



# Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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## SELECT BOARD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2019 NOVEMBER 12, 2019

### CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Ken Traum called this regular meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 4, 2019, in the Dunlap Room at the Town Hall. Vice Chairman Traum introduced the members of the Board.

**Members Present:** Ken Traum, Sabrina Dunlap, Steven Whitley and Anna Wells.  
Absent: Jim O'Brien

**Staff Present:** Neal Cass, Town Administrator and Robin Buchanan, Administrative Assessing Assistant, Carol Harless, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Karen Robertson, Planning and Zoning Director, Donna Dunlop, Library Director, Paula Simpkins, Recreation Director Deb Gallant, Finance Director, Gayle Kimball and Lynn Clark, Cemetery Trustees, and Marilyn Ceriello Bresaw, Human Services Director.

**Public Present:** James Newsom, Melissa Jones, Rob Knight, Bob LaPree, Elaine Loft, Cleve Kapala, Victoria Bram and David Salzberg.

Karen Robertson led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Traum noted the reception held on Sunday, November 3, 2019, at the Library for Donna Dunlop for being named Librarian of Year was well deserved and well attended.

### ADMINISTRATIVE

The Board reviewed documents for signature and approved (4-0) the consent Agenda, taking the following action on a motion made by Ms. Dunlap and seconded by Mr. Whitley. Discussion ensued, with the contents of the letter addressed to Michael Tardiff. Mrs. Wells read the letter to those present before the vote was taken.

**Consent Agenda 11-04-2019**

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANIFEST**

\$272,396.60

**PAYROLL MANIFEST**

**Veteran's Credit**

Marcia Shell Map 221 Lot 8

**TRANSFER OF FUNDS**

Sewer Fund to General Fund

\$11,023.27

**RIGHT TO BURY**

Lee Hancock & Kathryn Keefe Hancock

**BUILDING PERMITS**

Jennifer Leigh Kubat mech & plumb 498 South Rd

**Letter to Michael Tardiff re: US202/NH9/NH127 Intersection**

The Board reviewed the Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 28, 2019. Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wells, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 28, 2019.

**VOTE:** Traum, Dunlap, Whitley and Wells voting in favor of the motion; no votes against, MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Select Board Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 28, 2019, Session I. Mrs. Wells made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dunlap, to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 28, 2019, Session I.

**VOTE:** Traum, Dunlap, Whitley and Wells voting in favor of the motion; no votes against, MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Select Board Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 28, 2019, Session II. Mrs. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of October 28, 2019, Session II.

**VOTE:** Traum, Dunlap, Whitley and Wells voting in favor of the motion; no votes against; MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

**APPOINTMENTS:**

**Karen Robertson, Planning and Zoning:** Mrs. Robertson presented her budget for 2020, noting the overall increase for Planning and Zoning is 6.47%. She noted that the budget for 2019 was \$120,151, and this year she is requesting \$127,926. She noted small increases in the Computer Software line of 1.42% and Dues/Subscriptions is up 1.47%, due to the State updating building codes, which we use. Mrs. Robertson in anticipating that there will be required training for John Pianka, Code Enforcement Officer. Mrs. Robertson stated the largest increase in her budget is in Professional Service, which includes money for a survey for the Master Plan, a Conservation Subdivision Review, and scanning of planning files, which includes large scale maps. She noted that the purpose of the Conservation Subdivision Review is in response to our subdivision ordinance not being cost effective. Mr. Whitley inquired about how the results from the survey for the Master Plan will be used. Mrs. Robertson replied that the questions, similar to those on the MTAG survey, and those answers will be incorporated into the Master Plan to support the changes that will be made. Mr. Traum inquired as to revenues. Mrs. Robertson stated she has kept revenues the same as last year. She noted that we had 15 new home permits this year, however, they were large homes and we price homes out by square footage. Mr. Traum inquired when the fee structure was last changed. Mrs. Robertson replied about 5 years ago. The Board thanked Mrs. Robertson for her time.

**Carol Harless, Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Ms. Harless presented the Town Clerk/Tax Collector budget for 2020, noting an overall increase 46.75% or \$40,729. Ms. Harless stated that the increase is in the wage line for the part time position, which was eliminated last year. Ms. Harless went line item by line item and noted if there was an increase and why. She noted increases in contracted services and postage. Ms. Harless stated that there will be four (4) upcoming elections in 2020, therefore election costs impact her wages, overtime, advertising and postage lines.

