



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, April 25, 2022
Approved**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Traum called this meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:31 p.m. on Monday, April 25, 2022. With the meeting being held at Town Hall, Mr. Traum introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

Members Present: Ken Traum; Steven Whitley; Thomas Lipoma; and Jeffrey Donohoe, via conference call

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator, and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant; Sam Currier, Superintendent of Water/Sewer; and Anna Wells, Economic Development Director

Public Present: Steve Bolles, Process Energy Services; Sharon Nall, NHDES; Bonnie Christie; Katherine Mitchell; Robert Clay; Norm Goupil; Ian Tewksbury; Michele Sarazin; and Shannon Greenwood

Before proceeding, a motion was made by Mr. Lipoma, and seconded by Mr. Whitley, to allow Mr. Donohoe to join the meeting remotely; this was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Thomas Lipoma	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

POINTS OF PRIDE:

Mr. Cass noted that, with the Town Clerk/Tax Collector still out of the office and the vacancy in the Finance Director position, everyone in the building, including Christine Johnson, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Pat LaPree, Assistant Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Karen Robertson, Planning Director; and Cara Johnson, Administrative/Assessing Assistant, has continued to step up to keep the offices running smoothly. He added that several departments beyond Town Hall, including the Highway, Police, and Transfer Station, are also understaffed, and commended the staff of all the departments for working so hard to keep everything operating well.

Mr. Traum added his thanks to Mr. Cass and all the Town staff for their efforts. He also thanked Bonnie Christie and all the residents who participated in the Earth Day cleanup on Saturday.

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 Mr. Lipoma.

**TOWN OF HOPKINTON - SELECT BOARD
CONSENT AGENDA
APRIL 25, 2022**

ITEM	DATE	ACTION	COMMENT
AP MANIFEST			
AP MANIFEST DATED - 4/25/2022 - CH #S 70564-70590	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$1,522,009.53
PAYROLL			
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$86,942.99
CHECKS: \$ 2,643.62			
DIRECT DEPOSIT: \$ 84,299.37			
INTENT TO CUT			
266-026-001 - 580 BROCKWAY RD - OP #22-227-02-T - OWEN	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
YIELD TAX			
208-088-000 - 1074 PINE ST - OP #21-227-01-T - WELDON	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$2,534.49
227-039-000 - 403 MAPLE ST - OP #21-227-06-T - RIVEREDGE PROPERTIES	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$9,627.12
256-017-000 - JEWETT RD - OP #21-227-22-T - S & M FOREST TRUST	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$2,041.66
258-011-000 & 258-012-000 - HOP RD & 1038 HOP RD - OP #21-227-24-T - BOCKIUS	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$4,879.49
ELDERLY EXEMPTION APPLICATIONS			
224-012-000 - 196 DEER PATH - CATE	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$170,000.00
224-025-000 - 16 TEBROK RD - MARTIN	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$170,000.00
SOLAR EXEMPTION APPLICATION			
259-005-000 - 641 ROLLINS RD - LOCKE/SCHOLL	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$10,000.00
VETERAN CREDIT APPLICATION			
224-012-000 - 196 DEER PATH - CATE	4/25/2022	APPROVE	\$500.00
OTHER			
BOAT AGENT TRAINING REQUEST TO DMV - DEP TC/TC - CHRISTINE JOHNSON	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - HUMAN SERV ADVIS COMM - NAN MCNICHOLAS	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - HUMAN SERV ADVIS COMM - MARCIA SHELL	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE - HUMAN SERV ADVIS COMM - LUKE SIMON	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
RIGHT TO BURY #1178 (VOID #1176) - OLD HOPKINTON - GN-2-1 - FRIBERG	4/25/2022	APPROVE	
PERSONNEL ACTION FORM - NEW HIRE - TEMP SEASONAL - GINA SIMPKINS	4/25/2022	APPROVE	

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum Yes
 Steven Whitley Yes
 Jeffrey Donohoe Yes
 Thomas Lipoma Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, April 11, 2022. Mr. Lipoma made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of April 11, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes
Thomas Lipoma	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board reviewed the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of Monday, April 11, 2022. Mr. Whitley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Traum, to approve the sealed Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of April 11, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Thomas Lipoma	Yes
Jeffrey Donohoe	Abstain

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS:

I. After introducing himself and Sharon Nall, of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES), Steve Bolles, of Process Energy Services, presented a positive review of the Contoocook Village Precinct water treatment plant and booster station, based on last December's energy audit. He noted that the Contoocook Village Precinct is very good, in comparison with other New Hampshire water systems, saying that the only recommendation is the fine tuning of thermostats. He highlighted that it is excellent for a system so small to be operating this efficiently, and commended Sam Currier, Superintendent of Water/Sewer, adding that he is doing a great job of running the water system. Mr. Traum requested that this information be shared with the Commissioners of the Contoocook Village Precinct.

