



Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

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**SELECT BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Monday, February 3, 2020
Approve February 18, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman O'Brien called this regular meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2020, in the Dunlap Room at the Town Hall. Chairman O'Brien introduced the members of the Board.

Members Present: Jim O'Brien, Ken Traum, Steven Whitley and Anna Wells. Sabrina Dunlap arrived at 5:36 pm

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator, and Robin Buchanan, Administrative Assessing Assistant.

Public Present: Janet Krzyzaniak, Rob Knight, Digit Taylor, Bonnie Christie, Steve Lux, Jr. and John Millette.

Steve Lux, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

POINTS OF PRIDE:

Mr. Cass noted the staff at the Transfer Station, stating that they work through all kinds of weather, and they are open on some holidays as well. He further noted that they are currently short staffed, but have stepped up to make sure that things are done.

Mr. Traum stated he read an article in which Hopkinton was listed as the 7th safest town in New Hampshire. He further noted that there were no violent acts committed in 2019. He thanked the Hopkinton Police Department, as well as the residents for looking out for one another.

ADMINISTRATIVE

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

Consent Agenda 02-03-2020

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANIFEST

\$439,647.89
\$1,470,548.52

PAYROLL MANIFEST

\$76,961.30

BUILDING PERMITS

Forever Metal Roof Co. 381 Brockway Map 256 Lot 27 steel roof system
James Mattes 1279 Hopkinton Rd Map 258 Lot 70 Renovations, dormer
Stephen Reed 103 Hedgerose Ln Map 264 Lot 10 Renovations
George Sharpe 147 Galloping Hill Map 212 Lot 9 Renovations

TRANSFER OF FUNDS

Sewer Fund 200 Account to General Fund \$2,196.00

Elderly Exemption

Sandra Hunt 136 Tucker Dr Map 219 Lot 3

Veteran's Credit

Sandra Hunt spouse 136 Tucker Dr Map 219 Lot 3
John Millette 451 Broad Cove Rd Map 247 Lot 8
Beth Reid 84 Main Street Map 106 Lot 51

Personnel Action Form

Samuel Currier DPW hire as full time employee

ELDERLY DEFERRAL

Gaskill- initial change in amount from \$6,050. to \$4,706.

ABATEMENTS

Michael & Rebecka Standefer Map 221-115-002
David & Kathleen Barter Map 245-038-000

Yield Tax

Adam Bates Map 222 Lot 55 \$1,733.32

The Board reviewed the Select Board Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wells, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020. There was one correction, page 7, Public Hearing Date should be February 18, 2020.

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

The Board reviewed the Non Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020, Session I. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wells, to approve the Non Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020, Session I. These minutes were not sealed.

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

The Board reviewed the Non Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020, Session II Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wells, to approve the Non Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 21, 2020, Session II. These minutes were not sealed.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Property Tax Exemption Review:

Mr. Traum stated that he informed the Budget Committee of the Select Board decision to propose an increase to the Elderly Exemption at Town Meeting. He noted that the Budget Committee expressed appreciation to the Select Board for reviewing the exemption.

Mr. Cass explained the current Elderly Exemption noting the income and asset levels that are in place, as the amount of the exemption, is based on age. Mrs. Wells inquired if income levels were the issue. Mr. Cass replied no it is more the asset limits that often are the reason for denial. Discussion ensued, with regards to the amount and ranges allowed. Mr. Cass noted that the amount can be changed on the floor at Town Meeting. Mr. Traum inquired as to when it would become effective. Mr. Cass replied at the start of the new tax year, April 1, 2020.

Mr. Traum made a motion to accept the proposed income and assets limits, as well as the new exemption amounts as follows: income limits for single person: \$40,000, married: \$50,000; assets limits \$150,000 and exemption amounts as follows: age 65-74 \$120,000, age 75-79 \$145,000 and age 80+ \$175,000. The exemption amount is deducted from the value of the home before any tax is assessed. Mrs. Wells seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Cass stated the Disabled Exemption would be a new exemption for the Town. The proposed exemption would be at \$100,000 and only those on Title II and Title XVI of the Social Security

Act for benefits to the disabled would qualify. Mr. Cass also noted it would mirror the Elderly Exemption in assets. Discussion ensued, with regards to amounts and the unknown tax impact on the town. The Board asked Mr. Cass to find out how many people Bow, and Henniker have their on the Disabled Exemption.

Mr. Traum made a motion to accept the proposed Disabled Exemption with the following income levels and asset limits to mirror the Elderly Exemption, income limit single: \$40,000, married: \$50,000 and asset limits at \$150,000. Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

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

APPOINTMENTS:

Signing of the Beyer Conservation Easement: Digit Taylor and Rob Knight from the Conservation Commission spoke about the Conservation Easement on an unimproved piece of land about 14.2 acres in size situated on Old Henniker Road, Map 238 Lot 80. Ms. Taylor stated that they have been working on this with the Audubon Society of NH, noting there was a delay, due to the Conservation Commission conducting a small timber harvest before the Easement went through.

