

Approved

**TOWN OF GRANTHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET HEARING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 06, 2019**

The budget hearing was called to order at 5:01pm on February 6, 2019, by Chairman Warren Kimball. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Lower Level at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, New Hampshire.

Present were: Chairman Warren Kimball; Selectman Constance Jones; Selectman Peter Garland; Town Administrator Melissa White; Administrative Assistant Ann Jasper; Attorney Sheridan Brown; Police Chief John Parsons; Police Sergeant Gordon “Vince” Cunningham; Fire Chief Justin Hastings; Assistant Fire Chief Jay Fountain; Emergency Management Director David Beckley; Transfer Station Supervisor Chris Scott; Road Agent Jeff Hastings; Activities Director Jamielynn Garland; Athletics Director Marsha Googins; Moderator Lorie McClory; Library Director Dawn Huston; Cindy Towle; Dave Wood; Richard Hocker; Renee Gustafson; Richard Kaszeta; Colette Simon; Peter Gardiner; Don Roberts; Peg Roberts; Paul Handley; C. Peter James; Brenda Molloy; Jean Liepold; Bruce St. Peter; Morgan Alexander; Ralph Beasley; and Patricia Beasley

Attendees were given copies of the 2019-2020 proposed budget and warrant articles.

Article 1 – Election of Officers

(By Official Ballot at the Polls March 12, 2019 from 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM)

Town Administrator White reviewed the budget summary:

Proposed Budget Summary

Item	Prior Year (FY2019)	Ensuing Year (FY2020)
Total Operating Budget	\$3,621,572	\$3,550,587
Special Warrant Articles	\$355,603	\$450,000
Individual Warrant Articles	\$116,865	\$455,240
TOTAL Appropriations	\$4,094,040	\$4,455,827
Less: Amount of Estimated Revenues & Credits	\$1,449,688	\$1,907,601
Estimated Amount to be raised by taxes	\$2,644,352	\$2,548,226

- The estimated amount to be raised by taxes, after estimated revenues and credits, is \$2,548,226; a decrease of \$96,126 from the prior year (FY2019).

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Estimated Tax Impact

- The estimated tax impact of this proposed budget would be .33 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.
- Why would the tax rate increase when the proposed budget is less than last year?
 - ❑ *Over the years, we have been able to use the Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) to keep the town's portion of the tax rate as steady as possible. From 2015 through 2018, the town portion of the tax rate went from \$4.86 to \$5.12.*
 - ❑ On the 2019 Town Meeting Warrant, there are three articles totaling \$530,000 to come from UFB. Therefore, we are unsure how much of the UFB will be available to continue the practice of using UFB to steady the tax rate.

Resident Don Roberts asked if the steady tax rate from 2015 to 2018 was due to the surplus of funds that were given to the school from the Dover law suit that the school budget didn't use and turned over to the town. Town Administrator White replied no, this tax rate is only for the town's portion. Roberts said that he and others were told by the School Superintendent that monies appropriated through the Dover law suit in the amount of approximately \$795,000 that the school could not use was the reason that the taxes were somewhat flat in 2016 and 2017 but went up considerably in 2018 because that money was not available and they were told to their face by the Superintendent of Schools that the town received that money. He continued that when asked about that by certain parties, it was denied so somewhere there is money flowing that nobody knows about. He stated further that curiosity has to be asked what happened to that money and why would the Superintendent of Schools tell them that it goes to the town. He asked again if that is not why the 2016-2017 budget stayed flat. White said that she can't speak to the school budget or how revenues to the school happen, she can only speak to the town's revenues and the town's budget and how the town's portion of the tax rate is set. The \$795,000 from the Dover law suit is something that the school district will have to answer. Roberts said they did and the school district told him that the money was given to the town but nobody knows where this money is floating. Selectman Jones stated that the Dover law suit money was used by the school to reduce the school's portion of the budget. The monies that the town has are used solely to reduce the Town's portion of the budget and when we are talking about the tax being pretty level, we are referring to the municipal portion of the budget. Roberts said he is confused. White asked him to give her his contact information after the meeting and told him that she will connect with the Superintendent for clarification on his question. Roberts thanked her.

Article 2 – Land Purchase (Sawyer Brook Headwaters)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$415,000) for the purchase of an approximately 386 acre parcel of land located on Upper Dunbar Hill Road (Tax Map Lots 220-027, 028, and 031), said parcel being the same premises as were conveyed to Dillon Investments, LLC by William B. Ruger, Jr. by warranty deed dated March 28, 2018, and recorded in Book 2035, Page 044 of the Sullivan County Registry of Deeds. \$115,000 to come from private donations. The balance of \$300,000 to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

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Sawyer Brook Headwaters Conservation Project

GRANTHAM TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE #2

Sheridan Brown presented the following overview of the proposed land purchase in Article 2:

