



Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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

**SELECT BOARD
BUDGET WORK SESSION MINUTES
Hopkinton Town Hall – 330 Main Street
Monday, November 7, 2022
Approved**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Dunlap called this Budget Work Session meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:33 p.m. on Monday, November 7, 2022, and introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap; Ken Traum; Jeffrey Donohoe; Steven Whitley; and Thomas Lipoma

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator; Karen Robertson, Planning Director; Kelly Henley, Finance Director; Alicia Presti, Human Services Director; Paula Simpkins, Recreation Director; Anna Wells, Economic Development Director; Donna Dunlop, Library Director; and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant

School Board

Members Present: Andrea Folsom, Chair; and Norm Goupil

Public Present: Glen Tobiason; Elizabeth Sides; Debbie Norris (via Zoom); and Louise Carr (via Zoom)

II. POINTS OF PRIDE:

Mr. Traum thanked Mr. Cass and everyone involved with last week's successful lunch, held at the Slusser Center, in honor of the Dial-A-Ride program volunteers. During the lunch, Ann Simms, who volunteered with Dial-A-Ride for many years, was awarded the Boston Post Cane. Mr. Traum also thanked Police Chief Hennessey for providing resident Susan Covert with information to send in her email messages, informing subscribers about the Police Department's recent efforts and the new digital speed limit signs.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE:

Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Donohoe, to add Sarah Hoffman to the Consent Agenda, in the section of Appointments to Office for the Energy Committee.

VOTE: Dunlap, Traum, Donohoe, Whitley, and Lipoma voted in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

The Board reviewed documents for signature, and approved (5-0) the Consent Agenda of November 7, 2022, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Traum and seconded by Mr. Whitley.

TOWN OF HOPKINTON - SELECT BOARD			
CONSENT AGENDA			
NOVEMBER 7, 2022			
ITEM	DATE	ACTION	COMMENT
AP MANIFEST			
AP MANIFEST DATED 11/7/2022	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$72,825.31
PAYROLL			
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$87,143.82
DIRECT DEPOSIT: \$ 83,275.16			
CHECKS: \$ 3,868.66			
FUND TRANSFERS			
FROM MULT ACCTS TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$7,343.77
FROM EXPEND TRUST FUND ACCTS - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$12,621.11
FROM CONSERV COMM FUND ACCT TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$1,595.00
FROM SEWER FUND ACCT TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$65,407.65
FROM CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$133,110.08
FROM SLUSSER CTR RENTAL FUND TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$300.00
FROM PUBLIC SAFETY REVOLV FUND TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$96,173.68
FROM RECYCLING REVOLV FUND TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$285.25
FROM RECREATION REVOLV FUND TO GENERAL OP FUND - APR-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$62,386.43
FROM TIF DIST EXIT #6 ACCT TO GENERAL OP FUND - JAN-SEPT	11/7/2022	APPROVE	\$13,549.06
RIGHT TO BURY			
#1196 - CONTOOCOOK - F/318-4 AND 321-1 - MOCK	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
OTHER			
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - BALLOT CLERK - CUSHING	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - BALLOT CLERK - GAMSBY	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - BALLOT CLERK - MADDEN	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMM MEMBER - CARR	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - ENERGY COMM MEMBER - ECKBERG	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - ENERGY COMM MEMBER - ZANKEL	11/7/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - ENERGY COMM MEMBER - HOFFMAN	11/7/2022	APPROVE	

VOTE: Dunlap, Traum, Donohoe, Whitley, and Lipoma voted in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of the Select Board meeting of Monday, October 24, 2022. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 24, 2022.

VOTE: Traum, Donohoe, Whitley, and Lipoma voted in favor of the motion, no votes against, Chair Dunlap abstained, as she was not present for meeting of October 24, 2022;
MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Nonpublic Session Meeting Minutes of the Select Board meeting of Monday, October 24, 2022. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Nonpublic Session Meeting Minutes of Monday, October 24, 2022; Mr. Traum noted they are not sealed.

VOTE: Traum, Donohoe, Whitley, and Lipoma voted in favor of the motion, no votes against, Chair Dunlap abstained, as she was not present for meeting of October 24, 2022;
MOTION PASSED 4-0.

