



# Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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

**SELECT BOARD  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, December 6, 2021  
Approved**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Sabrina Dunlap called this meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:31 p.m. on Monday, December 6, 2021. With the meeting being held at Town Hall, Chair Dunlap introduced the members of the Board.

**Select Board**

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

**Staff Present:** Neal Cass, Town Administrator, and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant

**Public Present:** Members of the Houston Barn Study Committee: Louise Carr, Jason LaCombe, Don Houston, Dave Feller, and Lee Wilder

Before proceeding, a motion was made by Chair Dunlap, and seconded by Mr. Traum, to allow Mr. Donohoe to join the meeting remotely.

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

**POINTS OF PRIDE:**

Mr. Cass thanked Ms. Robertson, Planning Director, for all the time she put into researching fees, noting how much work it was. He went on to thank Ms. Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant, for preparation of minutes for the weekly Select Board Meetings. Cam Burgess, who presented his Eagle Scout project proposal at last week's meeting, sent a nice thank you note, so Mr. Cass confirmed that the Board members had a chance to read the note.

Chair Dunlap seconded Mr. Cass's expressions of appreciation and added thanks to everyone who contributed to Starry Starry Weekend, pointing out that so many people were involved in making it happen, and what a fun and successful community event it was. She also thanked the Department of Public Works for their great work on the roads during the recent frozen rain. Mr. Traum added that he would have expressed the same appreciation as Chair Dunlap. Mr. Whitley also commented on what a fantastic event Starry Starry Weekend was.

**ADMINISTRATIVE:**

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

**Town of Hopkinton - Select Board  
Consent Agenda  
December 6, 2021**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>AP MANIFEST</b>			
AP Manifest dated 12/6/2021 ch #s 67237 - 37303	12/6/2021	Approve	\$2,310,906.07
<b>PAYROLL</b>			
Employee Payroll	12/6/2021	Approve	\$84,609.84
<b>PAYMENT REQUEST FROM EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND ACCOUNTS</b>			
Rec. Facil. Trust Fund pymnt. for invoices 10/1/2021 - 11/30/2021	12/6/2021	Approve	\$332.25
<b>PAYMENT REQUEST FROM CAPITAL RESERVE FUND ACCOUNTS</b>			
To Trustees of Trust Fund for invoices 10/1/2021 - 11/30/2021	12/6/2021	Approve	\$35,391.95
<b>FUND TRANSFER</b>			
From Sewer Fund Acct. to Gen. Operating Fund	12/6/2021	Approve	\$12,905.92
From Kimb. Cabin/FD Aux./Slusser Ctr. Donations to Gen. Op. Fund	12/6/2021	Approve	\$8,512.87
From H.S. Donation Acct. to General Fund	12/6/2021	Approve	\$50.00
From Pub. Safety Revolving Fund to Gen. Operating Fund	12/6/2021	Approve	\$5,221.98
From Rec. Revolving Fund to Gen. Operating Fund	12/6/2021	Approve	\$1,719.38
<b>YIELD TAX LEVY</b>			
222-039-004 Kearsarge Ave. Op. #21-224-12-T	12/6/2021	Approve	\$3,203.78
<b>INTENT TO CUT</b>			
221-050-000/221-050-001 Bound Tree Rd./Pine St. Op. #21-227-20-T	12/6/2021	Approve	
<b>SOLAR EXEMPTION</b>			
242-031-000 963 Broad Cove Rd.	12/6/2021	Approve	
<b>OTHER</b>			
Personnel Action Form Step Pay Raise (Thomas Modini/FD)	12/6/2021	Approve	

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

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, November 29, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of November 29, 2021.