As for the Elections Administration Budget, Ms. Harless stated this budget is also impacted by the elections in the wages for ballots clerks, and Supervisors of the Checklist, as well as coding voting machine expenses. Discussion ensued, with regards to moving some of the election costs from the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office to the Election Administration Budget. Mr. Cass will make those changes. The Board thanked Ms. Harless for coming in.

**Gayle Kimball and Lynn Clark, Cemetery Trustees:** Ms. Kimball thanked the Board for the work that they do. Ms. Kimball also thanked Deb Gallant, Finance Director, for all her help on the budget.

Ms. Clark stated that the Cemetery Trustees are looking for more money from the Town in order to give the Cemetery Sexton more hours. She noted that he is still catching up on deferred maintenance. Ms. Clark further stated that the Cemetery Sexton is the public face of the Cemetery Trustees. Discussion ensued, with regards to the mowing contract that is up this year. Ms. Clark stated they have been in contact with Dan Blanchette, Director of Public Works, with regards to asking the Town to take over the mowing of the Cemeteries starting in 2020.

Ms. Clark also stated the Trust will be covering the cost of a map of the new section of Old Hopkinton Cemetery, and updating the map for the New Hopkinton Cemetery. She also stated that there is deferred maintenance to catch up on, including the repair of gravestones. Ms. Clark stated that we are spending more than we are bringing in. Discussion ensued, with regards to a fiduciary issue about maintaining those funds and if the town should pay a portion of the upkeep. Mr. Whitley inquired if there are plots that have not paid for perpetual care. Ms. Clark stated we have ten (10) cemeteries to look after, one having burials from the 1700's, and we have no idea when perpetual care was started. She further noted that there are large portions of the cemeteries that are not covered by the trust fund.

Mr. Whitley inquired what deferred maintenance is needed. Ms. Clark replied that the fence at Blackwater Cemetery needs repairs, there has been some vandalism, and the removal of tree branches.

Mr. Whitley inquired is an increase of 30 hours to the Sexton's position more accurate as to what the actual workload is. Ms. Clark replied yes. Mr. Whitley inquired about the fees. Ms. Clark stated the total cost is \$650.00; \$400 to trust fund maintenance and \$250 goes to the Town. She further stated that as more and more people make the choice to be cremated, we will be selling less plots, as you can place more cremains in a plot. Ms. Kimball noted that we had approximately six (6) sales this year. The Board thanked the Cemetery Trustees for coming in.

**James Newsom and Melissa Jones, Conservation Commission:** Mr. Newsom stated he is the recently elected Chair of the Conservation Commission. He noted that typically the budget for the Conservation Commission is \$1.00. However, he has submitted a budget request in the amount of \$4,409, for land conservation costs, office supplies, professional dues and workshops/seminars. Mr. Newsom stated that currently all those expenses are coming out of the Conservation Fund. Mr. Traum noted that the Conservation Commission gets 35% of all the Land Use Change Tax. Mr. Newsom stated that is true, however, there are several towns in NH that give up to 100% of the Land Use Change Tax to the Conservation Commission. It was noted that caps are flexible but that any change would have to be approved at Town Meeting. Mr. Newsom stated that if the proposed budget for the Conservation Commission is not approved, the Commission will be considering the option of asking for a larger percentage than 35%.

**Donna Dunlop and Elaine Loft, Library:** Mrs. Dunlop thanked the Board for all their support during the past year. She stated that her budget is up 2.9% overall from last year. She noted that part time wages are down due to a change in cleaning personnel. Mrs. Dunlop stated that the telephone expense is up. She further stated the system was 20 years old and TDS no longer serviced it, so the phone system was replaced after the fire. Mrs. Dunlop noted that computer services are up because they are changing the vendor for the online catalog after speaking with other libraries. Mrs. Dunlop noted that the Repairs & Maintenance line for 2019 was overspent due to cuts that the Select Board made last year. She further noted that everything else was the same.

Mr. Traum inquired as to the number of public computers at the library. Mrs. Dunlop replied that we now have 4 for the public and 2 for the catalog. She noted that previously there were 8 computers, however, more libraries are using tablets and Chromebooks, and we will be doing that as well.