IV. OTHER:

Regarding the hate crime that took place over the weekend, Chair Dunlap and the Board noted the importance of acknowledging and discussing it, highlighting that Hopkinton is a welcoming community of people who value diversity. She emphasized that criminal behavior will not be tolerated, and such an offense is loudly and clearly condemned. After thanking Mr. Cass, the Hopkinton Police Department, the Hopkinton Department of Public Works, and many residents of the area, for their efforts in cleaning and repairing physical damage, Chair Dunlap read the draft of the Joint Statement of the Hopkinton Select Board and the Hopkinton School District. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Donohoe, to approve the Joint Statement, which will be signed by the members of the Hopkinton Select Board, the Hopkinton School Board, and the Superintendent of the Hopkinton School District.

VOTE: Dunlap, Traum, Donohoe, Whitley, and Lipoma voted in favor of the motion, no votes against; **MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

Resident Glen Tobiason suggested that the verbiage of the statement be amended to pertain to all people, rather than specific people. Mr. Tobiason and residents Elizabeth Sides, Norm Goupil, and Debbie Norris, speaking individually, commended the Town for taking a stand and taking action, being proactive in addressing this crime, and thanking all those who worked on cleanup and repair of damage.

Mr. Whitley shared information on “Let There Be Light,” a campaign to unite the world in solidarity with the symbolic light over the darkness of antisemitism, racism, intolerance, and hatred. He noted that this global effort of leaving on the lights on the night of November 9, in houses of worship, public buildings, and private homes, is in remembrance of the atrocities committed on that date at thousands of synagogues and Jewish institutions in 1938. The Board agreed that the Town would show support of this campaign by leaving on lights at Town Hall on November 9, and encouraged residents to do the same in their homes.

With no additional questions or comments, Chair Dunlap thanked everyone for their comments.

V. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

A. Planning/Building: Ms. Robertson shared the following:

- Proposed budget for 2023 is \$151,043, which is less than 2022 budget by about \$1,000
- Provided details of line items

- Hopes build-out will be covered by Invest NH grant
- Email is the form of communication preferred by many and results in big savings on postage
- Last year at this time, Planning/Zoning/building permit revenues were \$50,600; this year, total revenues at this point are about \$58,000, likely due to combination of increase in activity and fees
- Fortunate to have our building inspector; not only works his hours, but voluntarily assists in off hours

B. Finance:

1. Ms. Henley shared the following regarding Financial Administration:
 - Proposed budget for 2023 is \$135,712, which is just under \$1,500 more than the 2022 budget
 - Provided details of line items
 - Hopes to attend the NH Government Finance Officers Association (NHGFOA) Annual Conference, as past conferences have been beneficial
 - Annual pre-audit will take place later this month
2. Mr. Cass shared the following regarding Personnel Administration/Property Liability/Long-term Debt:
 - Proposed merit pool for 2023 is 6.5%
 - Increase in Medicare and Social Security for stipends is due to more stipends, but saves money in the long run
 - With people returning to training and pursuing educational opportunities, there is an increase in this proposed amount
 - Increase for property liability insurance is due to the increase from Primex, but being in a risk pool means cost is less than it would be otherwise
 - Due to the new bond, principal payments for long-term debt are up by \$19,500, but interest is down \$27,000

C. Human Services: Ms. Presti shared the following:

- Provided details of line items
- Second half of 2022, conferences/training resumed; plans to attend more in 2023
- New applications are no longer being accepted for emergency rental assistance through the Community Action Program (CAP)
- Fuel assistance was at \$1.98/gal. for heating oil through July 1, 2022, but jumped to \$3.59/gal. after that
- Will provide more information on funds available through donations

D. Recreation: Ms. Simpkins shared the following:

- Provided details of line items, with emphasis on staffing challenges at Kimball Pond
- Conferences/training request is entirely for lifeguard training for Kimball Pond staff
- Requested pay increase for ice clearing staff

- Hopes for postage funds to send out more mailers regarding Fourth of July event and to receive financial support for Recreation Committee event promotion; all proceeds from events go to Human Services programs
- Provided information from her research on options for the skate park; \$9,000 requested from Recreation Facilities Maintenance Trust would cover the cost of the design of a new concrete ramp system, but if this option not agreeable, does not need to request the \$9,000

