

**TOWN OF HOPKINTON**  
**Budget Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 9, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.**  
**Remote Meeting**  
**\*Approved\***

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mark Zankel, Steve Reddy, Ken Traum, Norm Goupil, Don Houston, Janet Krzyzaniak, Thomas Lipoma, and Ginni Haines joined at 6:30 p.m.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT**

Rich Houston and Jonathan Cohen.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mark Zankel called the Budget Committee Remote Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Zankel read the Right to Know Law remote meeting checklist. As Chair of the Hopkinton Budget Committee, due to the COVID19 crisis, and in accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. There is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are providing public access to this meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by Zoom. Members of the committee can communicate contemporaneously during the meeting through the Zoom platform. The public has access to listen and participate in this meeting by dialing the phone number, 1-646-558-8656, meeting ID 892 1128 8232. Public notice of instructions for accessing the meeting is available on the Town’s Website and on the Town’s Facebook page. If there is an access problem please call 603-746-8242 or email Neal Cass at [townadmin@hopkinton-nh.gov](mailto:townadmin@hopkinton-nh.gov). All votes, during this meeting will be done by roll call vote. This meeting is being recorded and will be available to watch later. The link will be available on the Town Website, [www.hopkinton-nh.gov](http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov).

Mark Zankel began the meeting with a roll call of attendance.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Attendance Anyone Else in the room</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Attendance Anyone Else in the room</b>
Don Houston	Here- Alone	Thomas Lipoma	Here - Alone
Steve Reddy	Here - Alone	Mark Zankel	Here - Alone
Janet Krzyzaniak	Here - Alone	Rich Houston	Not Present
Norm Goupil	Here – 16-y/o son	Ginni Haines	Not Present
Ken Traum	Here - Alone	Jonathan Cohen	Not Present

There were 7 Budget Committee Members present when the meeting began.

Mr. Zankel asked Ken Traum to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2020, DRAFT MINUTES**

Ken Traum motioned to approve the July 15, 2020, Meeting Minutes. Norm Goupil seconded the motion. Mr. Zankel asked for any corrections or discussion.

Norm Goupil pointed out that on page 11, last paragraph, it should read – *“increase of 4.3% on the Operating Account, they came back with an additional reduction and used some of their Unreserved Fund Balance with a 2.53% increase – neither of these passed. They now come with a 1.8% increase on the Warrant”* – not \$4.3M, \$2.53M, and \$1.8M, respectively, as in the original transcription.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the July 15, 2020, minutes with the corrections addressed:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Steve Reddy	Yes	Thomas Lipoma	Yes
Norm Goupil	Yes	Mark Zankel	Yes
Janet Krzyzaniak	Yes		
Don Houston	Yes		
Ken Traum	Yes		

The vote passed 7-0.

**TOWN FINANCIALS – KEN TRAUM**

The Town Summary Reviews through the end of August 31, 2020, were presented by Mr. Traum. He explained that the summaries reflect the most recently approved budget.

On the Revenue side, where it looks like we are running below where we should be 2/3 of the way through the year – it’s due to timing. Payments from the State come in during the last part of the calendar year.

On the Expense side, we are running slightly better than what was budgeted. Where it shows that we’ve spent roughly 65% of our budget through 2/3 of the year, within that is \$72,000 which is due to a COVID grant, that will get pulled out, because it’s 100% reimbursable.

Thomas Lipoma asked if the \$72,000 for COVID was the 4290 Emergency Management line item? He asked if this was an expense that will eventually get reimbursed? Mr. Traum explained, yes that it will be paid back.

Thomas Lipoma asked about the Highway Block Grant, where does that come from and where does it go to? Ken Traum explained that it comes from the state and it is one of the funds used for highway purposes.

Thomas Lipoma asked if it goes to any roads or is it for specific roads? Ken Traum explained that it just goes into the pot for roads.

Mark Zankel about the Road Bond shown on the Expense Summary. Ken Traum explained that this is the previous Road Bond that is about to be spent down on. Ken Traum explained that they have not issued the new Road Bond for \$1.8M, that was approved at the last Town Meeting vote on July 25, 2020. The expectation is that this will be issued in the January/February time frame, going through the Municipal Bond Bank. They don’t know the interest rate yet, it could be as low as 1% and they are also

## **TOWN FINANCIALS – KEN TRAUM**

planning to refinance what's left to be paid off the first Road Bond, as well as the Fire Station Bond, thus bringing the interest rates from them down from their current 2.5% and 3.5% respectively, without changing the maturities.