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

**PUBLIC APPOINTMENT:**

Louise Carr, Chair of the Houston Barn Study Committee, began by pointing out that this was a follow-up to their September appointment, at which funds were requested for the barn project, and noted that this evening, Jason LaCombe would be presenting the results of their research and options for funding. Mr. LaCombe indicated that Milestone Engineering and Construction was their choice for working on budgeting options, as the company has done a lot of work on this type of project. Focusing not only on the cost of the various proposals, Mr. LaCombe highlighted the Hopkinton departments and organizations that utilize the barn for storage and added that some Fire Department training takes place on the upper floor. Moving to the Committee's two main proposals, Mr. LaCombe noted that all options include design, engineering, construction, and construction management, as figured by Milestone, plus contingencies added in by the Committee.

Under the option of removing the barn, the choices include replacing the barn on the same site, with a new 8,800 square foot building of a similar configuration to the current barn, at a cost of \$2.4 million; the other choice in the barn removal option would be to replace the barn on a new site, near the ballfields, with a 7,000 square foot, one story building, at a cost of \$2.3 million. Under the option of restoring the barn, the choices include stabilization—with structural repairs, new foundation, and standing seam metal roof—which would cost \$875 thousand; and the other choice, which would be a rehabilitation of the current barn—including completion of the stabilization project, plus the addition of a fire suppression system, electricity, insulation, and other interior and exterior upgrades—would run \$1.8 million.

Focusing on the stabilization option and, given that about \$70,000.00 will be proposed to the Budget Committee for allocation to the Houston Barn from the CIP (Capital Improvement Program) budget, Mr. Traum asked how the money might be most efficiently spent. Mr. LaCombe indicated that the best plan would be to start with the new foundation, followed by the metal roof, noting that a metal roof could be damaged if foundation work occurred after the roof installation.

Referencing the barn replacement estimates, Mr. Donohoe expressed that the cost per square foot was unrealistic, and Mr. Feller noted that of the three companies with which they consulted, the other two provided similar or higher estimates.

Returning to the stabilization option, which Mr. LaCombe noted was their recommendation as a starting place, Mr. Traum inquired if this was a plan that could be done in steps, and Mr. LaCombe elaborated that this plan would set the barn up especially well, with structural work being done first, then additional work being done in the future. He continued, noting that the Committee would be working on a formal report, which would include background data and information from over twenty years of looking at the barn, and they would be open to working collaboratively with the Select Board and the Budget Committee, drafting a Warrant Article, and looking at other funding opportunities, such as grants offered by LCHIP (the Land & Community Heritage Investment Program). He pointed out that the assumption would be that the Town would bear the full cost of the project, but that grants would reduce the expenditure.

In answer to Mr. Whitley's question about a possible time for any work to begin, Mr. LaCombe pointed out that the barn roof is leaking, adding that historically speaking, buildings this age tend to deteriorate quickly once damage begins, and the Committee unanimously agreed that moving forward with this proposal for \$875 thousand at Town Meeting is the plan. Ms. Carr added that the list of problems with the barn over the past twenty years is extensive, including water damage to the roof, foundation problems, decay and beetle infestation, and beams coming loose or detaching from the frame. Ms. Wells asked about the age of the roof and a discussion ensued among Committee members and Ms. Wells, concluding that the same shingles used on the barn had been used on some other buildings, and the shingle quality was poor.

Mr. Houston asked Mr. Cass to run some numbers to show an estimate of how a bond for this project might look, and Mr. Cass projected some rough figures. Discussion ensued among Mr. Houston, Mr. Cass, and Mr. Traum, regarding a possible Warrant Article and the potential impact on property taxes, and Mr. Houston indicated that it was owed to the people of Hopkinton to let voters decide if they want to put money into the barn. He also noted that, if the barn is torn down and not replaced, storage of everything kept in the barn will become the issue.

With regard to the financial aspect, Mr. Whitley asked about a possible time horizon for the proposed barn rehabilitation and Mr. LaCombe pointed out that if the Town moves forward with the stabilization project, which should take approximately four months and be completed before the end of next year, the Committee would need to work with the CIP Committee, to plan out budgeting and priorities related to the rehabilitation project.