Regarding the energy audit of the Hopkinton wastewater treatment plant and collection system, Mr. Bolles noted that, although it is not running quite as efficiently as the water system, it is still well ranked, in comparison to other similar systems. He added that, if the recommendations are implemented, the numbers will improve and a higher efficiency ranking will be achieved. He pointed out that Mr. Currier, who was hired in early 2020, took the initiative to lower the speed of the blower, which had previously been set at high. Other recommendations were primarily related to thermostat settings and replacements, and Mr. Bolles noted that these taking these steps would improve efficiency. Turning to the recommendation of the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, he highlighted the savings seen by Warner, whose solar array is larger, but is a good example for a similar system in Hopkinton. He added that a system in Hopkinton could be close to net zero, at about a 16-year payback.

Moving to funding opportunities, Ms. Nall highlighted that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were coming in, and that any municipalities that had put in a pre-application for energy implementation last year had received a 100 percent grant. She added that the pre-application deadline this year is June 1, for drinking water and wastewater treatment, and even the lowest amount she would foresee would be a 50 percent loan forgiveness. The Board members asked for clarification of the pre-application process, confirmed that submitting the pre-application is not a commitment, and noted that they looked forward to a review of the pre-application in the near

future. There being no further comments or questions, the Board, Ms. Nall, and Mr. Bolles exchanged thanks.

II. As Shannon Greenwood, the second public appointment of the evening, had not arrived, Mr. Traum asked if there were any public comments in favor of the Ms. Greenwood's request for a building permit on a Class VI road. There being no comments in favor, Mr. Traum asked if the Board had any input. After a brief discussion confirming that the Planning Board must submit their comments to the Select Board prior to the Select Board making any decisions, Mr. Traum asked again if there were any public comments.

Bonnie Christie, address not provided, asked for clarification on the exact nature of Ms. Greenwood's application and Mr. Traum stated that it is for a building permit on the Class VI portion of Bound Tree Road, with Mr. Whitley adding that the request does not pertain to reclassification of the road.

Norm Goupil, of 121 Amesbury Road, asked if this method of approval could have a potentially different outcome than the approach to approval discussed and voted on at Town Meeting. Mr. Whitley responded that, while the potential outcome is the same, in that Ms. Greenwood is requesting to have a single-family home built, this approach, if approved, would mean the section of road adjacent to Ms. Greenwood's lot would remain Class VI, and the Town would not have any responsibility for it. Mr. Goupil also asked about the possible precedent this approach could set for others to seek permits for building homes on Class VI roads.

Katherine Mitchell, of 1677 Bound Tree Road, echoed Mr. Goupil's concern about the precedent possible approval of this request may set, and also stated that she believes it was voted down at Town Meeting because people do not want development on Class VI roads. She referred to a recent Select Board meeting at which a resident spoke of a similar desire, which included potentially subdividing his property, to include up to three new lots, which are currently adjacent to a Class VI road. Ms. Mitchell is concerned that if Ms. Greenwood's permit is approved, it may lead to development on land adjacent to Class VI roads throughout the town.

Mr. Goupil asked about the presence of fire hydrants along Bound Tree Road, so Mr. Currier, the Superintendent of Water/Sewer, responded that the hydrants are a requirement of the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES), for the Contoocook Village Precinct's access to water lines for water movement, scouring, and system maintenance, not for residential connectivity.

With no further comments or questions, Mr. Traum made note that the Select Board would request comments from the Planning Board and Department of Public Works, in order to make a decision on Ms. Greenwood's request.

(After misunderstanding the time of her appointment, Ms. Greenwood arrived during the Public Forum section of the meeting, and the Board provided her with a synopsis of the discussion that was held during her Public Appointment time.)

