



Town of Hopkinton, NH

Office of the Select Board

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SELECT BOARD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2017 APPROVED NOVEMBER 13, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jim O'Brien called this regular meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 6, 2017, in the large meeting room in the Town Hall. Chairman O'Brien introduced the members of the Board. Neal Cass led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Jim O'Brien, Chair, Ken Traum, Vice Chair, Steve Lux, Jr. and Bob Gerseny.
Absent: Sabrina Dunlap.

Staff Present: Neal Cass (Town Administrator), Robin Buchanan (Administrative Assessing Assistant), Deb Gallant (Finance Director), Karen Robertson (Planning Director), Paula Simpkins (Recreation Director), Chuck Gangel (Town Clerk/Tax Collector), Donna Dunlap (Library Director), Jed Merrow (Conservation Commission), and Marilyn Bresaw (Human Services Director).

Public Present: Janet Krzyzaniak, Bob Lapree, Bill Chapin, Jr., Joan Day, Lee Wilder, Rob Knight, David Dufault, Don Houston, Mary Leadbeater, Nancy Clark, Ginni Haines, Jessica Scheinman, Steve Baroody and Frank Davis.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Consent Agenda

The Board members reviewed documents for signature and approved (4-0) the Consent Agenda, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Traum and seconded by Mr. Lux.

CONSENT AGENDA 11-06-17

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANIFEST

\$83,945.27

Abatements

Sandy Beach-camper removed Map 208 Lot 3 C-16	\$182.00
Sandy Beach-camper removed Map208 Lot 3 A-8	\$597.00

RIGHT TO BURY

Douglas Payne

INTENT TO CUT

Bruce Lee Map 102 Lot 24
Dimitri Tsihlis Map 102 Lot 223

Building Permits

EJ MacKenzie LLC 157 Main St Map 106 Lot 2

The Board reviewed the Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 30 2017. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lux to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of October 30, 2017. Chair O'Brien noted Ms. Dunlap had some edits to add to the minutes. Mr. Traum amended his motion to include those additions.

VOTE: O'Brien, Traum, Lux, and Gerseny voting in favor of the amended motion; no votes against. MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 30, 2017, re: personnel. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lux to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 30, 2017. Chair O'Brien called for a vote.

VOTE: O'Brien, Traum, Lux, and Gerseny voting in favor of the motion; no votes against. MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 20, 2017, re: land acquisition. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lux to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 30, 2017. Chair O'Brien called for a vote.

VOTE: O'Brien, Traum, Lux, and Gerseny voting in favor of the motion; no votes against. MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

Mr. Cass went over the process that was used to get to this point in the Budget process. He stated all Department Heads work on budgets between August and October. Those budgets were submitted to Deb Gallant, Finance Director. Mr. Cass and Ms. Gallant met with Department Heads individually and then on Thursday, October 25, Mr. Cass met with all Department Heads

to go over the entire budget. Mr. Traum inquired if there were any changes made to the budgets being presented tonight. Mr. Cass replied no.

Karen Robertson, Planning & Zoning:

Mrs. Robertson presented the Planning budget of 2018 noting a 2.41% increase over last year's budget. She further stated it was contracts and updating of the Master Plan that were the drivers for the increase.

Mr. Traum inquired as to the updating of the Master Plan. Mrs. Robertson replied that it is recommended that you update the Master Plan every 5 years or do a chapter every year. She continued that we have not updated since 2002, so we are playing catch up.

Chairman O'Brien thanked Mrs. Robertson.

Chuck Gangel, Town Clerk/Tax Collector:

Mr. Gangel stated that the 2018 budget is up .81% from last year's budget. The drivers for the increase are utilities, software contracts and updating vital records.

Chuck Gangel, Elections:

Mr. Gangel noted the increase in Elections is due to the amount of elections scheduled for 2018. He stated this budget varies from year to year depending upon how many elections there are.

Discussion ensued, with regards to the assessing of utilities, and that the DRA historically assesses utilities at a very low rate, with no evidence to back up the assessment. Mr. Cass stated that is why we use George Sansoucy to assess our utilities.

Deb Gallant, Finance:

Mrs. Gallant presented the Finance budget for 2018. She noted some increases; but also noted a decrease in bank fees, which are the results of negotiating with the bank. The bottom line is a .07% increase in the Finance budget. Discussion ensued, with regards to the Treasurer's stipend which is set by the Town.