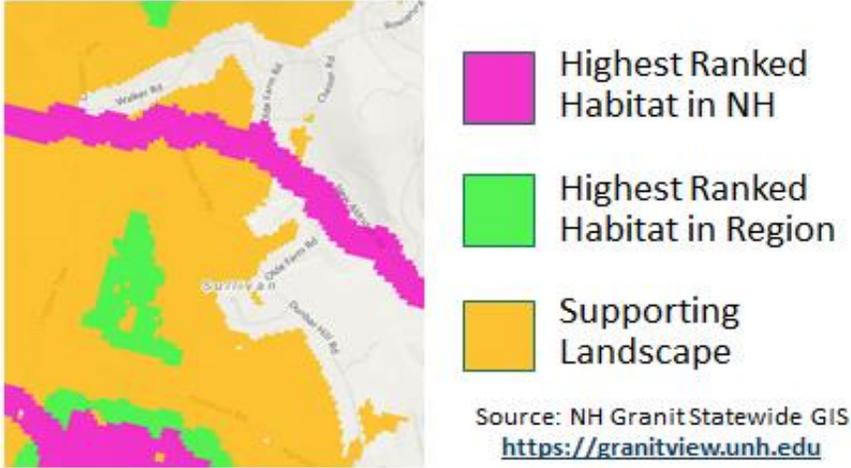
Article 2 asks for a \$300,000 appropriation to purchase a parcel of land located on Upper Dunbar Hill Road which may also be known as the Dillon Parcel because this is the parcel that was purchased last year by Dillon Investments from Bill Ruger, Jr. by warranty deed dated March 28, 2018 and recorded at Book 2035, Page 044 of the Sullivan County Registry of Deeds. The money for this purchase will come from the unassigned Fund Balance and no funds will be raised through taxation.

This parcel was slated to have a pretty extensive timber harvest done on it. It contains 386 acres and is bordered by Walker Road, Croydon Turnpike, Old Dunbar Hill Road and Hartshorn Road. Several of these roads are Class VI roads but all are accessible. Walker Road is a town maintained road so this parcel has very unique public access for a variety of uses such as bird and wild life watching, hiking, mountain biking, running, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and more. We have heard from people that they are already using it for these purposes and don't want to lose the opportunity.

The parcel has tremendous natural resources, the Sawyer Brook Headwaters and the Second Highest Ranked Wetlands Evaluation Unit out of 54 units surveyed by the Town in 2012 (Upper Dunbar Hill Road Beaver Dam).

On the following maps, the hot pink arc going across the top is following Sawyer Brook down to the west, being Blue Mountain and the Corbin Park Hunting Preserve. As it comes across the Croydon Turnpike, it goes all the way down through New Aldrich Road to where the Sawyer Brook Marketplace is (Rum Brook Market) and it is the highest ranked habitat in New Hampshire by New Hampshire Fish and Game. They put together a wildlife action plan that they update at regular intervals and this is as good as it gets and it runs right across the top of that parcel where it intersects at Walker Road and Croydon Turnpike.

NATURAL RESOURCES - WILDLIFE



NATURAL RESOURCES – WILDLIFE



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Brown informed that the immediate threats to this parcel are that in May 2018 the current owner announced it was going to conduct an extensive timber harvest that would leave much of the parcel open. This would really reduce the enjoyment for folks going there and doing those various activities. Large amounts of timber were already taken out in 2013 and 2014 by the prior owner. Some of those areas have grown back in but most of the valuable timber has been taken out so to go through and do another harvest would really leave a lot of that lot open. Many residents came to the Board of Selectmen meeting in May with concerns about the impact further timber harvesting might have upon wildlife, the character of the Town, and recreational use of the property and they asked the Selectmen to do something but, unfortunately, there are limits on how much town government can do. Town Government is only allowed to do what the state says it can in statute so they can't just outlaw people from timber harvesting. The most likely way to keep things we don't like from happening up there is to actually own the property and have some control over it. Brown said that was not an option until July when the town learned that the owner was offering the parcel to the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department for \$450,000. Fish and Game did not have any interest in acquiring the parcel because they previously looked at it along with others in Newport and Croydon and Dillon bought it before they could make that deal, so they spent all the money they had for conservation projects and didn't have enough money left for the sort of quick closing the current owner would have liked.

The Town looked at ways it could pull together a deal. The Master Plan encourages the Town to acquire, conserve, protect, and manage important open space area and natural resources, and also encourages the Town to work cooperatively with other organizations to make things happen that reduces the tax burden to the Town and helps the Town to do more with less. With the encouragement of the Board of Selectmen, members of the Conservation Commission, representatives from Ausbon Sargent Land Trust and representatives from The Conservation Fund, which is a national non-profit organization, all sat down together and a collaborative plan was developed to acquire and permanently protect the parcel. The partnership includes those three entities; the Town, Ausbon Sargent Land Trust and The Conservation Fund. Brown wanted to make it clear that when he talks about The Conservation Fund, it is not the Town Conservation Fund, it is a national non-profit organization as previously mentioned. Brown said The Conservation Fund incurred a lot of costs just on faith that the Town is serious about this purchase. Representative, Sally Manikian, has been fantastic and the organization has been fantastic and they have already incurred a lot of costs just on faith that the Town is serious about this.