Mr. Traum made a motion to accept the language in the Conservation Easement with the Audubon Society of NH for a 14.2 acre, owned by the Town of Hopkinton, located on Old Henniker Road. Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

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

OLD BUSINESS (continued):

Solar Exemption: Discussion ensued with regards to net metered and group net metered, noting that if the Town wanted to make a change on the amount, we need to consider RSA 72:61 II, which states if a municipal adopts or re-adopts the exemption under RSA 72:62 on or after January 1, 2020, "solar energy system" means, in addition to the definition in paragraph I, a system which utilizes solar energy to produce electricity for a building and includes all photovoltaics, inverters, and storage. Systems may be off grid or connected to the grid in a net metered or group net metered arrangement pursuant to RSA 362-A:9 or in a direct retail sale arrangement purchase to RSA 363-A:2-a. Discussion also ensued, with regards to the cost of a solar system for a single family home, and what constitutes a "re-adoption" of the solar exemption. Mr. Cass will check into the Board's concerns and will have it on the next agenda.

Assessment Contract: Mr. Cass stated the assessing contract with the current vendor, has been reviewed by Town Counsel and the Department of Revenue.

Mr. Whitley made a motion to approve the Assessing Contact as written. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

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

Correspondence Review: Chairman O'Brien stated that at the last meeting we had a request to answer several questions from Rita Blanchard with regards to the Hopkinton Rescue Squad. The Board looked over the letter, had some additional language to add, made some changes and corrections. Mr. Cass will make the changes and corrections and have the letter ready for the Board to sign on Primary Day, Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS:

Budget Committee Update: Mr. Traum stated that he presented the Town Budget to the Budget Committee including a \$2.2 million bond for the roads. He further stated that he hoped all the Board members could make it to the Public Hearing on the Budget on February 12, 2020.

NH Primary, Tuesday, February 11, 2020: Mr. Cass reminded the Board that election day is Tuesday, February 11, 2020. All of the Board members indicated they would be there most of the day.

Potential Abandoned Property: Mr. Cass stated there is an abandoned property at Deer Meadows Park. The owner of Deer Meadows would like to negotiate with regards to the back taxes that are due, so that he can take ownership of the property, rehab it and then sell it. Mr. Cass noted that the property is currently under lien and there is one year to go before we could take the home. No decision was made at this time.

Bonnie Christie was in with regards to becoming a volunteer to serve on the NHMA committee for Infrastructure, Development and Land Use, which she stated would directly benefit Hopkinton and is looking for support from the Board. She noted that she would work closely with Sabrina Dunlap, who is the Select Board's representative on the Waste Reduction Committee. Chairman O'Brien stated he would be happy to send an e-mail to NHMA and he will cc Ms. Christie on it. The Board thanked her for her willingness to serve.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Mr. Cass informed the Board that a Cease and Desist Order has been sent out to TAAG Home Improvement, with regards to property located at 1363 Hopkinton Road.

Mr. Cass noted a PAF on the Consent Agenda is to hire Sam Currier, as Superintendent of Water and Sewer. Mr. Currier is certified Class 2 for Water Distribution and Sewer. Mr. Cass noted that we had three very good candidates for the position. Mr. Currier's start date is Monday, February 10, 2020. It was noted that this is a joint position with the CVP which will be paying part of Mr. Currier salary.

Mr. Cass announced that Garrett Hoyt will be retiring around April 1, 2020. He will continue to do part time work. Mr. Cass noted that Mr. Hoyt has knowledge that cannot be replaced.

Mr. Cass also noted that Dan Blanchette, Director of Public Works, has concerns about the snowmobiles using the sidewalk as proposed by Sean Weldon last week.

Mr. Cass noted that we have received two petition warrant articles. He stated one is for SB2. He noted that the petitioner also had one for the school. Discussion ensued with regards to a joint public hearing, however, after discussion, it was obvious that a joint meeting would not work because of different deadlines.

Mr. Cass stated the other petition warrant article is a NH Resolution for Fair Districting.

PUBLIC FORUM:

John Millette stated he has just moved to town and would like to get on the agenda to discuss increasing the veteran's credit. Chairman O'Brien stated that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 and that Mr. Millette should put his request in writing.

OTHER:

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

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

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

The Board and the Town Administrator entered into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:15 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:18 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Ms. Wells moved to seal the minutes of the just completed nonpublic session because it was determined that divulgence of this information could make the action ineffective. Ms. Dunlap seconded the motion.

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

NON-PUBLIC SESSION I-RSA 91-A: 3 III (a-d) To Review Sealed Non-public Minutes

Ms. Dunlap moved to go into a non-public session to review sealed non-public minutes to consider them to be made public under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (a-d). Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:18 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:41 p.m.

These minutes were not sealed.

UNSEALING OF NONPUBLIC MINUTES

Ms. Dunlap moved to unseal the following previously sealed nonpublic minutes because the reason for sealing the minutes no longer exists. Ms. Wells seconded the motion.

January 11, 2000	February 2, 2000	February 29, 2000
March 7, 2000	April 18, 2000	May 10, 2000
June 7, 2000	August 30, 2000	September 6, 2000
October 18, 2000	October 25, 2000	November 1, 2000
November 8, 2000	November 22, 2000	December 6, 2000
December 20, 2000		

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

NON-PUBLIC SESSION IV-RSA 91-A: 3 IV (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). Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:43 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 8:35 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Ms. Wells moved to seal the minutes of the just completed nonpublic session because it was determined that divulgence of this information could make the action ineffective. Ms. Dunlap seconded the motion.

VOTE: Select Board Members O'Brien, Traum, Dunlap, Whitley, and Wells voted in favor, and the Chair declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Select Board Meeting, February 3, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan
Administrative Assessing Assistant