Mrs. Gallant presented the Personnel budget, noting that the 5% merit pool is placed in this budget until it is approved and then disbursed among the Departments. Mrs. Gallant noted only a 4.8% increase in health insurance, and a 2.3% increase in dental insurance. Workers Compensation has increased, as the last two years we have had a credit. Discussion ensued, with regards to the health insurance that Hopkinton schools chose. Mrs. Gallant stated the school has had that insurance since July 1; we will check with them later in the year to see how it is working. Mrs. Gallant noted that the Property Liability Insurance decreased by 3.4%. She explained we are in a risk pool through Primex and there is a \$1,000 deductible per occurrence. With regards to Debt Service, there is a decrease in principle and interest; noting that the landfill bond will be paid in 2017. Mrs. Gallant stated that the TAN (Tax Anticipation Note) remains the same at \$2,000.00. She further noted we have not had to use the TAN, as tax payments are steady.

Paula Simpkins, Recreation:

Mrs. Simpkins presented the Recreation budget for 2018, noting an overall increase of .67%. She further noted there are few changes. Increases are in the copier maintenance contract, water and sewer bills and lining the fields. Discussion ensued, with regards to lining the fields and the cost of the paint and paying the field liner. Discussion ensued, with regards to football. Mrs. Simpkins noted that the proposal for George Park has been given to the CIP Committee.

Donna Dunlop, Library:

Ms. Dunlop noted that the Library has had a very busy fall season. She stated the budget this year is lower than last year and is down by 1.16%. She further noted that the server crashed in 2017 and so her computer line shows an increase as the Library is now utilizing the cloud. Ms. Dunlop noted that the heating line continues to go down as she and the staff continually look for ways to save. Discussion ensued with regards to the malware attack that affected the server, noting that the Library lost four days of data. She noted the E-book program and the non-resident card holders continue to rise. Discussion ensued regarding the book drop that will be placed in Hopkinton Village Precinct.

Ms. Dunlop, off the subject of budgets, encouraged the Board to continue with their plan to revamp the parking and front entrance of the Town Hall as the handicap entrance is not the most accessible.

Bob Gerseny, Cemetery Trustees:

Mr. Gerseny stated that the Cemetery Trustees are changing their model. In the past, the Cemetery Trustees have done the bulk of the work, which in most towns the sexton handles. The Trustees have advertised for the position of the sexton, working up to 15 hours per week. Mr. Gerseny noted an overall budget increase of 48.43%. Mr. Gerseny stated the Memorial Gardens were once a burial for indigent people and only accepted cremated remains, but the maintenance has increased over the years. He noted the need to repair and replace many of the headstones. Mr. Gerseny stated we have to have someone come in and turn the water on in the spring and off in the fall simply because we do not have the proper tools to do it ourselves. Discussion ensued, regarding the perpetual care fund, noting we cannot spend the principle, only the interest. He further noted we are not receiving revenue at the same rate of spending. He suggested that the Trustees will have to revisit the costs of plots and the level of maintenance. Discussion ensued, with regards to the maintenance and training of the software the Cemetery Trustees use.

Jed Merrow, Conservation Commission:

Mr. Merrow stated the Conservation Commission has been working on developing trails, signage, research, land management and camp scholarships. He further noted the Conservation Commission is completely funded by the land use change tax. The Commission receives 35% of all the funds that the Town collects for the year. He noted that the land use change tax is directly tied to development. He stated the Commission budget request is the same as last year. Discussion ensued with regards to changing the percentage of the land use change tax that the Conservation Commission receives as a way to increase their funds. Mr. Traum inquired how much the Commission has in their funds now. Mr. Merrow replied there is \$60,000 in the Conservation Commission account and approximately \$68,600 in the Town Forest Account, which comes from timber sales. Discussion ensued, with regards to possible projects the

Conservation Commission might be interested in, including the proposal for improving boat ramp access by the gazebo.

Marilyn Ceriello Bresaw, Human Services:

Mrs. Bresaw stated there is no change to the Human Services budget for 2018. Chairman O'Brien inquired if she had any concerns for 2018. Mrs. Bresaw stated it could go either way. She is concerned about fuel assistance; noting if the program is cut at the state level, then the Town will most likely see an increase in applications. She stated she has approximately \$12,000 in a donation account and \$17,000 in the energy account. Discussion ensued with regards to how she uses each account, noting that some people are not eligible by the guidelines, but are in need of help.