Brown said when he goes through the budget and talks about the overall project costs, he wants people to be aware of how little in terms of administrative costs are built into that because they have put together an A-Team of non-profits as partners:

The Conservation Fund

- 4-star rating from Charity Navigator. Charity navigator is America's largest independent charity evaluator, grading fiscal management and transparency.
- A+ grade from Charity Watch for over 10 years, ranking as their top environmental charity.
- Learn more at www.conservationfund.org
- The Conservation Fund puts an average of 96% of its budget directly into conservation programs and just 1% into fundraising.

The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust

- Debbie Stanley, Executive Director, runs a fantastic organization and they try to get people out to utilize these properties that they conserve.
- Accredited by Land Trust Accreditation Commission that is a national organization.
- Serves Grantham and 11 other towns in Mount Kearsarge and Sunapee area.
- Has protected 11,481 acres, 147 properties, and over 8.5 miles of shore frontage including over 4,700 feet frontage on Lake Sunapee.

THE ROLES OF THE PARTNERS - TOWN



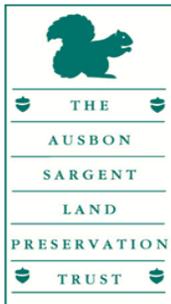
- Provides \$300K appropriation toward purchase price.
- Holds eventual title to Parcel.
- Grants conservation easement to Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust.

THE ROLES OF THE PARTNERS - TCF

- Executes P & S Agreement with Dillon to secure property until July 2019 (Done).
- Performs appraisal, legal and title work for initial closing with Dillon.
- Holds title to Parcel until full funding for Town acquisition is secured.
- Provides technical assistance w/ grant writing.

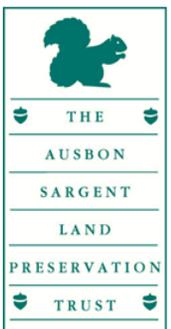


THE ROLES OF THE PARTNERS - ASLPT



- Coordinates private fundraising efforts.
- Writes & submits LCHIP grant application on behalf of Town.
- Performs legal work required for permanent conservation easement required by LCHIP.

THE ROLES OF THE PARTNERS - ASLPT



- Holds conservation easement after Town takes title from TCF.
- Monitors the Parcel as part of its stewardship program.

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PROJECT BUDGET - COSTS	
Purchase Price	\$415,000
TCF Costs	\$50,000
ASLPT Costs	\$25,000
Establish Stewardship Fund	\$25,000
Total Project Cost	<u>\$525,000</u>

PROJECT BUDGET - SOURCE OF FUNDS	
Total Project Cost	\$525,000
<u>Town Appropriation</u>	<u>-\$300,000</u>
Balance to be raised from LCHIP and Private Sources	\$225,000
<i>Private fundraising target</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>
<i>LCHIP may fund up to 50% of eligible costs. Project is expected to be competitive.</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>

PROJECT SCHEDULE	
P&S Agreement between TCF and Dillon (Done).	Sept. 2018
Town Appropriation	Mar. 2019
Private Fundraising	Mar. 2019 - Mar. 2020
LCHIP Application	May 2019

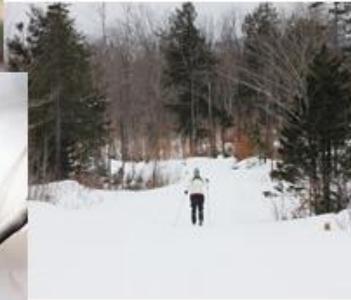
PROJECT SCHEDULE, CONT'D.	
TCF Closing w/ Dillon	July 2019
<i>TCF Holds title, Town holds equitable interest securing its funds.</i>	
LCHIP Awards	Nov. 2019
Town Closing w/ TCF & ASLPT	Mar. 2020
Town transfers Conservation Easement to ALPT ensuring permanent protection as required by LCHIP.	

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TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE



Unique natural and recreational resources are at stake.



Protecting the property is consistent with the Town's Master Plan, and doing so enhances quality of life for Grantham residents.



- **ONLY** time the Parcel has been available to the Town at less than \$700K (once listed as high as \$1.2M).

- **ONLY** time that the Town has had a seller who will accept appraised value (\$415K) for

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Brown emphasized that this cannot be done without the initial appropriation. He also encouraged residents to get out and enjoy the parcel at the Sled Dog Race on February 16, 2019 at 9:30am starting at the Recreation Park and running along the western boundary of this parcel. It goes up the Croydon Turnpike and the dog teams can be seen from Walker Road. He added that there will also be a snow shoe hike in March with more details to come as it gets closer and we know more about the weather conditions.

