

TOWN OF HOPKINTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
Town, School District, Hopkinton Village and Contoocook Village Precincts
Remote Meeting - Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
Approved and Amended August 11, 2021

CALL MEETING TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mark Zankel called the Meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Thomas Lipoma led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SWEARING IN OF CHRISTA SCURA AND JONATHAN COHEN

Neil Cass, Town Administrator, performed the swearing in of Christine Scura (Christa) and Jonathan Cohen as elected in March meeting for term to begin effective May 1, 2021. Everyone present welcomed them as official members of the Budget Committee.

Mark Zankel introduced Cindy Brown, Minute Taker, replacing Tammy Clay. Mark and the entire Budget Committee welcomed her.

RIGHT TO KNOW LAW REMOTE MEETING CHECKLIST

Mark Zankel read the Right-to-Know Law remote meeting checklist as follows:

Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means.

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the committee can communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83830179121>. The public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone number: 1-646-558-8656 Webinar ID: 838301792121. iPhone One-Tap Dial: US: +16465588656,,83830179121# or +13017158592,,83830179121#.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting.

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on Town of Hopkinton's website: www.hopkinton-nh.gov and on the Town of Hopkinton's Facebook page.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access.

If anyone has a problem, call (603) 746-8242 or email: townadmin@hopkinton-nh.gov.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled.

All supporting information referred to in these minutes can be found at the following link <https://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/budget-committee/agenda/agenda-supporting-documents>.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let us start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT – There were 9 Members present and 1 absent.

Committee Member	Attendance Anyone Else in the room	Committee Member	Attendance Anyone Else in the room
Don Houston	Present – Alone	Rich Houston	Present – Alone
Norm Goupil	Present – Alone	Thomas Lipoma	Present – Alone
Ken Traum	Present – Alone	Christa Scura	Present – with Kevin Scura
Steve Reddy	Present – with Carrie Williams	Mark Zankel	Present - Alone
Jonathan Cohen	Present – Alone	Janet Krzyzaniak	Unable to attend

OTHER ATTENDEES

Neal Cass, Town Administrator. Neal dismissed himself from the meeting, following the swearing in ceremony, at 5:37 p.m.

PROCESS EXPLANATION AND OVERVIEW – MARK ZANKEL

Mark Zankel welcomed those in attendance to the meeting.

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.

Norm Goupil announced that it appears that the recording was not yet started as no indicators are showing it. Mark Zankel noted and started the recording at 5:39 p.m.

SELECTION OF HOPKINTON BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Ken Traum motioned to nominate Mark Zankel for the office of Chair to the Hopkinton Budget Committee, seconded by Norm Goupil.

Mark Zankel asked for any other nominations. There being none, Mark accepted the nomination.

A vote was taken to approve Mark Zankel as Chair of the Hopkinton Budget Committee for the current term.

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Approved
Jonathan Cohen	Approved		

Rich Houston motioned to nominate Jonathan Cohen for the office of Vice-Chair of the Hopkinton Budget Committee, seconded by Norm Goupil.

Mark Zankel asked if there were any other nominations. There being none, Jonathan Cohen accepted the nomination.

A vote was taken to approve the motion nominating Jonathan Cohen as Vice-Chair of the Hopkinton Budget Committee for the current term.

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Approved
Jonathan Cohen	Approved		

Mark Zankel congratulated all and thanked Richard Houston for serving many years as Vice-Chair.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2021.

Ken Traum motioned, seconded by Jonathan Cohen, to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing dated February 10, 2021.

Mark Zankel asked if there were any corrections needed. There being none a vote was taken to approve the motion for the approval of the Public Hearing Minutes of 2/10/2021.

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Abstaining
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Approved
Jonathan Cohen	Approved		

TOWN FINANCIAL UPDATES – KEN TRAUM

Ken Traum gave a financial report of the Town budget beginning with Revenues.

In particular, he noted that revenue is in excess due to Federal COVID relief funds, and that water/sewer infrastructure and broadbands are areas that the town could fund.

Mark Zankel asked for questions. There were no questions.

Ken continued his report moving on to the Expenses. He stated the Expense budget is in line and that there are no areas of concern.

Mark Zankel questioned in regard to the water/sewer infrastructure if the Federal COVID relief could fund water supply improvements for Hopkinton Village Precinct? In response, Thomas stated that he would discuss with Rich Houston.

Ken Traum stated that because the Precincts are separate entities from the town that it may not be possible to access the COVID relief funds for this purpose. He stated that the Town expects to receive \$570,000 over this year and next.

Christa Scura questioned if it is a use it or lose it situation.