Mr. Whitley asked about the repair and maintenance bills. Mrs. Dunlop stated that even though the building was closed to the public, there was a lot of activity in the building during that time. She also noted that the sprinkler system is old; and that it has been maintained by replacing leaking pipes as they show up.

With regards to the Capital Reserve Fund, Mrs. Dunlop noted that a generator is needed to run the sprinkler system. She stated that we had considered sharing one with the Slusser Center however, the logistics of the project were not compatible between the two buildings.

Mrs. Dunlop stated that the Buddhist Monks from the DrePung Gomang Monastery will be at the library the week of November 4 – 11, 2019. All events are listed on the Library's website.

**Paula Simpkins, Recreation Director:** Mrs. Simpkins stated that her budget for 2020 is up 5.09%, overall from last year. She noted that she has not replaced the Recreation Clerk, as she is doing that work herself. However, she would like to keep the line funded for part time temporary help throughout the year. Mrs. Simpkins noted that wages for Kimball Pond Staff are up this year. She stated last year it was very challenging to find lifeguards. She noted that at the beginning of the summer, the staff at the pond was not at full capacity, therefore, they had to shorten the swimming area and remove the raft. She is hoping that with an increase in the hourly rate and the ability to help pay for training and certificates, that she will be able to find more staff for lifeguards for next summer. Mrs. Simpkins noted that if she were to contract out for lifeguards, we would not make any money for the swim lessons. She stated she is not ruling out any options.

Mrs. Simpkins noted an increase in the equipment lease line, due to an increase in leases of the port-a-potties. She noted that we now are using handicap port-a-potties, which are more costly than non handicap. She also noted that we have them at Kimball Pond for the time the pond is staffed, at the gazebo for the summer concerts, and all year at the Kimball Cabins.

She noted an increase in office supplies, however, she feels that we can print the Recreation Guidebook in-house at a lesser expense and you can remove that from the budget.

Mr. Whitley inquired about the possibility of user fees. Mrs. Simpkins stated that she does not think that user fees are wise, as the town already has a high tax rate.

**Marilyn Ceriello-Bresaw, Human Services Director:** Mrs. Bresaw stated that her overall increase for the 2020 Human Services budget is .38%, noting that there were not any significant changes.

Mrs. Bresaw stated that her request for the 2020 Welfare Vendor Payments budget is for \$50,000, which is the same as last year.

Discussion ensued, with regards to the yearly donation to the CAP (Community Action Program).

**Deb Gallant, Finance Director (Finance, Personnel Administration, Insurance and Debt Service):** Mr. Cass noted that Mrs. Gallant is the person that enters all the budget information into the computer, which it is very time consuming.

Mrs. Gallant noted that the Finance Clerk resigned at the beginning of the year and that she has taken over the responsibilities of that position, so funding for that line has been eliminated. She noted the proposed Finance budget for 2020 is 3.03% lower than 2019. She noted that she increased the line for the Budget Committee Minute taker, as the length of the meetings and transcript time has increased, as well as the number of meetings. She also noted an increase in contracts, which includes the computer software modules, audit, postage meter and fixed assets. Mr. Whitley inquired about Mrs. Gallant's workload with the added responsibilities from the Finance Clerk's job. Mrs. Gallant stated that it is busy, but she is on top of things.

Mrs. Gallant stated that the Personnel Administration budget for 2020 is up by 25.01%. She noted that the merit wage pool line is in this budget. She explained that once the budget is approved, the monies will be distributed to each department. She also stated there is an increase in the health and dental insurance.

With regards to the Property/Liability Insurance budget, Mrs. Gallant noted that Primex has increased approximately 7% over last year.

Mrs. Gallant stated that the Debit Schedule budget is down about 12.28% from last year. She informed the Board that she had looked into refinancing the Fire Station Bond, and she can obtain an interest rate change from 3.49% to 3.156%, which would mean a savings of approximately \$41,000 in interest over the term of the loan. There will be no cost to the town to refinance. She also noted the Ransmerier Bond was paid off in 2019.

With regards to the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) the request is the same as last year, \$2,000.00.

