



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, July 19, 2021

Approved August 2, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sabrina Dunlap called this regular meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 19, 2021, being held in-person at the Town Hall and via Zoom. Chair Dunlap introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap, Ken Traum, Steven Whitley and Anna Wells (arriving at 5:42 pm) in person, and Jeffrey S. Donohoe, via phone.

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

Public Present: NH State Senator Becky Whitley, Jackson Whitley, Leigh Bossie and Sharon Sommers, Esquire via zoom.

Chair Dunlap made a motion to allow Jeffrey S. Donohoe to join the meeting via phone. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes

Ken Traum Yes

Steven Whitley Yes

Anna Wells Yes

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

POINTS OF PRIDE:

Mr. Cass wanted to thank Police Chief Steve Pecora for the tour that he gave the Select Board on Tuesday, July 13, 2021. He noted that it was an impressive tour.

Mr. Cass also wanted to thank the Highway Department for all the ditching and culvert replacements. He also thanked them for responding recently to a beaver dam backup, due to the recent storm on Saturday, July 17, 2021.

Mr. Traum also commented about the great tour the Select Board had of the Police Department. He also noted how organized and immaculate the station was and that reflects on the way he runs his department.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

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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
Consent Agenda

19-Jul-21

PAYROLL MANIFEST \$94,560.84
cks 34136-34146- \$6,955.17 direct dep: \$87,607.37

ACCOUNT PAYABLE
cks 66584-66599 \$55,162.65
cks 66561-66583 \$153,505.99

PERSONNEL ACTION FORMS
Recreation Hire seasonal employee
Fire Department -New employee part time

PROPERTY TAX CREDIT/EXEMPTIONS
Veteran's Credit 371 Putney Hill Rd \$500.00

Yield Tax
Map 253 Lots 033 & 037 \$3,049.55

ABATEMENTS
Map 223 Lot 025 Hardship abatement \$388.00
Map 208 Lot 003-D23 removed camper prior 4/1/21 \$51.00
Map 253 Lots 033 & 037 error in amount reported
(rebilled) \$8,560.92
Map 228 Lots 041 & 043 incorrect address in software \$64.66

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

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The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, July 6, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

The Board reviewed the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of Monday, July 6, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021. Chair Dunlap noted the minutes were sealed.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, July 7, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2021, noting that the time the meeting ended needed to be corrected. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Jeffrey S. Donohoe	Yes
Steven Whitley	Abstaining

MOTION PASSED: 4-1-0

The Board reviewed the Public Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, July 13, 2021. Mr. Traum made a motion, seconded by Chair Dunlap to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of July 13, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS:

Senator Becky Whitley re: Legislative Update:

Senator Whitley was in to give the Board a legislative update. Senator Whitley noted that she is a senator for District 15, which includes Hopkinton, Henniker, Warner and Concord. She currently is on two (2) committees; the Judiciary Committee, involving criminal justice reform, and the Health and Human Services Committee. Senator Whitley also serves on a joint committee of the house and senate, which hears every single rule that goes through for state agencies. She also noted it is a place for public input. Senator Whitley stated that a lot of voting bills went through the legislature, however, she noted none of the Democrat priorities made it and, in her opinion, some of the priorities are restricting access to voting. Senator Whitley noted House Bills, including HB 108 relative to attorney-client privilege, HB 315 relative to the aggregation of electric customers and municipal host customers, HB 71 relative to school district emergency meetings and HB 98 relative to the date of the state primary elections. Senator Whitley noted HB1 & HB2, which are relative to the budget, noting that there were some very controversial policies this year in the areas of education, women's health and working families, and voting restrictions. She noted it was a very partisan bill, with no democrats signing off on the bill in the senate. She also noted that as the budget goes through its process, the projected revenue increase and between the governor's budget and the senate receiving it, the budget writers had more resources at their disposal. However, she further noted, that they chose to give tax breaks to the wealthiest granite staters, our large out of state corporations and into the rainy day fund. They did nothing for strengthening the state's education funding or making meaningful relief for working families. Senator Whitley noted that with regards to municipal funding, she noted a reduction in funding for the rooms and meals. She further noted there is a \$15.6 million state grant sag that for 160 previously approved water pollution control projects, which will affect 56 communities. Senator Whitley noted that there will a reduction in the highway block grant, but bridge aid will remain the same as in the current budget. She also noted a new fund, which she is hoping to speak to Police Chief Steve Pecora about, which is a matching fund grant to either purchase or replace body cameras or dashboard cameras, which was part of the police reform. Senator Whitley stated that she did not vote for this budget, because the tax reductions substantially reduce the revenues. She also noted a phase out of the interest and dividends tax by 2027. Senator Whitley stated that this budget falls far short of meeting New Hampshire's funding needs. She noted the creation of a school funding commission, that created a bipartisan and well-researched report, which costs a half a million dollars, that had recommendations for education funding, however, they were not all addressed in this budget. She noted that this budget spends less on adequacy to local communities, so that one in four will receive less state education aid. She noted that it would be about \$4,000 for each student, when it costs school districts about \$17,000 to educate each student. Senator Whitley also noted that a school voucher bill that will allow the diversion of funds for private religious and school programs for education freedom accounts for families that earn less than 300 percent or less of the federal poverty guidelines, which would be \$79,500 for a family of four. Senator Whitley stated we do not know how much this will actually cost because no analysis of cost was done. Senator Whitley stated it does not fund education adequacy and although they had the resources and the opportunity to address, they chose instead tax breaks for the wealthy and large corporations. She noted there is a ban on teaching and training on systemic racism, sexism, ableism, and other so-called divisive concepts. She noted the other is an abortion ban; New Hampshire's first, its extreme in nature, as there is no exception for fatal fetus diagnosis.