Mr. Cass presented the Financial information for the end of October, 2017. Mr. Traum inquired about the PILOT for St. Methodios. Mr. Cass stated, they are running behind, but we always have it by the end of the year.

Discussion ensued, with regards to the merit pool, noting the 5% seems a little high, however the Board will wait until all budgets are presented before discussing it further.

Mr. Traum inquired when the current Treasurer's term was up. Mr. Cass replied it is a three year term and it began in March, 2017.

The Board took a 5 minute break before continuing.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Beaver Dam Update: Chairman O'Brien gave a brief history, noting that the beaver dam is on Cross Road, which is a Class 6 road. There has been a request to work, remove the dam, on Cross Road; however, it must be approved by the Select Board. Chairman O'Brien noting that the Town cannot expend funds on a Class 6 road. Chairman O'Brien further stated that Select Board members Ken Traum and Steve Lux held a meeting, on Thursday, November 2, with many of the interested parties in hopes of coming to a compromise, but they did not. Chairman O'Brien opened the floor for comments from the interested parties.

Bill Chapin, Jr. stated we all agree the Class 6 road should be accessible, however, we disagree on what accessibility means. A walking path, not a tractor road, allows for accessibility without destroying the dam. He further stated that no one abutter is blocked from their land.

Steve Baroody, stated that his driveway is part of the Class 6 road, he has safety concerns for his children and dog, if tractors start going through there.

Cleve Kapala stated Class 6 roads have been identified as valuable and access is important. The wetlands are also important to the wildlife. He also noted the area of contention is also in the wetlands, which complicates the matter. He further stated we need to find a way to resolve the issues without destroying the dam and the wetland area.

Joan Day stated she spoke with Fish and Game and they indicated to her that the EPA must issue a permit to work in the water.

David Dufault stated the dam has gotten out of hand. He has watched it grow over the road.

Don Houston, an abutter, would like to be able to take his tractor down the Class 6 road from Maple St; however, because of the beaver dam he cannot access it from Maple Street. He further stated the water level needs to come down, and no one wants to destroy the wetland.

Bill Chapin, Jr. stated it should be for walking, so that it will be enjoyable. He further stated that Don Houston went in and destroyed some of the dam without permission. He also noted that the value of the timber is not as high as others are claiming.

Michael Martin stated there is a large culvert on Cross Road which was once a Class 5 road. He further stated we should reduce the water level to the top of the road.

Discussion ensued, among the Board members with regards to a beaver fence, beaver pipes, permits that are needed if in the water, and how much water could be released if they lower the level.

Mr. Traum made a motion to allow David Dufault to slow down the process of the beaver dam on Cross Road, by breaching some of the dam and lowering the water level to the road. They will revisit the issue in the spring. Mr. Lux seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Chairman O'Brien called for a vote.

VOTE: Tram and Lux voting in favor of the motion; O'Brien and Gerseny voting against the motion. MOTION FAILS.

It was determined that there is no emergency to the situation. Chairman O'Brien asked that the interested parties meet again and try to come to some kind of compromise. Mr. Traum and Mr. Lux stated they would meet again at 8:30 am on Thursday, November 9, 2017 at the Town Hall.

Michael Martin stated it is not an emergency now, but if the road floods it will be and then it will be an emergency.

Finalization of letter to Warner ZBA:

Chairman O'Brien stated that Select Board member Sabrina Dunlap did the first draft of the letter and then sent it onto Chairman O'Brien for edits. The letter was sent out to the Board prior to the meeting for any further edits to be made at the meeting. The Board went through the letter paragraph by paragraph, which was projected on to the screen for members of the audience to see. Discussion ensued, paragraph by paragraph as to wording, deletions and additional language. Areas of concern included a commercial district (Warner) next to a residential/agricultural district (Contoocook); the proposed location of the gun range is too close to Hopkinton schools, reclamation of the lead and other health and environmental issues. (Final letter attached to the Minutes).

Mr. Gerseny made a motion to approve the letter, subject to minor edits. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

VOTE: O'Brien, Traum, Lux, and Gerseny voting in favor of the motion; no votes against. MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

Jessica Scheinman stated that she was disappointed in the letter.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Mr. Lux, seconded by Mr. Gerseny to adjourn the meeting. Vote 4-0 in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan
Administrative Assessing Assistant