E. Economic Development: Ms. Wells shared the following:

- Provided details of line items
- Requested funding for professional services, such as engaging with various economic development programs some organizations offer
- Hopes for funds for printed materials and support of various community events
- Grants approved/received: \$250,000 for solar array at sewage treatment plant and approximately \$74,000 for the Concord to Lake Sunapee Rail Trail

F. Library: Ms. Dunlop shared the following:

- There has been a significant increase in all usage, including in-person visitors, computer users, and community spaces; curbside is still a popular option
- Provided details of line items
- Due to renovation after lightning strike, electricity costs continue to be controlled
- The small increase in PT employee wages is due to paying employees for current weekend and evening hours, which were nonexistent during the limited hours of the pandemic
- Since joining the library 15 years ago, fuel consumption has been cut in half, due to management of the system
- Air conditioning system is about 25 years old; contracted maintenance this fall noted in good shape, but given age, could go at any time

G. Executive: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Provided details of line items
- Retirement rate is dropping July 1; this will be reflected throughout all budgets
- An additional phone in Town Hall has resulted in increase
- 2022 year-to-date is over due to the Waste Reduction Committee's attendance of Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) training
- Printing costs decrease each year, as fewer Town Reports are printed; moving to online format seems to be popular option
- Advertising is up due to the increase in the cost of newspaper ads for public hearings
- Total requested increase for 2023 is just under \$3,000, which is 1.23% over 2022 budget

H. IT: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Provided details of line items

- Have stayed fairly consistent in budget since switching companies approximately six to seven years ago
- All computers and server are on this IT line item, rather than in individual department budgets or on computer services line, which is reflected by 2022 year-to-date figure

I. ASSESSING: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Provided details of line items
- Decrease due to fewer filings with Registry of Deeds
- Online assessment card access cost is up, but saves substantial time for staff
- Will examine Sansoucy cell tower assessment contract for details

J. LEGAL: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Dropping \$45,570, due to end of settlement payment
- PSNH abatements ended in 2022

K. COMMUNITY SERVICES: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Community Action Program (CAP) provides substantial help to Hopkinton residents
- Cost has stayed consistent through the years

L. PATRIOTIC PURPOSES: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- \$300 covers expenses for the band for Memorial Day parade
- \$2,700 covers expenses and music for Hopkinton Town Band for Summer Concert series

M. GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Provided details of line items
- Electricity cost is up universally
- Heating oil is also nearly double the 2022 rate
- Slusser Center propane use down, due to gas fireplace not being used and more efficient stove in kitchen
- Government buildings in total are up just over \$15,000 for 2023, which is an 11.39% increase; primary reason for increase is rise in fuel and electricity costs

N. GENERAL OVERVIEW: Mr. Cass shared the following:

- Dan Blanchette, Department of Public Works Director, will present at next week's meeting, so there will be information on road projects, which account for a good portion of the overall budget increase
- The overall department proposed operating budget increase of 6.5% seems to be a good starting point
- Approximately \$100,000 of the increase is due to fuel and utility cost increases
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee has met three times and will meet again next week
- Proposed merit pool increase is included in overall proposed operating budget; any approved amount will take effect at pay period closest to April 1

The Board, Mr. Cass, and all department heads exchanged thanks after each department or budget area was presented and discussed.

VI. PUBLIC FORUM:

Resident Glen Tobiason asked questions about community topics, included the popularity of the skate park and a property near the Hopkinton/Warner border. He also shared some information on the potential for methane capture at the transfer station, noting that this technology may make it possible to use the methane from the old landfill to generate electricity. It was noted that he would share the information with Mr. Cass at a later date.

Resident Louise Carr (via Zoom), who is the Chair of the Recreation Committee, asked for clarification on the Patriotic Purposes account in the budget, and if the Recreation Committee might be able to request funds from this account to be used for music at any of their events. Mr. Cass noted he would have to look into the specific language of the uses for funds from this account. Ms. Carr also asked for clarification of the Economic Development Committee line item regarding Community Relations and Outreach, as she believes the funds should only be used for community outreach directly related to EDC projects.

The Board, Mr. Tobiason, and Ms. Carr exchanged thanks at the conclusion of their respective segments.

VII. ELECTION REVIEW:

Mr. Cass noted that everything was set up and ready to go for Tuesday's election. The Board reviewed attendance at the election and expressed appreciation for those involved in preparation for and running the election.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Donohoe moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Lipoma seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Administrative/Assessing Assistant