OLD BUSINESS:

Regarding the tour of the Park Avenue barn on April 11, for which the owners are seeking a Barn Preservation Easement, the Board discussed the criteria for the evaluation form, ranking it in the

following areas: scenic quality of structure; public access/participation in enjoyment; historical importance on a local, regional, or national level, individually or as part of a historic area; condition of the structure; and public benefit to be obtained versus the tax revenue lost if an easement is granted. The Board discussed the public benefit if an easement were to be granted, pointing out that one of the property owners intends to take blacksmithing courses and open the barn to the public to view active blacksmithing. It was noted that Jeff Yale, Chief of the Hopkinton Fire Department, would be involved in the renovation project, as the barn is not safe at this time. After reviewing the specifics for a Barn Preservation Easement, the Board agreed that they would sign the paperwork at their next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

I. Regarding the Budget Committee update, Mr. Traum announced that the Committee had met recently, and that Mark Zankel will continue as Chair for the Committee, with Jonathan Cohen as Vice Chair, and he noted that the next meeting will be August 10. A brief discussion ensued among Board members and Mr. Cass, regarding the Budget Committee's request for an in-depth report on improvements that could be made at the Transfer Station. It was decided that such a report would be best if provided by the Hopkinton-Webster Refuse Disposal Committee, with a goal of report submission to the Budget Committee sometime around late summer. Mr. Traum reported that the Committee had a discussion regarding whether any new homes being built may have an impact on the tax rate, but their discussion was inconclusive. He also noted that there was a question raised by a member of the Committee related to tax incentive programs for residents making major improvements to their properties, and Mr. Whitley and Mr. Wells confirmed that there are existing programs related to such improvements for properties located within the villages.

II. Moving to the Warner River Local Advisory Committee, Mr. Cass announced that there had been a resignation by a Committee member, so there is an opening for a new member. After a brief discussion of the appointment process, it was agreed that the opening should be posted on the website. Mr. Whitley requested that the Planning Board and Conservation Commission be asked if any of their members may be interested in this position.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Regarding the Blackford property, Mr. Cass shared that the Town is waiting to receive the deed to be able to move forward with the sale. He noted that the initial engineering estimates had come in for the work that still needs to be done on the Tyler Bridge, and a proposal will likely be presented at the next Board meeting. He announced that there have been five applications submitted for the Finance Director position, that he is pleased with the applicants, and that he and Joel Moyer, the Town Treasurer, will begin interviewing next week. Mr. Cass noted that he has been managing the accounts payable and an MRI representative has assisted with payroll, so the financials are moving forward in the interim. After a brief discussion among Board members and Mr. Cass, it was decided that the Board will make any hiring decisions based on the recommendations of Mr. Cass and Mr. Moyer.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Ian Tewksbury, of Irish Hill Road, noted that, like so many municipalities, Hopkinton has a number of staff vacancies, and his hope is that the Town will consider paying more competitive wages, to help retain current employees and attract applicants with more experience to open positions, which he believes will ultimately be more cost effective. He also expressed concern for long-time residents who may be struggling to pay their property taxes, and suggested that the Town consider raising the exemption amounts for those who benefit from the elderly property tax exemption.

Michele Sarazin, of 75 Cressy Brook Road, noted concern over her observations at the Contoocook Village Cemetery and her interaction with some representatives of Hopkinton's cemeteries. She added that she would like the Cemetery Trustees and Sexton to consider scheduling their meetings in the evening. The Board let Ms. Sarazin know that the Cemetery Trustees are elected by the residents of Hopkinton and not overseen by the Select Board.

OTHER:

Mr. Traum asked if there is an update on the Horseshoe Tavern and Mr. Cass replied that it is awaiting a new surveyor. After a brief discussion among the Board members, Mr. Cass, Mr. Goupil, and Ms. Wells, regarding field maintenance, it was decided that the updated Field Use Policy covered this information.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION I-RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) Reputation

Mr. Lipoma moved to go into a non-public session to discuss an issue which could affect the reputation of someone other than a Board member under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (c). Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Thomas Lipoma	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 6:50 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:10 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Mr. Whitley 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. Lipoma seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ken Traum	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Thomas Lipoma	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Administrative/Assessing Assistant