**PUBLIC HEARING: PILOT for Renewable Generation Facility:** Vice Chairman Traum opened the Public Hearing by giving a brief presentation of how we came to the public hearing for the PILOT. He noted that there were months of negotiations, consultations with counsel and approval at Town Meeting for both Hopkinton and Webster. He further stated that both Hopkinton and Webster have entered into a Land Lease Option and Lease Agreement for a solar farm at our jointly owned Transfer Station with Hopkinton Solar, LLC (Granite Apollo). Revenues will be split between the two (2) towns approximately 75/25 based on population and consistent with the split of the Transfer Station operational costs. Vice Chair Traum noted that the agreement has many protections built into to protect the Transfer Station and the Towns, including decommissioning, change of ownership, daily operations, and minimum insurance levels. Vice Chair Traum stated that these agreements for PILOTS are a win/win for property taxpayers, and the environment. He further noted the only cost to the Town has been and will

be in the form of legal fees. It was noted that the Lease Option and Lease Agreement covers three (3) phases: Option Period, Construction Term and Primary Term. Vice Chairman Traum stated the Option Period is up to three (3) years beginning at the execution date, towns to receive \$2,500.00. He noted the second phase, Construction Term, which runs from the Lease Commencement Date for the lesser period of two (2) years or the Commercial operation date. He further noted that during this period the Towns will receive \$66,500 annually. The third phase is the Primary Term which would last twenty-five (25) years with an option for up to a 3-5 year extension. Vice Chair Traum opened the floor for public comment.

David Salzberg, Blaze Hill Road inquired as to why the town decided to do this option instead of supplying the energy to the Town. Vice Chair Traum replied this was done for lease and PILOT revenues. Mr. Salzberg stated that the companies, Hopkinton Solar, LLC and Granite Apollo seem to be intertwined and overlap with MacEnergy. Vice Chair Traum replied that during negotiations with Granite Apollo, protections were built in for the Town. Mr. Whitley stated that Granite Apollo has had past agreements with other towns under a different entity. He further stated that we went into this with Town Counsel, who has done agreements with other towns; we did not go into it blindly.

Vice Chairman Traum stated that the Public Hearing for tonight is only about the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes).

Mr. Salzberg stated that is he concerned about the Town's liability, as the entity has no experience. He stated that he hopes that it was addressed during negotiations.

Victoria Bram, Hopkinton Road, stated that her husband is in the solar field and they are very secretive and form a new LLC for every project.

Vice Chairman Traum stated that it is a 25 year lease, we do not own the panels, there is an opportunity for extension, we don't own it and we will not pay for repairs.

As there was no further public comment, Vice Chairman Traum closed the public hearing at 7:53pm.

Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dunlap, to approve the PILOT and to enter into an agreement with Hopkinton Solar, LLC, on the terms presented, with a term exceeding 5 years if such term is necessary for the financing of the project or is otherwise advantageous to both parties and both parties agree to such term.

**VOTE:** Traum, Dunlap, Whitley and Wells voting in favor of the motion; no votes against, MOTION APPROVED 4-0.

**Neal Cass: Executive, IT, Assessing/Legal/Community Services/ Patriotic Purposes/ EDC:** Mr. Cass stated the 2020 Executive budget is up 3.21% overall from 2019, noting an increase in printing the town report, dues and subscriptions, office supplies and Select Board expenses.

With regards to the 2020 IT Budget, Mr. Cass stated there is a 2.44% increase, as we are due to replace the server at the Town Hall in 2020, at which time, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector will be on the same server.

Mr. Cass stated that Assessing is up 2.56%, it is software related.

Mr. Cass stated that the Legal budget for 2020 is up about 25% from 2019 from \$20,000 to \$25,000.

With regards to the Community Services budget, Mr. Cass noted that the budget is down 59.89% due to the Rescue Squad no longer being funded. Mr. Cass noted the payment to Community Action Program remains the same.

Mr. Cass noted that Patriotic Services, which covers the cost of the flags and for the band on Memorial Day, has not changed.

With regards to EDC, Mr. Cass stated the budget request for 2020 has increased by 49.27%, because of a request for a half time person in the position of Community Development Director. Mr. Whitley stated that the EDC discussed this subject of a Community Development Director vs. an independent contract but was unable to come to a decision on that matter. He stated that the EDC appreciates that to fully take advantage of the opportunities to get grants, we need this position staffed.

**OTHER:**

Mr. Cass noted that he will be meeting with abutters of Krzyzaniak Lane.

Discussion ensued, with regards to moving all of the utilities to one account for better tracking.

Mrs. Wells noted that the Complete Streets Committee had met, and they have drafted a charge for the committee.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan  
Administrative Assessing Assistant