Brown said he is happy to answer questions and can be contacted at 603-865-5231 or 03753@sheridanbrownlaw.com

Resident Jean Liepold noted that Article 2 states . . . To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum \$415,000 and this presentation states the appropriation will be \$300,000 and asked which is it? Brown stated that it is confusing and the reason Article 2 states \$415,000 is because that is the way the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration requires the article to be written because the amount to be appropriated has to line up

with what the overall expenditure is. He broke it down in his presentation to show that the amount to be appropriated by the Town is actually \$300,000 with the rest to be raised by LCHIP and private funds.

Resident David Beckley asked if the Town would be able to execute a timber management plan or even cutting areas to maintain wildlife with the partners the Town is working with on this. Brown replied yes, timber harvesting is allowed under the terms of the conservation easements, but how soon the Town would be able to do that is another question because as he mentioned, the valuable timber has already been taken off so it would probably be a while.

Resident Lorie McClory asked how much land the Town owns right now for similar recreational programs. David Wood, Grantham Conservation Commission Chair, responded approximately 900 acres.

McClory stated that she knows the Town is not raising the \$300,000 by taxation and asked if we used that to offset the tax rate, what is the tax impact of raising \$300,000 by taxation. Brown calculated that it would be roughly ten cents (\$.10) on the tax rate per \$50,000 so if someone owns a \$200,000 home, it may be under \$20.00.

Brown added that as for what the town owns for other lands, there is a limited amount of lands that offer these sort of opportunities with guaranteed public access that can't be lost. This is something where public access to the property is based on the goodwill of the property owner. There is another large parcel in north Grantham which has excellent opportunities but very limited access. Brown said the Town does not have another property that has the access to it in terms of road access and in terms of universal access like this one. One of the things the Town did at Brookside Park was put in a trail system with low grades so folks that weren't as mobile could use it. Brown emphasized that with the three class six roads that surround this parcel and Walker Road there are places that people can actually drive, park a car and walk in without hurting themselves versus if you compare it with the Town Forest, it's an excellent piece of property to get out on but it's a long and steep hike to get up Miller Pond Road before you get to the good stuff.

McClory asked if the Town has any money in conservation trusts that can be used to purchase this land instead of using unassigned fund balance. Brown replied that there was not sufficient funding in conservation trusts that the Town would use for this. He said there is approximately \$75,000 in conservation trust and if the Town used that towards this purchase, it would wipe that out and the reason he would recommend against that course of action is that the Town almost lost this opportunity because we didn't have seed money. If we had even a small amount for a deposit to put down with Dillon initially, if we hadn't had to go looking at holding a special town meeting and getting approval to spend funds for this project, we may have been able to land it earlier so it is good to have that sort of money sitting there to entice partners to come in so they didn't want to drain that down to nothing.

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Dave Wood (Grantham Conservation Commission Chair) said he would like to expand on the answer to McClory's question. He stated when this property first came up as an option to purchase, one of the ideas was to take money from the Land Preservation Trust in order to put a down payment on it. Then the project fell through but that is the kind of seed money that Brown was just referring to. The next two articles that are on the Town Meeting Warrant regarding RSA 36-A:4-a, I(a) and (b) would allow the Conservation Commission to make just such a contribution out of those Land Preservation Capital Reserve Funds. What the RSA provides is for the Conservation Commission to make contribution where the Town will not be the owner but some appropriate organization would, in this case Ausbon Sargent, so it's exactly to allow us to do that sort of thing. If for some reason the private funds are not available, that's an option.

Resident Don Roberts asked to confirm and clarify that the monies in the Land Trust Preservation Capital Reserve Funds is tax money. White confirmed that it is. He asked if this parcel is purchased, if it could be used by outdoors people besides bird watchers, hikers, snowshoers and dog sleds or can it be used for things such as hunting and fishing. Brown said there are no restrictions on other uses in terms of sporting if you wanted to go hunting and fishing out there but, obviously, the Town has to balance safety issues so there has to be some way of people knowing what is going on when they are out there. Brown asked Debbie Stanley of ASLPT if ATV's are allowed. She said it is up to the town but she knew that snowmobiles are allowed and as far as hunting goes, she clarified later in the meeting that LCHIP grants require hunting to be allowed. Brown summarized that there are few limitations in the conservation easement, it's possible that the Town might decide by vote to impose certain limitations but it is not something that is put on the Town by an outside entity other than any development of the parcel. Roberts said he is asking for transparency, the land use available and to whom it is available to and not limited to. Brown said that it sounds like he is looking for a restriction where there isn't any and reiterated that the Town will not become bound by a new restriction other than not developing the property. He stated further that if the Town does not do this, all of these uses may disappear. A private land owner may dramatically change the use of that property someday and it may be gone and the natural resource of that property may be gone.

Resident C. Peter James commented that a lot has been said about the unassigned fund balance and that he thinks of it as a locally controlled capital reserve fund. It's money that has been set aside and if an opportunity comes up, we have the money to expend on something, for example, Miller Pond Road bridge. He said he wanted to make a point that this isn't the first time that this has happened.

Jean Liepold questioned if the Town does not buy this land, if Dillon could develop it and put in houses and lots? She felt strongly that it is important for the Town to buy this land and fully supports this. She said she believes it is a great investment to keep our town little Grantham.

