



Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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

**SELECT BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 31, 2022
Approved**

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Ken Traum called this meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:33 p.m. on Monday, January 31, 2022. With the meeting being held at Town Hall, Vice Chair Traum introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap, Ken Traum, Anna Wells, Steven Whitley, and Jeffrey Donohoe, via conference telephone

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator; Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant; and Carol Harless, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Public Present: David Croft, Merrimack County Sheriff; Louise Carr, Chair of the Houston Barn Committee Chair; Bonnie Christie, Hopkinton-Webster Refuse Disposal Committee Member; and Norm Goupil

Before proceeding, a motion was made by Mr. Whitley, and seconded by Ms. Wells, to allow Mr. Donohoe to join the meeting remotely.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Anna Wells	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

POINTS OF PRIDE:

Noting that the new financial software is still being implemented, Mr. Cass thanked Ms. Gallant, Finance Director, for her ongoing work and learning. He also pointed out that Ms. Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant, has been busy working on the Annual Town Report. With another snowy weekend, Mr. Cass extended appreciation to the Department of Public Works and Fire and Police Department personnel for their work. Mr. Whitley and Mr. Traum added their thanks to all the staff who worked during the weekend's storm, and Mr. Traum thanked all the candidates running in the upcoming Town election, noting that there are five contested positions this year. Mr. Traum noted the recent passing of Edith Houston, who was a very active, long-time volunteer in the community, and former Hopkinton Police Chief, Chester "Chet" Jordan, who, Mr. Cass added, was also a former Merrimack County Sheriff.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

The Board reviewed documents for signature, and approved (4-0) the Consent Agenda, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Whitley and seconded by Ms. Wells.

TOWN OF HOPKINTON - SELECT BOARD CONSENT AGENDA JANUARY 31, 2022			
<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
AP MANIFEST			
AP MANIFEST DATED 1/31/2022 CH #s 70157 - 70158	1/31/2022	APPROVE	\$31,779.00
AP MANIFEST DATED 1/31/2022 CH #s 70159 - 70187	1/31/2022	APPROVE	\$1,514,947.80
PAYROLL			
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL	1/31/2022	APPROVE	\$85,006.00
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE			
ROBERT WARDELL (SEN REC COUNCIL ALTERNATE)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
COMMITTEE NOMINEE			
DANIEL MORRISSEY (WARNER RIVER LOCAL ADV COMM)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
TOWN MAPPING RENEWAL			
CAI TECH TAX MAP MAINT CONTRACT (4/1/2022 - 3/31/2023)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
CAI TECH PLANNING MAP MAINT CONTRACT (4/1/2022 - 3/31/2023)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
FOREBEARANCE AGREEMENT			
223-033-000 69 MEADOWS DR	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
223-033-000 69 MEADOWS DR (DUPLICATE)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	
YIELD TAX			
231-003-000 410 STUMPFIELD RD OP #21-227-19-T	1/31/2022	APPROVE	\$1,375.52
OTHER			
PERSONNEL ACTION FORM ANNA WELLS (PERM PT)	1/31/2022	APPROVE	

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Anna Wells	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 18, 2022. Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wells, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Anna Wells	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

PUBLIC APPOINTMENT:

After thanking the Board for the opportunity to meet, Sheriff Croft began by highlighting his goal to meet with all the town Select Boards and City Councils in Merrimack County, to present an overview of the work of the Sheriff's Office, and to convey his message to the public that he believes law enforcement professionals are there to help. Providing a brief history of his work in law enforcement, he pointed out that he had been the Boscawen Police Chief for 25 years prior to becoming the Deputy Sheriff for Merrimack County, and most recently, his election to Sheriff. He noted his deep ties to Hopkinton, having worked at the State Fair each year for many years, and added that he is familiar with the outstanding work of Hopkinton's law enforcement professionals, past and present, and commended the selection of Chief Hennessey to lead Hopkinton's Police Department. Pointing out that the Sheriff's Office has full state jurisdiction, he noted how important this is to the work they do through their Civil, Transport, Warrants, Detective, and Communications Divisions. In addition to these divisions, Sheriff Croft noted that he is responsible for security of the three Merrimack County Courthouses, and has some deputies assigned to special Task Forces. Among the programs Sheriff Croft highlighted was the research done in the Civil Division, in relation to people being evicted from their homes, many of whom may have multiple underlying problems. The program offers resources for people who may be suffering with mental health disorders and drug addiction, to get them the help they need. Mr. Whitley commended Sheriff Croft on this program and encouraged his Office to continue this great work. There being no further comments, the Board and Sheriff Croft exchanged thanks. Chair Dunlap arrived during Sheriff Croft's presentation.

