



Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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**Hopkinton School Board
Hopkinton Select Board
Joint Public Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.
HMHS Auditorium
Approved**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Folsom called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., and thanked the Select Board for joining the School Board this evening.

School Board

Members Present: Andrea Folsom, Chair; Rob Nadeau, Vice Chair; Dulcie Madden Lipoma; and Norm Goupil

School Board Student Representatives

Present: Noah Aframe, Class of 2025; and Florence Dapice, Class of 2025

School District Administrators

Present: Michael Flynn, Superintendent; Michelle Clark, Business Administrator; and Jodi Condon, Executive Assistant

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap, Chair; Ken Traum, Vice Chair; Jeffrey Donohoe; Steven Whitley; and Thomas Lipoma

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator; and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant

II. ADDITIONS TO OR DELETIONS FROM AGENDA

There were no additions to or deletions from the agenda.

III. INTRODUCTIONS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Goupil thanked the Select Board for all they do for the Town and added that he enjoys attending their meetings.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Confirmation of Annual Meeting dates:

1. School District Meeting was confirmed for Saturday, March 11, 2023
2. Town Meeting was confirmed for Saturday, March 18, 2023

A brief discussion ensued, regarding when warrants must be set, and it was confirmed by Ms. Clark that they must be posted 20 days before meeting. Mr. Lipoma noted that the Town's warrants would be set before going to the Budget

Committee, and Mr. Cass added that the Budget Committee Public Hearing is the second week of February.

Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goupil, to approve the School District Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 11, 2023, and the Town Meeting, the following Saturday, March 18, 2023.

VOTE: All in favor; no votes against
MOTION PASSED 9-0.

- B. George Park: Chair Folsom began by noting how nice it is that the Town owns George Park, but the School District is allowed to use it. She pointed out that the park has been the subject of ongoing discussion, so the goal this evening was to learn more about the plan for the park. Chair Dunlap shared some history of the George Park project, highlighting that a group of residents approached the Select Board regarding their goals for the park, and in 2017, Mr. Cass created a timeline for the overhaul, based on an engineering plan, with an estimated overhaul project completion in 2030. Mr. Cass added that, although the figures for the project have been updated, it is likely the estimated figures will continue to change significantly as time passes, noting that the plan is identical to its placement in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plan. Discussion regarding plans for a track ensued, highlighting that this addition to the park was never formally added to the plan; Mr. Cass added that this is why the track was placed at the end of the plan. Superintendent Flynn suggested a joint field work group be formed to learn more about how George Park is maintained and managed. Mr. Whitley pointed out that some of the George Park maintenance questions have been addressed since last year's School Board and Select Board Joint Meeting, so he and Mr. Cass emphasized the importance of establishing a clear purpose if a working group is formed. Mr. Lipoma confirmed that, with the exception of the track, all plans in the George Park project are included in the CIP plan, so all of the project's plans are slated to be completed, per the CIP plan, without any further action. After briefly discussing the ramp access, which Mr. Cass noted is on the schedule for 2023, Mr. Nadeau asked if it would be possible to move the fence in approximately three feet, to give more space for those parking in that area. Mr. Cass said he would need to consult the engineering plan to determine if this would be feasible. With no further comments or questions, Chair Folsom thanked everyone.
- C. Town Initiative – Houston Barn update: Mr. Cass said, with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and bond funding, the stabilization of the barn was moving forward. The test pits were completed last week, and construction is scheduled to begin in the spring, with completion anticipated around this time next year. Mr. Nadeau asked what the long-term vision for the barn is, and Chair Dunlap shared that for now, the focus is on getting the barn stabilized and functional, with no particular plan to change its use in the foreseeable future. There being no further comments or questions, Chair Dunlap thanked everyone.
- D. School District Initiatives:
1. Safety and Security – Chair Folsom noted that this is an ongoing topic, and that there have been some Federal grant matching funds to assist in making our

schools as safe as possible. Mr. Nadeau suggested there be some attention turned to creating a secondary exit from the Harold Martin School, as he noted there is significant congestion created at Main Street, where the one entrance/exit to and from the school is located. He added that this is a concern not only in practical, daily operations, but in the event of an emergency. Superintendent Flynn noted that he has been working with Police Chief Hennessey to address traffic safety conditions in all three school zones. Mr. Goupil noted his concern for student safety on the Hopkinton State Fairgrounds land when the cross-country track and Nordic ski teams are active. Mr. Whitley stated that the Town does not have much leverage with the Fairgrounds organization, so the School District would need to negotiate directly with them. Chair Dunlap emphasized that the Hopkinton State Fairgrounds is a separate organization and is not affiliated with the Town of Hopkinton; however, she said she could contact the organization to try to facilitate a conversation regarding School District concerns. Discussion ensued, regarding student safety with the traffic in the Contoocook Village business district, and Mr. Cass noted that the Town is working to get this intersection in the State's 10-Year Plan.

2. Moving budgeting from Fund Balance Budget to Base/Zero Balance Budget – Chair Folsom pointed out that work on this initiative began last year and continues this year.
3. Multiple new committees – Chair Folsom said multiple, active committees have been formed, including the Curriculum Committee, the Safety and Security Facility Committee, and the Energy Management Steering Committee, and the work of all the committees is ongoing, and a major focus this year.

With no further comments or questions, Chair Folsom thanked everyone.

E. Budget Items:

1. School District Drivers – Superintendent Flynn noted that, although it is early in their budget process, at last week's work session, the focus was on utilities; transportation, including school bus fuel and contracts; and special education. Ms. Madden Lipoma noted that the School District has submitted grant applications for school safety and electric school buses, and Superintendent Flynn added that the grant amounts were approximately \$150,000.00 and \$3,000,000.00, respectively, with the bus grant being awarded not in dollars, but in buses.
2. Town Drivers – Mr. Cass noted that department head budgets are due this Thursday, with high diesel fuel costs and trying to keep competitive salaries being chief topics of conversation. He highlighted that the Town is fully staffed, which is especially notable in the Public Works and Police Departments. Costs of capital items, such as vehicles scheduled for replacement, have increased significantly; the lagoons at the Transfer Station have been closed; and the Town has applied for grants from the Department of Environmental Services (DES) to upgrade the sewer system. Mr. Traum added that the Town is trying to reestablish an energy committee for the purpose of looking at conservation; the

installation of the solar arrays on Town-owned property; the opportunity for community power for residents and possibly commercial customers, as well; what to do with the hydro dam when the 40-year lease expires in a year; and to examine the potential for vehicle charging stations. A brief discussion ensued, regarding solar arrays, private solar system incentives, and potential members for an energy committee.

3. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) – Ms. Madden Lipoma noted that the Board is working with Jim Rozycki, Director of Facilities, to re-forecast expenditures, create a smoother maintenance schedule, and to try to stabilize the tax rate. She, Mr. Traum, and Mr. Cass discussed the importance of the School District and Town working together, communicating, and staying mutually aware of plans and projects, with the goals of saving money and being able to present total tax rate impact to residents. Mr. Cass emphasized that, statutorily, the CIP Committee is responsible for the Town, the School District, the Hopkinton Village Precinct, and the Contoocook Village Precinct, and Ms. Madden Lipoma added that deepening the relationship among the entities will be mutually beneficial.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments or questions, Chair Folsom thanked the Select Board, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Town of Hopkinton
Administrative/Assessing Assistant