Article 3 – Adopt Provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I (a)

Shall the town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I (a) to authorize the Conservation Commission to expend funds to purchase interests in land outside the boundaries of our municipality, subject to the approval of the local governing body? If adopted, this authority shall remain in effect until rescinded by majority vote.
Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Sheridan Brown explained that Articles 3 and 4 come from the same RSA and are to give the Town Conservation Commission and the Board of Selectmen some optional powers that the State allows. To explain how they work, Brown stated the first one is authorizing the Conservation Commission to expend funds to purchase interest in lands outside the boundaries of the municipality subject to approval by the local governing body. The Board of Selectmen would have to go through hearings and there would be a vote on it. It's another instance where a conservation project could come along in Grantham where we are bordered by Springfield, Plainfield and Enfield, that may involve some sort of collaborative conservation effort. He said we don't know what that is at this point but these things come along quickly from different land owners. This is simply another mechanism and doesn't guarantee that we are going to spend money to have an interest in land. It also could involve another kind of interest such as a conservation easement and not necessarily the title to property. Therefore, it could be a lesser

Approved

interest so that when we talk about buying interest in land outside of the boundaries we are not necessarily talking about buying title to an entire parcel.

Article 4 – Adopt Provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I (b)

Shall the town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I (b) to authorize the Conservation Commission to expend funds for contributions to “qualified organizations” for the purchase of property interests, or facilitating transactions related thereto, where the property interest is to be held by the qualified organization, and the town will retain no interest in the property? If adopted, this authority shall remain in effect until rescinded by majority vote. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Brown said Article 4 authorizes the Conservation Commission to expend from its Conservation Fund for contributions to qualified organizations for the purchase of property interest or facilitating transactions related thereto where the property interest has to be held by the qualified organization and the town will retain no interest in the property. He explained that qualified organizations are conservation organizations that are going to permanently protect the parcel. This is a mechanism that might allow the Conservation Commission to put up some money for legal costs or other transactional costs even though at the end of the day, the deal might not go through and we don't get the parcel. So, we might not hold an interest in something but we have worked to facilitate the transaction and as Dave Wood pointed out earlier, it's another mechanism to put up a little bit of seed money and support other organizations that are doing good work around us. It may be something happening in neighboring towns that impact Grantham's water quality or may be something that ties to a wildlife corridor. Brown said New Hampshire Fish and Game just spent a lot of money to acquire land at the other end of the wildlife corridor that we have been talking about in Newport and Croydon and they did that in partnership with The Conservation Fund. There are things that happen around us that might be worthwhile for the town to support.

Bruce St. Peter asked for clarification between the two statutes that are spending tax payer money. Brown stated that both of them deal with the Conservation Fund which is tax dollars that are put into a dedicated fund and, also, money in that Conservation Fund comes from land use change taxes when people take their property out of current use and develop it. So, the first one, Article 3, allows money from that fund to be spent for interest outside of town in the rare instance that one became available. That would require not only the Board of Selectmen's vote but public hearings and recommendations from the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. There would be a lengthy process involved. Article 4 would be for supporting organizations like The Conservation Fund or Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust with the town not acquiring interest in the property but the Town supporting their efforts. It would allow the Conservation Commission to write a check to qualified organizations in the interest of helping with a project that is beneficial to the Town.

Resident C. Peter James asked if this will be voted on by ballot or floor vote at Town Meeting? White replied floor vote.

ARTICLE 5 – General Government

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million, three hundred forty-six thousand, nine hundred four dollars (**\$1,346,904**) to defray the cost of **General Government** operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

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Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Selectmen's Office	\$249,150	\$257,195	\$8,045
Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$121,559	\$125,538	\$3,979
Supervisors of the Checklist	\$11,150	\$9,000	(\$2,150)
Financial Administration	\$41,200	\$45,200	\$4,000
Tax Maps/Assessing	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$0.00
Legal	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$5,000
Personnel Administration	\$784,192	\$633,000	(\$151,192)
Planning Board	\$4,250	\$5,050	\$800
Zoning Board of Adjustment	\$2,400	\$2,550	\$150
General Government Buildings	\$126,200	\$129,690	\$3,490
Cemeteries	\$19,800	\$19,800	\$0.00
Insurance (Property & Liability)	\$38,050	\$33,781	(\$4,269)
Regional Associations	\$4,057	\$4,100	\$43
Other General Government	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$1,479,008	\$1,346,904	(\$132,104)

Additional Information for Article 5

Administration/Selectmen's Office:

\$8,000 allocated to salaries

Town Clerk/Tax Collector:

\$2,500 allocated to salaries

\$1,500 for increases in accounting software and upgrades

Supervisors of the Checklist:

A decrease of \$2,150 due to two elections in this budget cycle

Financial Administration:

\$4,000 for Auditing & Actuarial costs

Legal: \$5,000 increase

Personnel Administration:

An overall decrease of \$151,192 due to switching providers for health insurance, as well as receiving a reduction in premium's for Worker's Compensation & Unemployment insurance

There was no public comment on this Article.