OLD BUSINESS:

Regarding the Town Meeting Warrant, Mr. Cass noted that all the Zoning Amendments have been approved by the Planning Board and are ready to go forward. Moving to Article 3, Question on Keno, the Board and Mr. Cass discussed the details of the upcoming Public Hearing on this Warrant Article, and the decision was to hold off on any recommendations of this Article until after the Public Hearing. Regarding Article 4, Borrowing for Houston Barn Stabilization, Mr. Cass noted that he had consulted with the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA), so the Article is appropriately worded. Ms. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mr. Traum, to recommend this Article.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Regarding Article 5, Operating Budget, Mr. Traum pointed out that the figure in this Article will be presented at the Budget Committee Public Hearing on Wednesday, February 9. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to recommend this Article.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Moving on to Articles 6,7, and 8 (Appropriation to Capital Reserve Funds, Appropriation to Expendable Trust Funds, and Creation of Payroll Liability Trust Fund, respectively), Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to recommend all three Articles.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Regarding Article 9, Designating Lots as Town Forest, Mr. Cass clarified that if this Article passes, it will put the Conservation Forestry Committee in charge of the designated land, and the funds from the logging of the land would go into a separate Forestry fund, not just the Conservation fund. Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Traum, to recommend this Article.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

After the Board and Mr. Cass worked out a small clarification of the wording of Article 10, Authorization to Sell Donated Lot and the Net Proceed Going to Conservation Fund, Ms. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to recommend this Article.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Regarding Article 11, Authorization to Expend from Pay-by-Bag Special Revenue Fund, Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to recommend this Article.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

A brief discussion ensued regarding Article 12, Hand Count Ballots Petition Warrant Article, and Mr. Whitley asked Ms. Harless, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, for her opinion on the accuracy of the ballot counting machine, and Ms. Harless noted that she did not have any concerns about the machine's accuracy. Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Traum, to not recommend this Article (with a yes vote by each Board member indicating he or she does not recommend it).

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Moving on to the 2021 Year-to-Date Financials, Mr. Cass noted that there had been very minor changes since the January 18 Select Board meeting, so the information is essentially final, but unaudited. He added that this information is in the new format, from the new system, and the summary page is printed directly, which saves time and lowers the chance of any mistakes. Mr. Traum pointed out concern over the tax increase but added that revenues for 2021 were about \$150,000.00 more than budgeted. Mr. Cass and Mr. Traum briefly discussed the figures, and Mr. Whitley and Chair Dunlap agreed that, as Mr. Cass had noted, it is better to estimate figures on the conservative side, to avoid taxes being any higher than people are told in March.

Regarding the update to the Transfer Station Septic Lagoons, Mr. Cass noted that as of January 31, the lagoons are closed, a letter was sent to the Department of Environmental Services (DES) late last week, requesting an extension to February 18 to present a plan for the lagoons, testing will be performed on the sludge piles, and engineers from Nobis Group will be working on the plan. Mr. Cass added that he had met with the Hopkinton and Webster members of the Refuse Disposal Committee and notified Webster's Town Administrator, as well, so Webster is aware of the status of the lagoons. Ms. Christie, a member of the Refuse Disposal Committee, noted that the Committee members were surprised by the recent inspection results, since no problems had been noted at any of the previous annual inspections. With no further comment, the Board thanked Ms. Christie. Moving forward, Mr. Cass added that DES took care of notifying the septage haulers.