Ken Traum stated that there are projects to be done, and he expects the Town will fully utilize the funds. Possibility of sewer line in Maple Street area to Exit 6 to get more business which will generate more property taxes. Any input for ideas on how to utilize these funds would be welcome, noting that the next proposed Federal stimulus bill would cover a lot of infrastructure needs as it is being presented.

Mark Zankel asked for further questions. There were none.

HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATE – Norm Goupil

Norm Goupil thanked the Budget Committee and welcomed Jonathan and Christa to the Board. He stated that a lot has happened with the school. Schools are back in session with exception of those who are unable and continue to work remotely. There has been a need for additional food help. There is an additional \$126,000 over in the unreserved fund balance, exceeding the projected amount in unreserved fund balance. Recommendations have been made to the finance committee on how to use these funds, looking at CIP and other avenues. We are still on budget. He gave thanks to the Town for passing the budget.

There will be public hearing to receive funds from the State for SR2 (\$175,000) to be used for COVID relief by September 30, 2023 and SR3 (\$400,000) that can be allocated for best use for the schools.

In reference to the Building Committee, there are projects being recommended. Everything promised to the community has been delivered. We should be looking at phase 3 (\$200,000) to be received.

Norm stated that the budget is over \$15,000 by quote. \$43,000 contingency could be used. He pointed out that the reported leaks at the schools was not part of the facilities project. It was new. He stated that a quick map is available outlining roofs to show community what was done and what needs to be done.

Question by Mark Zankel to Norm regarding what town approved for facilities. If all of the proposed improvement projects could be complete under the amount approved, will you bond less money or will you do more projects?

Norm responded we will bond out the full amount that the town approved and use the funds to get more deferred maintenance projects done, resulting in long-term savings. Trying to take pressure off of CIP. Building Committee job is to maintain facilities. Because of the low bond rate achieved, the Committee gave the town a lower tax rate – gift giving them to improve our schools.

No further questions.

CONTOOCOOK PRECINCT FINANCIALS UPDATE – DON HOUSTON

Don Houston reported that expenses are on budget. No critical items at this time.

No questions were presented.

HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT FINANCIALS UPDATE – THOMAS LIPOMA

Thomas Lipoma reported that everything is on budget. No major updates. Water projects will be complete by the end of the year. So far so good.

No questions were presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No comments.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Mark Zankel asked for any other business to come before the Budget Committee.

Mark stated there were two items he would like to discuss.

1. Next meeting date
2. Opinion on Meeting in Person

Ken Traum, Select Board representative, stated that the Select Board discussed meeting in person at the last meeting. It was noted that public would need to be allowed. For that reason, they are looking at larger locations to hold the meeting such as the Slusser Center. They are scheduled to discuss again in 2 weeks.

Mark Zankel asked Ken if remote access in addition to in person was discussed.

Ken Traum stated yes but we have to allow public access into the in person meeting. Recording would still be done.

Norm Goupil stated that School Board meets in person and has been able to stream the meeting. They attend at Maple Street Cafeteria.

Ken Traum stated that the School Board is in a better position because they have much more room at the school which can accommodate the public access.

Norm Goupil stated that they have plastic separations as well.
Mark Zankel asked Ken if the Town could have this capability.

Ken Traum responded that they could but the concern is the public and there is no space available to allow that and maintain the guidelines.

Christa Scura asked if the Town could do in person and remote.

Ken Traum responded that the town cannot turn public away if there is no space provided.

Mark Zankel noted that this is a question for our Counsel.

Ken Traum agreed and Town will be revisiting in 2 weeks.

Jonathan Cohen stated that depending on when we decide to meet, we would need to revisit this as things have been changing rapidly.

It was suggested that the Budget Committee skip the June meeting and the next meeting be in July, at which time the Committee can determine the course of action for in person.

Rich Houston stated that he will be away on vacation for the July 14 meeting but will be able to attend remotely.

Mark Zankel asked for perspective by each member on the decision to skip June and meet in July and it was the consensus that the Board do this.

One member asked whether all Committee members were vaccinated and Mark Zankel stated that he didn't believe that we could ask that question. This would be a question for Counsel. Mark will follow up with Neal Cass before the July meeting regarding the questions about meeting in person and will report back to the Budget Committee.

In closing, Jonathan Cohen informed that the Farmer's Market is now operating at the Bandstand. Norm Goupil reported that a clinic will soon be held at the school for vaccination of students.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Ken Traum motioned, Rich Houston seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

A vote of the motion to adjourn was held as follows:

Committee Member	Vote	Committee Member	Vote
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Approved
Jonathan Cohen	Approved		

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Brown