ARTICLE 6 – Public Safety

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eight hundred forty-three thousand, two hundred fifty-one dollars (**\$843,251**) to defray the cost of **Public Safety** operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

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<i>Account Title</i>	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
<i>Police Department</i>	\$535,910	\$543,131	\$7,221
<i>Ambulance (FAST Squad)</i>	\$98,630	\$136,646	\$38,016
<i>Fire Department</i>	\$131,784	\$141,474	\$9,690
<i>Building Inspection</i>	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$2,000
<i>Emergency Management</i>	\$9,500	\$10,000	\$500
TOTAL	\$785,824	\$843,251	\$57,427

Additional Information for Article 6

Police Department: Net increase of \$7,221

- ▶ **Reduced budget for sign-on bonus by \$10,000**
- ▶ **Reduced budget for witness fees by \$600**
- ▶ **Reduced budget for photo developing by \$150**
- ▶ **Reduced budget for vehicle fuel by \$5,000**
- ▶ **Reduced budget for reference books by \$500**
- ▶ **Reduced budget for radio replacement by \$5,000**
- ▶ Increased budget for salaries by \$8,319
- ▶ Increased budget for computer services by \$5,812
 - ▶ \$2,968 for Comcast (\$247.35/month for 12 months). Switched to Business class account for increased internet speeds, encrypted lines for security video feeds, and an additional static IP for use with IMC and Hanover Dispatch.
 - ▶ \$100 for increased cloud storage
 - ▶ \$2,110 for Twin Bridges (additional IT services for IMC-desktop and MDT's)
 - ▶ \$634 for upgrade of licenses and platform
- ▶ Increased budget for dispatch services by \$4,340
- ▶ Increased budget for radio repairs by \$2,500
- ▶ Increased budget for outside services by \$7,500 for updating SOP's

Police Chief John Parsons went over the above line items individually and explained the reason(s) for the decrease or increase.

Lorie McClory asked Chief Parsons how they are doing with the on-call overtime that was approved last year. Chief Parsons said that as of January 29, 2019, for the officers to be on call they have spent \$5,392.88 out of \$18,100.00 appropriated. For the on-call overtime which means the officer was called out, they spent \$1,337.37 out of \$19,700.00. Chief Parsons explained that what that represents is from July 1, 2018 through this date, there were 54 calls that came in when there was no Grantham Officer on duty. Out of those calls, 40 either went to State Police or were a type of call that is only sometimes responded to such as medical calls, fire calls and BOL's on the interstate. Grantham covered 14 of the total calls which included a domestic that resulted in an arrest, a serious motor vehicle crash, a teen alcohol and drug party that happened in Grantham which resulted in eight people being arrested, two very serious medical calls involving cardiac issues, a woman who had been lost in the woods in Eastman for over eight hours and was found 45 minutes after the officer was called out.

Equipment and Grants obtained by the Police Department:

Equipment obtained through LESO (Law Enforcement Support Office)

(2) Ammunition Storage lockers (\$15,742 each), (50) Rifle magazines (\$12.30 each), (1) Tool kit (\$1,800), (3) rifle sights (\$386 each), (5prs) boots (\$77.00 pair).

Total Cost: \$35,442.00 Actual Grantham PD Cost: \$254.00 (only shipping costs)

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EMS in Warm Zone Grant: Used to offset the cost of helmets and plate carriers that were approved for purchase as part of PD's 2018-2019 operating budget. The total cost of the equipment was \$8,140. The amount received from the grant was \$6,000, which was the maximum amount allowed to be awarded.

EMPG Grant: Used to purchase the Electronic Message Sign board, the traffic control trailer, and the traffic control equipment. The total cost of this equipment was \$22,702. A matching grant was awarded in conjunction with the purchase of the 2018 Ford Expedition. No additional cost to town.

MDT Grant: Used to offset the cost to purchase (2) Mobile Data Terminals to replace the current models that are at end of life. The total cost of the equipment was \$12,220. Amount received from grant \$3,979, which was the maximum amount allowed to be awarded.

Administrator White discussed the increases to the Fire and Fast Squad Budgets.

FAST Squad:

- ▶ \$18,100 Allocated to salaries due to eight new members receiving their EMT license
- ▶ \$10,500 Allocated for ambulance service fees due to an increase in call volume
- ▶ \$4,500 Allocated for new protective equipment for EMS providers
- ▶ \$4,000 Allocated for new winter tires
- ▶

Fire Department:

- ▶ \$3,000 Allocated for upgrades to office equipment
- ▶ \$2,500 Allocated to salaries (more members responding to calls)
- ▶ \$1,500 Allocated to radios
- ▶ \$1,500 Allocated for engineering and permitting for the installation of a dry hydrant on Chester Road.
- ▶ \$1,000 Allocated for equipment maintenance

Don Roberts asked how many ambulances the Town has. Assistant Fire Chief Jay Fountain answered one. Roberts commented that \$4,000 seems like a lot of money to spend on tires for one ambulance. Fountain said that is for six tires and explained that Grantham is not a transport ambulance, but it is what our people use to get all of our equipment to a scene and because we have almost seven miles of interstate, if we have calls in the middle of winter, we want some way to get people who were in an accident out of harm's way to some place that is warm.