On the subject of the Houston Barn Committee's application to the NH Registry of Historic Places, Mr. Donohoe began the discussion by noting that he does not support the idea of the Houston Barn being placed on the Registry, as this places too many restrictions on the property. Ms. Carr, of the

Houston Barn Committee, noted that this designation is honorary only and does not place any restrictions on what can be done. She went on to say that the Barn being placed on the Registry would mean the Committee could apply for Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) funding. Discussion ensued among the Board members and Ms. Carr, with Mr. Donohoe stating that the Board should insist that the NH Registry of Historic Places provide a written notice that the Town would be able to use Federal funds for the Houston Barn stabilization if the Barn is listed on the NH Registry. Ms. Carr noted that there was not a deadline for the application for the Registry, so Mr. Whitley and Mr. Traum suggested it would be best if time is taken to research this more thoroughly before submitting the application. Mr. Cass said he would follow up with all the necessary organizations to get clear answers to the questions and concerns. There being no further questions or comments, the Board and Ms. Carr exchanged thanks.

NEW BUSINESS:

Regarding the Emergency Management Director position, Mr. Cass noted that (retired) Chief Pecora had been the EMD, but since the Fire Department is often involved, he recommended appointing Jeff Yale, Fire Department Chief. He added that research indicated most NH towns designate the Town Administrator as the Deputy, so the recommendation was that Mr. Cass serve as the Deputy Emergency Management Director. It was also noted that, given the level of involvement Mr. Cass has had with Emergency Management, particularly as the Town Health Officer through the pandemic, this seems the most logical choice. Ms. Wells made a motion, seconded by Chair Dunlap, that Jeff Yale, Fire Chief, be appointed as Emergency Management Director and Neal Cass, Town Administrator, be appointed as Deputy Emergency Management Director.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Mr. Cass shared that he had participated in a New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) call with Senator Jeanne Shaheen, on the topic of infrastructure, and added that it was very helpful, as all the infrastructure money is on its way. He also took part in a brief call regarding funding, with people from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). He noted that the Budget Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, the Operation of Keno Hearing and Houston Barn Stabilization Bond Hearing are both scheduled for Monday, February 14, and all Hearings will take place at Town Hall, with the option of participating via Zoom.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Mr. Goupil thanked Mr. Traum and Mr. Cass for their presentation, and Ms. Wells for her work with the Select Board, her deliberation, and great effort, adding that he had learned a lot from her and wished her the best.

OTHER:

Chair Dunlap announced that this was the last Select Board meeting for Ms. Wells, as Ms. Wells will be starting her new role as the Director of Economic Development with the Town of Hopkinton. Chair

Dunlap gave huge thanks to Ms. Wells for her amazing work in every capacity. Ms. Wells expressed her appreciation for having worked with the Board, noting that it had been a pleasure and she had learned so much about the town, and is deeply appreciative. Mr. Traum, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Donohoe, and Mr. Cass all thanked Ms. Wells and wished her the best in her new role, as well. A brief discussion about swearing in Thomas Lipoma as the new Select Board member took place. Mr. Donohoe left the meeting.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION -RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) Hiring

Ms. Dunlap moved to go into a non-public session to discuss an issue involving hiring a person as a public employee under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (b). Ms. Wells seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Carol Harless and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 6:48 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:00 p.m.

These minutes were not sealed.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION - RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) Personnel

Ms. Dunlap moved to go into a non-public session to discuss a personnel issue under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (a). Ms. Wells seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:00 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:35 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Ms. Dunlap moved to seal the minutes of the just completed nonpublic session because it was determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board. Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION - RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) Personnel

Ms. Dunlap moved to go into a non-public session to discuss a personnel issue under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (a). Ms. Wells seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:35 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 8:00 p.m.

These minutes were not sealed.

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 18, 2022, Session I. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2022, Session I.

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

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 18, 2022, Session II. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2022, Session II as amended.

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Wells moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Dunlap seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Administrative/Assessing Assistant