



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
Hopkinton Town Hall – 330 Main Street
Monday, March 24, 2025
Approved**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Cass called this Public Meeting of the Select Board to order at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, March 24, 2025, and announced that the first order of business was the election of a Select Board Chair.

Mr. Whitley made a motion that Ms. Dunlap continue in her role as the Chair. Ms. Bram seconded the motion.

VOTE: Whitley, Bram, and McKeon voted in favor of the motion; Dunlap abstained; no votes against. **MOTION PASSED 3-0.**

Chair Dunlap made a motion to allow Mr. Donohoe to participate remotely. Mr. Whitley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Victoria Bram	Aye
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

Chair Dunlap made a motion to nominate Mr. Whitley as Vice Chair. Ms. McKeon seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Steven Whitley	Abstain
Victoria Bram	Aye
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

Chair Dunlap and Mr. Whitley welcomed the two new Board members, and added that, with Mr. Donohoe on Zoom, all members were present this evening. At various points throughout the meeting, the new Board members asked questions pertaining to items on the Agenda and Consent Agenda, and the other Board members and Mr. Cass answered their questions and explained some of the details and highlights.

Select Board

Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap; Steven Whitley; Jeff Donohoe (Zoom); Victoria Bram; and Alyssa McKeon

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

Public Participants: Katherine Mitchell and Ken Traum (Zoom)

II. POINTS OF PRIDE:

Mr. Cass thanked everyone who worked so hard and contributed to another successful Town Meeting. From beginning the preparation in August through putting everything away after the Business Session in March, he noted great appreciation to everyone involved.

Chair Dunlap echoed the appreciation expressed by Mr. Cass, and highlighted all the planning and logistics involved behind the scenes. She thanked Mr. Cass for all his work on this, his 16th Hopkinton Town Meeting, and thanked the voters, noting that turnout was higher than many years. For their work during the recent storm, Chair Dunlap also thanked the DPW personnel.

Mr. Whitley added a note of appreciation to Town Moderator Sara Persechino and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Christine Johnson for doing another really fine job with all things Town Meeting.

Mr. Cass and Chair Dunlap added commendation to Town Moderator Persechino for how well she planned and managed the ballot voting during the Business Session of Town Meeting.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE:

- A. The Board reviewed documents for signature, and approved (5-0) the Consent Agenda of March 24, 2025, taking the following action on a motion made by Mr. Whitley and seconded by Chair Dunlap:

TOWN OF HOPKINTON - SELECT BOARD CONSENT AGENDA MARCH 24, 2025			
ITEM	DATE	ACTION	COMMENT
AP MANIFEST			
AP MANIFEST DATED 3/24/2025	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$131,102.23
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL			
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL DATED 3/24/2025	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$98,850.93
DIRECT DEPOSIT: \$97,130.27			
PAYROLL CHECKS: \$1,720.66			
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED - NO ACTION NEEDED			
AP MANIFEST DATED 3/17/2025			\$2,090,555.70
ELDERLY EXEMPTION APPLICATIONS			
209-047-000 - 462 CLEMENT HILL RD	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$240,000.00

221-029-000 - 477 PINE ST	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$295,000.00
256-020-000 - 390 BROCKWAY RD	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$240,000.00
ABATEMENT REQUESTS			
208-003-0A1 - A1 SANDY BEACH WY	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$240.00
208-003-D33 - D33 DEER RN	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$548.00
YIELD TAX			
OP #24-227-15-T - 101-041-000 - 11 SPRING ST	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$58.30
OP #24-227-12-T - 104-033-000 THROUGH 104-040-000 - 702 SMITHFIELD RD	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$32.92
OP #24-227-05-T - 249-008-000 - 812 BRIAR HILL RD	3/24/2025	APPROVE	\$844.12
OTHER			
2025 MS-232 - REPORT OF APPROPRIATIONS ACTUALLY VOTED	3/24/2025	APPROVE	

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes
 Steven Whitley Yes
 Jeff Donohoe Yes
 Victoria Bram Aye
 Alyssa McKeon Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

- B. The Board reviewed the Select Board Public Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025. Mr. Whitley made a motion to approve the Select Board Public Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes
 Steven Whitley Yes
 Jeff Donohoe Yes
 Victoria Bram Abstain
 Alyssa McKeon Abstain

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

- C. The Board reviewed the Select Board Nonpublic Session I Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025. Mr. Whitley made a motion to approve the Select Board Nonpublic Session I Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025, and noted that the minutes are sealed. Mr. Donohoe seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes
 Steven Whitley Yes
 Jeff Donohoe Yes

Victoria Bram Abstain
Alyssa McKeon Abstain

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

- D. The Board reviewed the Select Board Nonpublic Session II Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025. Mr. Whitley made a motion to approve the Select Board Nonpublic Session II Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025, and noted that the minutes are not sealed. Mr. Donohoe seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap Yes
Steven Whitley Yes
Jeff Donohoe Yes
Victoria Bram Abstain
Alyssa McKeon Abstain

MOTION PASSED 3-0.