ARTICLE 7 – Police Cruiser Lease Final Payment

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,740 for the final payment of the 2017 Dodge Charger Police Cruiser, with said funds to come from the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund previously established for that purpose. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Lorie McClory asked how much money is in that fund. Town Administrator Melissa White answered \$34,371 as of January 31, 2019.

C. Peter James stated that he was a member of the CIP Committee and the Committee recommended that instead of paying lease payments every year, the Town should buy the vehicle when replacements are needed.

ARTICLE 8 – Public Works

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seven hundred ninety-four thousand, three hundred forty-three dollars (**\$794,343**) to defray the cost of **Public Works** operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Approved

Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Highway Administration	\$242,595	\$252,345	\$9,750
Highway Maintenance	\$175,700	\$178,700	\$3,000
Street Lights	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0.00
Transfer Station	\$151,515	\$153,798	\$2,283
Waste Disposal	\$210,000	\$200,000	(\$10,000)
Landfill Monitoring	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$789,310	\$794,343	\$5,033

Additional information for Article 8

Highway Administration:

- \$3,850 allocated to salaries
- \$1,000 allocated for overtime
- \$2,000 allocated for rental equipment
- \$2,000 allocated for vehicle fuel

Highway Maintenance:

- \$3,000 allocated for costs associated with sand and gravel

Transfer Station:

- \$3,083 allocated to salaries
- \$1,000 for vehicle repairs

Reduced the budget for uniforms and equipment by \$2,000. \$2,000 was added last year for the purchase of an AED at the Transfer Station.

There was no public comment on this Article.

ARTICLE 9 – Highway Dump/Plow Truck

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 for the purchase of a new highway dump truck complete with plow and sander, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$200,000 from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established for that purpose. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Additional information for Article 9

- This would replace the 2010 (model year) plow truck
- This plow truck has been in service since November 2009 (eleven winter seasons)
- Mileage is over 43,000; hours are over 4,500
- Costs to keep this vehicle on the road have increased substantially:
 - 2016-17: Approximately \$7,200
 - 2017-18: Approximately \$9,300
 - 2018-19: To date, over \$4,000
 - Jeff and Brian's time repairing it when it breaks down

There was no public comment on this Article.

Approved

ARTICLE 10 – Replacement of Highway Garage Roof

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for costs associated with the replacement of the roof on the Highway Garage to come from the Town Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Jay Fountain asked if this roof would be metal or shingles. White answered shingles.

ARTICLE 11 – Highway Department Generator

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,500 for the purchase and installation of a generator for the Highway Garage. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

White commented that during the November snowstorm when we lost power and the truck broke down, Jeff and Brian were trying to repair that truck with no heat and flashlights.

There was no public comment on this Article.

ARTICLE 12 – Transfer Station Generator

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$18,000 for the purchase and installation of a generator at the Transfer Station. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

White explained that this would protect the building from pipes freezing and also operate the equipment that is needed when people want to go to the Transfer Station when the power is out.

Select Board Chair Warren Kimball explained that they are hoping to purchase a generator that is large enough to operate all of the equipment and they are working with a generator dealer who thinks it might be possible but will do a survey at the Transfer Station to find out for sure. If they buy something like this, they also want to make sure it is able to handle any new equipment that might come along in the future. He said if that is not possible, they will just get a generator that will heat the building and keep the pipes from freezing and so forth.

Ralph Beasley asked if there is LP gas out there to run a generator. Chairman Kimball said there is. Beasley then asked if they budgeted for the extra gas. Chairman Kimball said he does not anticipate a large increase in the amount of fuel that would be used.

Don Roberts asked Transfer Station Supervisor Chris Scott how many times they are affected out there with loss of electricity. Scott said during the November storm, they lost power for two days and thankfully it wasn't cold enough to hurt any of the equipment and they lost it again during another storm. Roberts commented that it is a lot of money to pay for three days of loss of electricity instead of putting up a sign that says closed. Selectman Jones stated that the problem is that in the winter when it is below zero, you have to keep that machinery warm so you have two choices; have a generator that keeps the machinery warm in the winter when the power is out because if it's out for 24 hours that liquid gels and the machinery won't work. You can have a generator that just does that or if it's not much more to have a generator that will run everything, then you might want to do so. She pointed out that Chairman Kimball is working with a generator company to try to get a handle on which kind of a generator would work for us. Fire Chief Justin Hastings added that if the pistons on the compactor get frozen, they can split and the cost to replace a piston is about \$10,000. C. Peter James added that setting up a generator with this type of equipment is very complicated and he can see where the expense is.

