



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, June 7, 2021
Approved June 21, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sabrina Dunlap called this regular meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, June 7, 2021, being held in-person at the Slusser Center and via Zoom. Chair Dunlap introduced the members of the Board.

Select Board

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

Staff Present: Neal Cass, Town Administrator, Karen Robertson, Planning and Zoning, and Robin Buchanan, Administrative Assessing Assistant.

Public Present: Norm Goupil, in-person, Bob Matteo, Greg Sagris and Bob Lapree, through video conference.

POINTS OF PRIDE:

Chair Dunlap thanked Mr. Cass for doing all of the prep work and set up for tonight's meeting.

Mr. Traum recognized Rob Dapice for organizing the Memorial Day Ceremony and Juan Garcia for speaking at the Ceremony.

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.

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Consent Agenda

June 7, 2021

<u>Item</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Comment</u>
PAYROLL MANIFESTS			
PPE 6/5/2021	6/7/2021	Approve	Checks-\$2,387.81 Direct Deposit-\$79,928.61 Total-\$82,316.42
AP MANIFEST			
CH# 66312-66341	6/7/2021	Approve	\$48,635.53
FUND TRANSFERS			
From Sewer Fund to Operating Fund-April	6/7/2021	Approve	\$15,543.41

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From Sewer Fund to Operating Fund-May	6/7/2021	Approve	\$11,406.50
PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION/CREDIT			
266-034-000	6/7/2021	Approve	Veteran's Credit - \$500.00
240-003-000	6/7/2021	Approve	Veteran's Credit - \$500.00
240-040-000	6/7/2021	Approve	Veteran's Credit - \$500.00
225-115-000			Elderly - \$120,000 Exemption
PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT			
Town Wide - PSNH	6/7/2021	Approve	\$59,002.85 per agreement
266-034-000	6/7/2021	Approve	\$250.00
101-025-000-per BTLA Settlement	5/24/2021	Approve	\$9,041.20
208-003-D16	6/7/2021	Approve	\$107.00 - Camper removed
INTENT TO CUT			
211-014-000 & 211-019-000	6/7/2021	Approve	Country Club Road
TIMBER TAX WARRANT			
253-003-000 & 253-037-000	6/7/2021	Approve	\$8,560.92
AP MANIFEST APPROVED SINCE LAST MEETING			
CH # 66276-66311	6/1/2021	Approved	\$1,416,085.92
BUILDING PERMITS APPROVED SINCE LAST MEETING			
104-088-000 95 Woodwells Garrison	6/1/2021	Approved	Remodel kitchen
105-018-000 112 Old Henniker Road	6/1/2021	Approved	Above ground pool and deck
265-016-000 845 Upper Straw Road	6/1/2021	Approved	Alter cell tower equipment
223-002-003 32 Granite Valley	6/1/2021	Approved	Construct detached garage

The Board reviewed the Public Hearing Minutes of Monday, May 24, 2021. Chair Dunlap noted a correction under the Mask Ordinance section. She stated that Mr. Traum made the statement about the school policy, and she stated that the state epidemiologist had not changed his recommendations on indoor mask wearing and still recommended it. Mr. Traum made a motion to approve the Public Hearing Minutes of May 24, 2021. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion.

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

The Board reviewed the Non Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, May 24, 2021, Session I. Mr. Traum made a motion to approve the Non-Public Select Board Minutes of May 24, 2021, Session I. Mr. Traum noted that the minutes are sealed. Mr. Wells seconded the motion.

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

The Board reviewed the Non Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, May 24, 2021, Session II. Mr. Traum made a motion to approve the Non-Public Select Board Minutes of May 24, 2021, Session II. Mr. Traum noted that the minutes are not sealed. Mrs. Wells seconded the motion.

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

The Board reviewed the Non Public Select Board Meeting Minutes of Monday, May 24, 2021, Session III. Mr. Traum made a motion to approve the Non-Public Select Board Minutes of May 24, 2021, Session III. Mr. Traum noted that the minutes sealed. Mrs. Wells seconded the motion.

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

APPOINTMENTS:

Karen Robertson Re: Approval of Building Permits:

Mrs. Robertson was in to discuss a new approach to approving building permits in hopes of streamlining the process, saving time and money for both homeowners and the contractors. She noted that it would give the Planning/Building Department the authority to issue or deny permits when required. Mrs. Robertson noted that it would reduce unnecessary delays and costs. Discussion ensued, with regards to the process and combining inspections. Mr. Donohoe stated that it is a great idea, however, he has concerns about contractors that have previous violations. He inquired if there is a process to ensure those violations are not repeated. Mr. Whitley agreed this was a good idea and brought up the possibility of performance bonds. Discussion ensued, with regards to performance bond and its impact on requiring it for all building projects. Chair Dunlap stated that if there are previous violations, we should be requiring a performance bond. Mrs. Robertson noted that Bob Pike, is the new Building Inspector and is a great asset to the community.

Mr. Whitley made a motion authorizing the Planning Board Director and the Building Inspector to have the authority to approve or deny building permits. Mrs. Wells seconded the motion.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

In Person Meetings: Discussion ensued, with regards to meetings at the Town Hall in-person. Mr. Cass noted that it is a lot of work to do the set up and take down at the Slusser Center. Mrs. Wells stated that she would like to see the zoom option for meetings to continue. Mr. Whitley agreed stating that the residents like it.

