



# Town of Hopkinton

## Budget Committee

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – [www.hopkinton-nh.gov](http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov)

**BUDGET COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, April 12, 2023  
APPROVED 9/13/2023**

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Cohen called this meeting of the Hopkinton Budget Committee to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, in the large meeting room in the Hopkinton Town Hall. Those gathered recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Budget Committee**

**Members Present:** Jonathan Cohen, Debbie Norris, Christa Scura, Steve Reddy, Rich Houston, Ken Traum, Norm Goupil, Don Houston, and Victoria Bram

**Member Absent:** Mark Zankel

**Others Present:** Neal Cass-Town Administrator

**Public Present:** None

### **SELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Mr. Goupil moved to elect Jonathan Cohen as the Budget Committee Chair. Mr. Reddy seconded the motion.

**VOTE** Voting in favor: Norris, Scura, Reddy, R. Houston, Traum, Goupil, D. Houston and Bram; no votes against; abstain: Cohen. Motion passed 8-0-1

Mr. Goupil moved to elect Christa Scura as the Budget Committee Vice Chair. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

**VOTE** Voting in favor: Cohen, Norris, Scura, Reddy, R. Houston, Traum, Goupil, D. Houston and Bram; no votes against. Motion passed 9-0.

### **APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting will be approved at the next meeting of the Budget Committee.

### **TOWN FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr. Traum said that there is not much to report at this time, three months into the year. Revenues are looking fine, and interest receipts are running ahead of budget. Expenses are where they are expected to be at this time of year, and the Select Board will be looking closely at the Transfer Station budget including the Pay-by-Bag (PbB) program.

Budget Committee members asked numerous questions about the Transfer Station and the following information was provided.

- A “deep dive” is being done into the operation at the Transfer Station. This includes the price for the PbB bags. This is high on the Select Board agenda.
- In the current agreement with the Town of Webster, there is a Refuse Disposal Committee made up of three members from each town. Currently there are no Webster members on the committee and the committee is not meeting.
- The Waste Reduction Committee (formerly Recycling Committee) has been asked to look at prioritizing “low hanging fruit” regarding increasing recycling and decreasing waste.
- NH DES is currently happy with the progress being made on the cleanup of the former lagoons at the Transfer Station. It appears that the sludge from the Wastewater Treatment Facility can also be capped at the Transfer Station. There is \$150,000 in the budget this year for engineering, and it is anticipated that there will be firm numbers for the actual cleanup available for budget season.
- The Transfer Station is owned jointly by the Towns of Hopkinton and Webster 75%/25% respectively based on population.
- It is unknown at this time what the ramifications of not doing the Transfer Station lagoon cleanup would be. The Town is currently working very closely with DES.

It is currently undetermined what the cost share between the town and the users will be for the sludge removal at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Mr. Traum said it is very likely the sewer users will be paying more in the future.

### **HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIALS AND OTHER UPDATES**

Mr. Goupil presented the following information to the Budget Committee:

- He thanked the Budget Committee for working with him during the time he has been on committee. School Board Member Rob Nadeau will be the new representative on the Budget Committee.
- Several items were noted from the February financial report.
  - Special education costs are higher than anticipated.
  - The surplus is low.
  - Funds may not be available to put into Fund Balance (Article X) at the end of the year.
- Budget Committee members were encouraged to watch the School Board meetings as they discussed class size. The School Board Policy Committee is working on the class size policy.

### **CONTOOCCOOK VILLAGE PRECINCT FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr. D. Houston reported that March figures are not yet available but at the end of February, expenses were \$27,000 below budget.

### **HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Ms. Bram reported that she had no updated financial information and that the \$50,000 bond for the water department was approved.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Goupil again thanked the committee for their cooperation during the time he represented the School Board on the Budget Committee.

Mr. Reddy said that the budgets are close to being in their final form before they reach the Budget Committee. He suggested having a Budget Committee member liaison to departments. Mr. Traum said this sounds like micromanagement and Mr. Goupil asked if this is the role of the Budget Committee and encouraged training for the committee. Ms. Bram suggested the committee divide and become more knowledgeable on specific topics. It was suggested that Budget Committees be made aware when certain topics are discussed by the Select or School Boards. Mr. Cass explained how to sign up on the town website to receive notification emails on specific topics. Ms. Bram said that the constituents of the Budget Committee are the people, not the four Boards.

There will be continued discussion on the role of the Budget Committee at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 13, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Traum moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Goupil seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the meeting was declared adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Cass  
Town Administrator