ARTICLE 13 – Health and Welfare

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-five thousand, five hundred dollars (**\$45,500**) to defray the cost of **Health and Welfare** operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Approved

Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Health	\$1,700	\$1,000	(\$700)
Boarding Animals	\$700	\$700	\$0.00
Community Services	\$18,500	\$18,800	\$300
Town General Assistance	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$45,900	\$45,500	(\$400)

Community Agencies:	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Lake Sunapee VNA	\$6,500	\$6,500	\$0
Newport Food Pantry	\$500	\$500	\$0
Sullivan County Nutrition Services	\$200	\$300	\$100
Kearsarge Area COA	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$0
Southwestern Community Services	\$900	\$900	\$0
West Central Services	\$3,500	\$3,700	\$200
Public Health Council of the Upper Valley	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT/NH	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
Total	\$18,500	\$18,800	\$300

There was no public comment on this Article.

ARTICLE 14 – Culture and Recreation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three hundred two thousand, one hundred fifty-two dollars (**\$302,152**) for **Culture and Recreation**. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Recreation	\$49,200	\$49,400	\$200
Dunbar Free Library	\$232,600	\$215,352	(\$17,248)
Activities	\$33,510	\$35,900	\$2,390
Archives	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$316,810	\$302,152	(\$14,658)

Additional information for Article 14

Library:

Overall decrease of \$17,248 due to savings in health insurance benefits.

Activities:

\$2,000 due to increase in tents, tables and chairs for Old Home Day

There was no public comment on this Article.

Approved

ARTICLE 15 – Conservation, Debt Principal, Debt Interest, and Tax Anticipation Note Interest

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred eighteen thousand, four hundred thirty-seven dollars (\$218,437) for **Conservation, Debt Principal, Debt Interest, and Tax Anticipation Note Interest**. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Conservation Commission	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$500
Town Hall Bond/Interest	\$77,773	\$74,808	(\$2,965)
Library Bond/Interest	\$61,455	\$59,406	(\$2,049)
Fire Department SCBA Lease	\$37,197	\$37,197	\$0.00
Police Cruiser Lease (2018)	\$22,971	\$22,971	\$0.00
Highway 1-Ton Lease	\$20,955	\$20,955	\$0.00
Tax Anticipation Notes Interest	\$100	\$100	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$222,951	\$218,437	(\$4,514)

Additional information for Article 15

Bonds & Notes:

- Town Hall Bond – year 15 out of 20
- Library Bond – year 4 out of 10
- Police Cruiser Lease/Purchase – year 2 out of 3
- Fire Department SCBA’s Lease/Purchase – final payment

There was no public comment on this Article.

ARTICLE 16 – Capital Reserve and Expendable Trust Funds

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000) to be placed in previously established Capital Reserve and Expendable Trust Funds, as listed below with said funds to come from Unassigned Fund Balance. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Account Title	Budget 2018/2019	Proposed 2019/2020	Change Increase or (Decrease)
Highway Equipment CRF	\$60,000	\$100,000	\$40,000
Transfer Station Equipment CRF	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0.00
Library Building Repair CRF	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0.00
Town Building Maintenance CRF	\$10,000	\$7,000	(\$3,000)
Fire Department Apparatus CRF	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0.00
Police Vehicles CRF	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0.00
Town Office Equipment CRF	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$1,000
Municipality Revaluation CRF	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0.00
Town Clerk/Tax Collector Equipment CRF	\$2,000	\$0.00	(\$2,000)
Town Emergency Repair ETF	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$189,000	\$225,000	\$36,000

There were no public comments on this Article.

Approved

ARTICLE 17 – Establish Road Improvement Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the town will vote to establish a Road Improvement Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the purpose of design, engineering, surveying, permitting and construction costs associated with improving town-owned road infrastructure, and to raise and appropriate \$5,000 to put in the fund, with this amount to come from unassigned fund balance; further to name the selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Town Administrator White explained that this Fund would allow the Town to get started on road projects sooner and will also serve as an opportunity to continue the Miller Pond Road Safety & Drainage and Guard Rail Projects that are going on. She said those construction plans are almost finalized. She added that road projects can entail culverts, surveys, designs and permitting so this fund would allow the Town to get started and we wouldn't have to rely on operating money for that.

Resident Peter Gardiner commented that it is a shame with the size town we have that more people don't attend these meetings.

ARTICLE 18 – End of Meeting

To hear the reports of agents, officers, and committees heretofore chosen, to pass any vote relating thereto, and to transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting. Recommended/Not Recommended by the Selectmen (Majority vote required)

Peter Gardiner asked how it is that the budget went down but the taxes went up. White referred to the Power Point slide titled "Estimated Tax Impact" at the beginning of the presentation. White explained that over the years they have been able to use the Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) to steady the tax rate but they are unsure how much of the UFB will be available to continue the practice of using UFB to steady the tax rate. She said this is the maximum the tax rate could go up but it is possible that it could go down.

Selectman Peter Garland made a motion that the Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends ARTICLES 2 through 18; seconded by Selectman Constance Jones. *Unanimously approved.*

By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Jasper
Administrative Assistant