## **HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATES – NORM GOUPIL**

Norm Goupil explained that the School Board has been meeting every Thursday since COVID started. He explained that now that they have an approved budget, they are working on getting the students back into school. Their Finance Committee will meet next week to discuss State and Federal Grants, as well as Budget Planning and the communication information format. He will share a link (<https://youtu.be/OGVlky3hwOI>) that explains how the \$641,000 was spent, broken down into a one-hour video.

A zero-based financial impact that has occurred in the District is that they agreed in the budget that they wouldn't have Assistant Coaches, but since COVID hit they have needed to make an adjustment to have protection for our additional athletes. The Head Coaches have taken a reduction in salary and the Assistants will get a little bit of their paid salary to participate in part of the season. The season is about six weeks and to accommodate the safety checks for the athletes, they needed to have someone there to do temperature checks and other COVID related checks, to have a successful season.

There was a return of surplus from the Health Insurance Pool that Norm Goupil has asked Steve Chamberlin to unpack in their next Finance Committee meeting. Norm Goupil explained that because health care was not used last year, due to COVID, there was a surplus of \$150,151.96. The Health Trust Board voted to return the surplus to the Members Institution. The District will receive this money and proceeds will be returned to the members, as a refund on the premiums they have paid.

Ken Traum asked if Norm Goupil could explain the Government's free lunches to all students through the rest of the year. Norm Goupil explained that he would investigate that, he hasn't heard about that yet.

Norm Goupil explained that their Auditor informed them that they have an additional \$225,000 on the Unreserved Fund Balance, once they closed the books. The School Board met and decided to use \$45,106 to go towards bleacher repairs, which was part of the CIP. He explained that this will now give them more room in the CIP to grow out for additional things. They also had some more cathodic protection at Harold Martin for \$8,450. Lastly, they invested \$171,000 into technology for the students. He explained that from Fourth grade up, each student will have a Chromebook. He explained that this will be very important, for the District, if they do need to go full remote, the technology will be available for the students. These Chromebooks have been ordered, but not received yet.

Mark Zankel asked if the District bought a Chromebook for every student. A lot of students already have laptops, so why would the District buy for those who don't need one? Norm Goupil explained that some of the Chromebooks can be used in the lower classes.

Ken Traum asked for an explanation – the Town voted on a budget for the schools, but now you're saying you are going to be spending \$225,000 more than the budget approved. Norm Goupil explained

**HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATES – NORM GOUPIL, continued**

that these funds were found after the books were closed, and the auditor found that the additional money is left from the Unreserved Balance. He explained that their fiscal year ends on June 30, so they are applying it towards the last fiscal year, and he added that it has nothing to do with this fiscal year.

Norm Goupil explained that the School Board has put aside for COVID related expenses. They have currently spent \$40,000-\$50,000 on masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, desks, nurses PPE, and electrostatic sprayers.

Norm Goupil reported that on the State level, there has been a change in the required Tax Rate Stabilization Fund - this went from 2.5% to 5.0%, and the restrictions on what that money can be used for has been removed.

The Facility Project has been going very well. The High School, was finished as of August 31, 2020, six bathrooms have been renovated, the locker rooms have been renovated and access to closets have been changed, the main office has been renovated to include space for the teachers, two classrooms have been moved and renovated, and the elevator hallway has been created. The roof at the High School is nearly complete, they are still working on a couple of leaks.

At Maple Street, the construction was finished on August 31, 2020. The only thing they are still working on is the ramp, which will be complete by September 20, 2020. Two bathrooms were renovated, and the bathroom and entrance to the Guidance Office has been renovated. The roof repairs are going to be done soon.

At Harold Martin, the foundation has been started for the addition. Safety procedures are being followed during the construction of the addition.

The Board has approved fire suppression at Harold Martin. The Facilities group has worked with Chief Yale on this project. They could receive \$60,000 from the State as part of fire suppression. Initially this project was quoted at \$1.5M. The total for fire suppression is now \$407,769. Money was saved because a fire door isn't necessary, which was \$15K, and an additional \$15,000 is being saved on moving the tank to the garage, because it's going to be horizontal. Money was also saved by using PVC instead of copper. They are still looking for more grants from the State.