Senator Whitley noted that one of her bills, HB157, which preserved funding for children's mental health from the last biennium and then increased funding and funded some positions in the contracting units. She also noted the creation of a new fund, called Save Our Granite Stages, which creates a new fund with federal discretionary relief dollars for those very small venues that weren't able to get

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federal funding through the federal safer stage. Lastly, Senator Whitley noted they created the snap health incentive program where people who are beneficiaries of snap can now get a dollar for dollar match for fresh fruits and vegetables, with an emphasis on locally grown, at participating farmer's markets, farm stands, mobile markets, community supported agriculture sites, grocery stores, or other participating direct food retailers.

Senator Whitley also noted that there is less for childcare scholarships. This program was to help families that needed it for childcare, so now there is less money in the fund. She further noted that there was a Medicaid dental benefit, which would have an impact on the health of our entire population, but the House took it out. Senator Whitley thanked the Board for their time and asked if there were any questions or concerns.

Mr. Traum inquired if any of the changes in the elections or voting would result in an unfunded mandate on the town. Senator Whitley noted that we are putting more and more work on our town clerks, with checking licenses. She noted a new bill, which if you did not have a license, the town clerk will be required to take a picture and that requirement could cause an unfunded mandate. Mr. Traum also inquired if she would be presenting the education portion to the School Board. Senator Whitley replied yes. The Board thanked Senator Whitley for all her work this session and for the updates.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tyler Bridge Bids: Mr. Cass noted that the news was not good. He noted that both bids came in over budget. He stated that after speaking with Dan Blanchette, Director of Public Works, and the engineer, it was decided the best thing to do was to reject both bids. Discussions ensued with regards to options that Hoyle and Tanner presented in a letter addressed to Mr. Cass. Mr. Traum made a motion to not accept the bids from Neil H. Daniels, Inc. and E.D. Swett. Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

Mr. Cass will gather more information on the two (2) options that were provided by Hoyle and Tanner.

NEW BUSINESS:

YTD Financials Review: Mr. Cass noted that the revenues look good. With regards to expenses, he noted that the legal line was under budgeted, and that line is now over budget, planning is currently running overdue to a change in personnel. He also noted an overage in the Cemeteries, which the trust will reimburse to the Town. With regards to Solid Waste, Mr. Cass noted there was additional testing beyond what was expected for this year, and Welfare Vendors will likely exceed the budget, but any overage will be reimbursed by the Human Service Trust Fund.

With regards to Debt Principal and Interest, Mr. Cass stated that the line is over budget by \$106,194. He noted that during the refinance, the Bond Bank anticipated using budgeted funds as part of the payoff for the previous road bond. The regular payment of \$106,981.28 for the previous road bond

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was paid in January and then the actual payoff happened in February. The regular payment was not included in the budget causing the overage.

Mr. Cass noted that the following items are due to timing and will most likely fall within the budgeted amount by the end of the year: IT Services, Finance, Assessor, Personnel and CAP.

Mr. Traum inquired if St. Methodios had paid their PILOT yet. Mr. Cass answered no. It was noted that it has not been paid for two (2) years.

Jones Lien Abatement Request:

Mr. Cass noted that the Board should have all the information. He noted Mr. & Mrs. Jones are requesting an abatement on their water bill, because they stated they did not receive the bill, however, also in the packet are signed certified confirmation of delivery slips, showing that they signed for the mail. Discussion ensued, with regards to the signed certified slips, notes that the Town Clerk kept when discussing the matter with the residents, the lien process and the process for notification of liens. It was noted that the notices were sent by certified mail three (3) times and were signed for all three times. Discussion ensued, with regards to the letter from the Jones and the process of interest and penalties for bills left unpaid.

Mr. Donohoe made a motion, seconded by Mr. Whitley to deny the abatement request.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	No
Ken Traum	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Jeffrey S. Donohoe	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED: 4-1

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

OTHER:

PUBLIC FORUM:

NON-PUBLIC SESSION I-RSA 91-A: 3 II (l) Legal Advice

Ms. Dunlap moved to go into a non-public session to meet with Town Counsel under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (l). Mr. Traum 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, Town Counsel Sharon Somers, and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 6:46 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:15 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 make the action ineffective. 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.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION II-RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) Leasing 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.

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 7:15 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:25 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 make the action ineffective. 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.

Mr. Donohoe and Mr. Whitley left the meeting.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION III-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). Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
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Ken Traum	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:25 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:46 p.m.

The minutes were not sealed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan
Administrative Assessing Assistant