Chair Dunlap inquired whether, if the voters did not support putting money into any of the barn projects, the Town would be able to store everything currently housed by the barn in open space that exists in other buildings around town. The consensus among Committee members was that the storage needs are far greater than the availability of alternative storage spaces around town; additionally, multiple storage spaces would present inconvenience for most of the groups using storage space at the barn.

Referencing an earlier question Mr. Donohoe posed, regarding the possibility of being able to build a 10,000 square foot storage building for \$1.2 million, Mr. Traum asked Mr. Donohoe to provide more details. Mr. Donohoe noted that he used a commercial cost estimating service that utilizes local multipliers, and he used the multiplier for Concord. Ms. Carr emphasized that the Committee's estimates from Milestone include demolition of the existing barn and the fire suppression system. A discussion regarding the details of building materials, size, and costs ensued between Mr. Donohoe and Mr. Feller. Chair Dunlap noted how much the barn is valued by the Committee members, and Ms. Wells added that if cost were not an issue, everyone would want to save the barn.

Focusing on other possible options, Ms. Wells and Mr. LaCombe discussed the feasibility of fundraising and exploring the idea of replacing the current roof with a new asphalt roof, then moving forward with rehabilitation of the barn, and possibly planning for a standing metal roof in the future. Adding that there has been public input on bringing a public gathering space for fine and performing arts, Ms. Wells suggested that the upper level of the barn might be an ideal building for such a venue. This topic was discussed further by Ms. Wells, Mr. LaCombe, and Mr. Houston, with Mr. LaCombe noting the differences in building codes, access, and lighting, but Mr. Houston emphasized that everything in their proposal would set up the barn so such a venue could be explored in the future.

Returning to the funding options and bringing this proposal to Town Meeting next year, Mr. Whitley mentioned the CIP increase coming in 2023, which will be nearly \$250 thousand more than 2022, and that ARPA funds may be another way of lowering the amount to be raised. More funding discussion ensued among the Board and Committee members, and Mr. Donohoe and Chair Dunlap emphasized that they thought the barn project would be ideal for ARPA funding.

Regarding the Budget Committee meeting this week, it was agreed that Mr. Traum would give a brief presentation of the Committee's proposal and most members of the Committee would be in attendance, in the event there may be any in-depth questions on the proposed barn project. With no further discussion or questions, the Board and the Committee exchanged thanks.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mr. Cass noted that the recommended Building and Planning fees, based on research results from multiple surrounding towns, have been submitted, as have the updated Refuse Disposal Ordinance and proposed new Transfer Station fees. After some discussion among the Board members and Mr. Cass, it was decided that these fees, updates, and ARPA fund acceptance would be presented at a Public Hearing later this month.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Regarding year-to-date financials, Mr. Cass noted that there have not been any changes, but he would be happy to answer any questions. There being no questions, Mr. Whitley asked if there were any updates from St. Methodios and Mr. Cass indicated they will be submitting a plan. Mr. Traum had some brief questions for Mr. Cass in preparation for the Budget Committee meeting.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:**

Mr. Cass announced that the last payment to the Tyler Bridge contractor has been made and the project came in \$11,329.00 under the estimated cost, and the bridge opened on time. In other good news, Mr. Cass noted he was excited to have received his NH Department of Transportation LPA (Local Public Agency) Certificate, which allows management of local DOT projects. Mr. Cass also noted that he met with HealthTrust last week, and that with a busy couple of weeks, today was the property tax due date.

**OTHER:**

Mr. Traum thanked Mr. Cass for all of his help in preparation for the Budget Committee meeting. The other Board members and Mr. Cass thanked Mr. Traum for all of his work, as well.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION IV-RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) Acquisition/Sale of Property

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

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

**MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:07 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:16 p.m.

These minutes were not sealed.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson  
Administrative/Assessing Assistant