Department Visits: Mr. Cass noted that the last time the Board visited each Department the visits were at separate times. Discussion ensued with regards to which day and time would work best for the Board. They agreed to begin the visits on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, and every other Tuesday until they are finished visiting all of the departments.

Mask Ordinance Review:

Chair Dunlap stated we are about two (2) weeks away from July 1, 2021, when the ordinance is due to expire. She noted that the state epidemiologist is still recommending wearing a mask. She is not in favor of rescinding the ordinance. She noted there is no benefit to rescinding. Mr. Donohoe stated that that all the numbers are going down and getting better. He noted that other towns and cities in

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Merrimack County have rescinded their mask ordinances. He noted that people should be able to make their own choice whether to wear a mask or not. He stated he thought the Board was overstepping with the ordinance and is continuing to overstep. Chair Dunlap noted that there is still moderate transmission in Merrimack County, but acknowledged that the numbers are trending down. Mr. Whitley agreed, noting that the more people that are vaccinated, the numbers will continue to go down. He understands that it is inconvenient, and that people are upset, but it is for their benefit to continue wearing masks. Discussion ensued with regards to continuing the mandate. Mr. Traum stated that two (2) weeks ago, he agreed with the mask ordinance, however, the numbers are going down, and other towns are dropping their mandates. He noted that some people will not or cannot get vaccinated. He inquired; how long do we wait? He stated he agrees with Mr. Donohoe. Chair Dunlap stated that we should continue to follow the recommendations of the state epidemiologist. Mrs. Wells stated that the NH Medical Society recommends that masks be worn indoors until vaccination levels are at 70%. We are still transmitting at a moderate level. We need to listen to the public health officials. Chair Dunlap, noting Mr. Donohoe's statement that the Board overstepped, stated that the Select Board is tasked with public health, and lowering the risk. She further stated that this is what local government is for.

At this time, Chair Dunlap opened the floor for public comment.

Gregory Sagris, 32 Granite Valley, stated that it is not easy for an employee to work an eight (8) hour shift in a restaurant wearing a mask the whole time. It is very difficult.

Rita Blanchard, Barton Corner Road, agreed with Mr. Sagris. She noted that recently the hot days at school, when it was too hot for recess, so the students did not get an outdoor break that day, therefore, wearing masks all day. Mrs. Blanchard inquired where Mrs. Wells was getting her information on COVID. Mrs. Wells replied at [COVID19nh.gov/dashboard](https://www.covid19nh.gov/dashboard).

Norm Goupil, 121 Amesbury Road, stated that as a parent, he is okay with the mask ordinance.

Bob Matteo, Park Avenue, stated that during the meeting it was very difficult to hear the Board. He noted he could clearly hear everyone that spoke that was attending by zoom. He stated he would like the mandate dropped as soon as possible.

Mrs. Wells noted that employees do not have to wear their masks when away from the public.

Mr. Donohoe made a motion to rescind the mask ordinance. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

VOTE: Traum, Donohoe voting in favor of the motion; Dunlap, Wells and Whitley votds against; MOTION FAILED 2-3.

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:

Mr. Cass stated that a Community Power meeting will be held on Monday, June 28, 2021, at 2:00 pm.

Mr. Cass stated that he is working on the Alcohol Policy. He noted it has been given to the Department Heads and he is incorporating their comments into the draft.

OTHER:

Mr. Traum inquired about the status of the Hopkinton State Fair. Mr. Cass noted he has not heard anything yet.

Mr. Traum asked Mr. Cass to do a health cost comparison.

Mr. Donohoe inquired about the porta-potties at the gazebo. Mr. Cass noted that the school has them on the fields for sports. Mr. Donohoe noted that last year we did not have porta-potties because of the virus. Mrs. Wells stated that we have learned things about this virus as time progresses. Discussion ensued, regarding the knowledge that we had about the virus then vs. the knowledge we have about the virus now.

Bob LaPree, 25 Highland Aveune, stated he also did not hear the Board very well during the meeting. He added he hopes the zoom option continues.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION IV-RSA 91-A: 3 IV (d) Leasing of Property

Mr. Whitley 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
Steven Whitley	Yes
Anna Wells	Yes
Jeffrey Donohoe	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

The Board, Eric Paulson, Ruth Chevion, Alyssa McKeon and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 6:51 p.m. The Board recessed this session and returned to public session at 7:26 p.m. The Board and the Town Administrator returned to nonpublic session to discuss this matter from 8:15 p.m. until 8:45 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. Ms. Dunlap seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

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

Mr. Whitley 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. Traum seconded the motion.

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ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

The Board, Mike Sintros, and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:28 p.m. The Board recessed this session and returned to public session at 8:02 p.m. The Board and the Town Administrator returned to nonpublic session to discuss this matter from 8:45 p.m. until 8:50 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. Traum seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

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

Mr. Whitley moved to go into a non-public session for consideration of legal advice provided by Town Counsel under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (I). Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

The Board, and the Town Administrator went into nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 8:02 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 8:13 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 decision ineffective. Mr. Traum seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Ken Traum	Yes

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Steven Whitley Yes

Anna Wells Yes

Jeffrey Donohoe Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan

Administrative Assessing Assistant