IV. PUBLIC APPOINTMENT:

There were no Public Appointments.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Town Meeting Follow-up – Mr. Cass noted:

- We have started moving forward on all approved Bonds, are finishing up the information we need to provide for the Clean Water Revolving Fund, and are starting on the sludge removal bond.
- The company that provided bags for the Pay-by-Bag program will be contacted to end the contract and finalize details. With the program no longer in effect, as of April 1, 2025, the special revenue account will be closed, and any balance remaining will go to the general fund.
- The current lease on the Bates Building goes through the end of July.
- He will contact the people who have emailed with concerns about the authorization to sell the land-locked, Town-owned parcel. Although one abutter expressed interest in the parcel, both abutters, whose land is in current use, will be contacted to see if there is interest in purchasing the parcel at fair market value, which will be determined by an appraiser. The Conservation Commission should be contacted regarding easements they would like in the deed.
- He was pleased with how smoothly everything went at the meeting and added that the recording turned out well, and is posted on the website.

B. Pending Items/Priorities Review – Mr. Cass noted:

- Writing down the organizational data, including offices, committees, etc.
- Assuring coverage of duties during transition.
- Getting going on all the projects and everything that was voted on at Town Meeting.

- Wrapping up some pending enforcement items.
- Preparing for properties that may be tax deeded.
- Appreciation of the community's response since his resignation was announced.
- Will share list of remaining priorities with the Board.

C. Town Administrator Transition Update – Mr. Cass noted:

- As of today, there are 17 applicants for the position.
- Review of timeline he recommended at previous Board meeting.
- Recommendation of review and preliminary interview committee consisting of the following:
 - Finance Director Kelly Henley
 - Town Clerk/Tax Collector Christine Johnson
 - Police Chief TJ Hennessey
 - Fire Chief Jeff Yale
 - Public Works Director Dan Blanchette
 - Recreation Director Paula Simpkins
- Has a list of recommended questions for use during interviews.

Discussion ensued regarding the interview process; the possibility of readvertising the position with a shorter application period; the possibility of having the committee take notes on why candidates were or were not recommended; and the recommendation that the committee meet with the Board to present their top candidates and discuss their recommendations. The Board members agreed that the committee was comprised of a good combination of representatives, and it was requested that the Board be sent the resumes, as well.

- His new employer has proposed the possibility that he spend some time there, learning some of his new position's duties, while still employed by the Town; then, while employed at his new position, coming back to the Town, to assist the person hired as his replacement here with some of the Town Administrator's duties.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. 2025 Select Board Assignments – The Board members and Mr. Cass reviewed and discussed the following: the positions available for Board members; bringing the non-statutory committee charges to the next Board meeting; publicly posting information on the committees in effort to generate more community participation; and the overlap of some committees. There was also brief discussion of the open Economic Development Committee Director position, and it was recommended that Mr. Cass add suggestions on this topic to his priorities list. The following assignments were made:

- Select Board Chair: Sabrina Dunlap
- Select Board Vice Chair: Steven Whitley
- Budget Committee: Victoria Bram

- Planning Board: Jeff Donohoe
- Economic Development Committee: Steven Whitley
- Open Space Committee: Sabrina Dunlap
- Waste Reduction Committee: Jeff Donohoe
- Highway Safety Committee: Alyssa McKeon
- Energy Committee: Steven Whitley
- Housing Committee: Alyssa McKeon

- B. 2025 Board/Committee/Commission Appointments – Brief discussion ensued regarding the various groups, their composition, and whether they are statutory or Town-created, and Mr. Cass explained the process that has been followed for filling positions, and noted he would check with current participants and report back on his findings.
- C. Year-to-Date Financial Update – Mr. Cass noted the Board received the figures for revenues and expenses through February. He explained some of the particular line items and how some are timing-related, noting that on the expenses side, IT is running over, due to some necessary software upgrades on more computers than anticipated. Overall, revenues and expenses are running about where they should this time of year.
- D. Orientation/Updates for New Members – Discussion ensued regarding the NHMA Conference, and Mr. Cass reviewed some of the highlights of the conference. Also discussed were some recommended publications and conferences and workshops that may be of interest to the new Board members.

Mr. Cass reviewed for the new Board members the established administrative chain of command and accepted behavior standards. Discussion ensued regarding email contact protocol, and it was noted that ordinances and policies are on the Town website.

- E. Department Visits – The Board members and Mr. Cass discussed details of visiting the Town departments, and it was agreed that Tuesdays and Fridays at about 8:00 a.m., starting April 1, would fit everyone’s schedules best.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE:

As the other topics on his list have been addressed this evening, Mr. Cass had only one update to note. Due to interconnection issues with Eversource, the company that was going to do the solar project at the Transfer Station will not be moving forward. They will be paying the Town the \$20 Thousand they were due to pay for having the option of completing this project.

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM:

The following residents spoke:

- Ken Traum (Zoom) wished the Board members luck, offered to talk with Ms. Bram and Mr. Whitley about the committees for which he used to be the Select Board representative, and complimented the new Board members on their questions this evening.

- Katherine Mitchell asked about Transfer Station and road classification-related topics, and discussion ensued regarding both topics.

IX. OTHER:

Mr. Whitley suggested the Board think about whether it wants legal counsel present at future Town Meeting Business Sessions. He noted that if not needed, it can be a cost saver; however, if something unexpected arises, it is nice to have counsel there. He added that this would only be something to consider if the Town Moderator were comfortable with it, so seeking Moderator Sara Persechino’s input would be necessary before considering such a decision.

Ms. Bram and Ms. McKeon asked questions related to the procedures to follow in particular situations, funding for projects, and various plans, and the other Board members and Mr. Cass answered their questions.

X. NONPUBLIC SESSIONS:

There were no nonpublic sessions.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Whitley moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Aye
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

With all members voting in favor, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Johnson
Administrative/Assessing Assistant