Mark Zankel asked if the fire suppression investment at Harold Martin is going to be done through the Facilities Project Bond, and is that amount going to displace something else that was part of the package for the project that was presented to the voters? Norm Goupil explained that when the bid went out for the project, they submitted other add opts that they needed. They got specific numbers on the project and they got bids on the add outs. The Board then prioritized the add outs and they had to jump on the fire suppressants, because they could have lost out on the \$60,000 from the State. He explained that the pump takes a long time to get and this must be set up and working by the end of the year. Norm Goupil explained that this is outside of the scope, which was presented to the taxpayers, but everything that has been promised to the taxpayers is going just fine.

This add opt, the Board and Chief Yale felt strongly was needed to protect the school.

**HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATES – NORM GOUPIL, continued**

Mark Zankel asked if this could be done within the amount of money approved by the taxpayers for this Facilities Bond. Mr. Goupil agreed that this was correct.

Norm Goupil explained that the only thing that isn't included in the CIP, is \$150,000 for a generator.

Mr. Goupil explained that the School Board reached an agreement with the teachers, for their health and safety, to go back to school. Guidelines were set with each teacher.

Mr. Goupil reported that the School Board has agreed to work with the firm Hazard and Young for their Superintendent search, the cost for that will be about \$15,000. September 16, 2020 is their first meeting with them, and it will be open to the public.

**CONTOOCH PRECINCT FINANCIAL UPDATES – DON HOUSTON**

Don Houston reported that they had their Annual Precinct Meeting on August 25, 2020 and there was only one person from the community present, other than the Board and that was Norm Goupil. The budget was passed unanimously. The project to replace the pipe on Main Street, on Linda Kimball's pasture is scheduled to be done and completed this year. They are having trouble finding a contractor because everybody is so busy – but it must be done and completed by the end of this year.

Janet Krzyzaniak asked for the names of the three commissioners. Mr. Houston responded that Chris Boudette is the Chair, Tom Yestramski, and Mike Metcalf who replaced Bill Chapin, Sr. Don Houston explained that Mike Metcalf works for the company that has been doing most of the engineering work for the precinct, and he's a great addition.

**HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT FINANCIAL UPDATES – THOMAS LIPOMA**

Thomas Lipoma explained that they had their precinct meeting, with relatively low turnout. He reported that Kelly McCaskill is replacing Diana Wieland as a Commissioner. Their budget was approved unanimously. The biggest portion of their budget is for lighting and utilities, which is about \$11,000.

Thomas Lipoma reported that the water project is going forward. One of the bonds has been taken out, he's not sure about the second bond. The cost of the project, when it came back from bid, came back a lot higher than they had expected. They are trying to figure out how to lower the cost. The project has been started.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public attendees.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Norm Goupil asked Ken Traum if the two Boards could meet to look at the upcoming budgeting plans. Ken Traum explained that, in the spring, there is a meeting between the two Boards and that if there are two members of each Board present, it then is a Public Meeting which needs to be publicized and recorded.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS, continued**

Thomas Lipoma asked if, in the past, has there been anyone on the Budget Committee that has been involved on a Committee created by the School Board – namely the Finance Committee – to help merge the budget process.

Norm Goupil said that would be a great idea. Their Finance Committee is trying to figure out a new budget plan. The Town has asked for a line by line item budget process and they are trying to get something to the School Board on it. It might make sense to consider having a Budget Committee member come on to their Finance Committee to help them find that budget format, to bridge the gap between the two boards. He explained that he didn't know how to go about implementing it.

Mark Zankel explained that the way to implement it, if that is what the School Board feels would be helpful to have an additional non-School Board member engaging more actively in the budget development process, it's a request that would come from the School Board through Norm, as their representative to the Budget Committee. It would then be up the Budget Committee to appoint one of their members.

Ken Traum explained that the Select Board does not have a Finance Committee. In the past, Neal and he have taken the recommendations from this Budget Committee, as well as from the rest of the Select Board and have tried to produce something that is then presented to the entire Select Board.

Mark Zankel encouraged Norm Goupil to make better use of the Budget Committee. He explained that he felt a little bit of leeriness of creating new structures that are outside of the Budget Committee's duties. He explained it is the responsibility of all the Budget Committee members to see and hear what the respective Boards are thinking about and then to provide guidance.

