articles)
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 03: Replace 2003 New Holland Backhoe Loader
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.064/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 04: Duncan Road Repairs
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.048/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 05: Purchase and Outfit New Police Vehicle
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.100/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.
**Article 06: Greater Downtown Public Wi-Fi**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.080/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board **Does Not Recommend** this article.

**Article 07: Municipal Fund Accounting Software**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.120/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board **Recommends** this article.

**Article 08: Amidon Annex Site Work**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board **Recommends** this article.

**Article 09: Independence Day Fireworks Display**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.015/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board **Does Not Recommend** this article.

**Article 10: Meetinghouse Capital Reserve**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.020/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board **Recommends** this article.

**Article 11: Mandatory Recycling & Transfer Station Ordinance**
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board has **No Opinion** on this article.
Article 12: Modify Veterans Tax Credit
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.073/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 13: Grapevine Community Resource Center
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.020/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 14: Grapevine Avenue A Program
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.004/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 15: Community Volunteer Transportation Company
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.002/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 16: Hundred Nights, Inc
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.003/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard does not Recommend this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Does Not Recommend this article.

Article 17: Baseball Special Revenue Fund
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.
Article 18: Recreation Special Revenue Fund
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 19: Highway Special Revenue Fund
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 20: History Special Revenue Fund
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 21: Police Special Revenue Fund
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 22: To Accept Town Reports
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard Recommends this article.
The Budget Advisory Board Recommends this article.

Article 23: Transact any other business
Estimated Tax Impact: $0.00/thousand-dollar evaluation
The Selectboard had no Recommendation on this article.
The Budget Advisory Board has No Opinion on this article.