Norm Goupil suggested that the Select Board and the School Board meet before starting the budgeting process begins, so that a discussion can take place about what they each are thinking.

Ken Traum explained that the Budget Committee could be giving direction, perhaps saying that because of COVID, they need a level tax rate again or let's go to 5% to make up for what happened last year.

Ginni Haines joined the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Mark Zankel suggested that at the next Budget Committee meeting, the School Board and Select Board present a three year look at what big ticket items or investments are being contemplated, either through the CIP's that they have or other things they think are coming up soon, like contracts, renegotiations, etc. Having this information early would be helpful to the Budget Committee when going into the budget process.

Mark Zankel asked the other Budget Committee members for their input on if they wanted to provide early guidance and how they would like to go about doing that.

Norm Goupil explained that he would like to discuss it with his four School Board members first to see what their expectations are. He explained that they have a pretty good feel with their CIP, they know

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS, continued**

what their bond is going forward for the next 20 years, that it will be a level debt at \$0.80. He explained that he wasn't comfortable giving an amount, he wants to be able to look at everything, he wants to be able to come to the Budget Committee saying that the School Board has presented him with a CIP amount for repair and maintenance, because they are sticking to their CIP planning. He explained that he has asked the Facilities Committee to provide the School Board with the CIP plan for the Facilities Project.

Mark Zankel asked the Budget Committee if they would like to ask both the Town and the School Board to share their latest CIP's or thinking on major capital investments and other big-ticket items at the next Budget Committee meeting? He explained that a vote wasn't necessary, he was looking for agreement that this would be helpful. Everyone did agree that this would be helpful.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Wednesday, October 14, 2020 – 5:30 pm, via Zoom, unless otherwise indicated.

Mark Zankel asked if Town Administrator Neal Cass could join the next Budget Committee meeting, so that he could run through the upcoming meeting dates, when we need to have certain meetings by, etc. There was also concern that the second Wednesday in November is Veteran's Day and inquired when the Budget Committee would be able meet, because of the holiday.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Ken Traum motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Norm Goupil seconded the motion. There was no further discussion.

A roll call vote was taken:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Steve Reddy	Yes	Thomas Lipoma	Yes
Norm Goupil	Yes	Ginni Haines	Yes
Janet Krzyzaniak	Yes	Mark Zankel	Yes
Don Houston	Yes		
Ken Traum	Yes		

The vote passed 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tammy Clay

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING, FROM NORM GOUPIL, SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE, TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THIS MEETING. PLEASE SEE THE ADDITIONAL PAGE FOR HIS RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS ASKED.**

**THIS INFORMATION WAS RECEIVED FROM NORM GOUPIL, SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2020, BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING.**

I wanted to provide some information to the Budget Committee about a few things that were discussed in the meeting. Can you please forward this to them?

**1. Fire Suppression: (breakdown, our 1<sup>st</sup> add all of the project)**

We had carried the infrastructure for the sprinkler in the base bid of \$117,950. The ADDITIONAL to make the piping operable is shown below as \$289,819. Total Sprinkler cost is the sum of the two: \$407,769.

We should get the \$60,000 State credit. We also will see some savings due to the vertical fire pump vs. horizontal fire pump.

Please find an additional breakdown attached to this email for the \$289,819.

**2. Link to explain the 641,000 state funding per Janet's request.**

The Finance Committee met in July to discuss this. Here is the link:

<https://youtu.be/OGVIky3hwOI>

3. We will be unpacking the \$150,000 from the Healthtrust in our new Finance Committee meeting. Michelle mentioned the following:  
***"So we have been told by Healthtrust that we will get approximately \$150,000 (some isn't the District and is retirees and employee co-share) but that will be voted on by their Board in the near future. Since we know we are not going to be selling what we normally would and that some students are remote, we know that we will see a significant decrease in Food Service revenue which could make the deficit over \$250,000. Since that is the case, we reduced the food service anticipated revenue by \$100,000 which will help us cover the deficit (like we do every year)."***

I will send you a link once this has been discussed. I want to communicate where the \$150K is going.

4. Technology purchase (part of Mark's question) \$171K. The following is Steve's reply

***"The second batch of is 550 devices, cases, extra power chords, licenses - the bulk of the extras will go to Harold Martin School...we did not purchase ones for Harold...some will be in reserve for replacements "***