



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, September 8, 2025 – Approved**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Dunlap called the Public Meeting of the Board to order at 5:32 p.m.

Select Board Members Present: Sabrina Dunlap, Victoria Bram, Alyssa McKeon, and Jeffrey Donohoe.

Staff Present: Karen Hambleton, Town Administrator

II. POINTS OF PRIDE (3:40)

The following were recognized under Points of Pride:

- Ms. Bram thanked the Police and Fire Departments for a successful, clean, and safe Hopkinton State Fair.
- Ms. Hambleton thanked everyone for their patience as DOT completes paving projects around the town.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE (4:40)

i. Approval of Consent Agenda (03)

AP MANIFEST			
AP MANIFEST DATED 9/8/2025	9/8/2025	APPROVE	\$2,033,288.00
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL DATED 9/8/2025	9/8/2025	APPROVE	\$103,811.12
DIRECT DEPOSIT: \$101,572.78			
PAYROLL CHECKS: \$2,238.34			
VETERAN CREDIT APPLICATIONS			
209-008-000 - 175 ROLFE POND DR - EFFECTIVE 2026	9/8/2025	APPROVE	\$500.00
240-012-002 - 59 WOODBURY RIDGE DR - EFFECTIVE 2026	9/8/2025	APPROVE	\$500.00
YIELD TAX			
OP #25-227-12-T - 235/003/001 - BASSETT MILL RD	9/8/2025	APPROVE	\$301.29

Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.

ii. Approval of Public Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025 (04A)

Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the public Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. McKeon and unanimously approved.

iii. Approval of Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025, Session I (04B)

Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025 – Session I. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and was unanimously approved.

- iv. Approval of Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025, Session II (04C)
Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025 – Session II. The motion was seconded by Ms. McKeon and was unanimously approved.
- v. Approval of Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025, Session III (04D)
Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025 – Session III. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and was unanimously approved.
- vi. Approval of Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025, Session IV (04E)
Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2025 – Session IV, noting that they were not sealed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and was unanimously approved.

IV. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS (7:11)

- i. Future of the Horseshoe Pile (05)
Chair Dunlap indicated that there had been some feedback provided by email and opened the floor to public comment.
 - Lee Wilder and Jeff Dearborn addressed the Board. Mr. Wilder indicated that the horseshoes were part of the history of the site. Mr. Wilder and Mr. Dearborn presented a slideshow that summarized, in images, some of the site's history and the horseshoes that were featured on the site. Mr. Wilder and Mr. Dearborn also presented recommendations for cleaning up, securing, and potentially relocating the pile. Mr. Wilder raised concerns regarding the closeness of the pile to the road and the risk of being hit by snowplows. Mr. Wilder summarized a proposal for a gazebo-like structure under which the cleaned-up pile could be placed and secured, as well as some short-term solutions to secure and protect the pile. Board discussion continued regarding cost, funding, and future maintenance of the proposed structure.
 - Louise Carr addressed the Board. Ms. Carr indicated that it was important for the Select Board to support projects like these.
 - Byron Carr addressed the Board. Mr. Carr stated that the site is a great site that could benefit the town and be activated as a public space. Mr. Carr suggested that the site could be a monument to the volunteers who have served the town. Mr. Carr stated that while he believed the costs should be considered, he believed something could be built that served the community and was maintenance-free. He suggested potentially looking for grants for a monument. Mr. Carr suggested that the Board take a few months to elicit the best ideas, including ideas for fundraising. Discussion continued about how to secure and protect the pile during the winter months. Mr. Donohoe asked if realistic costs for a structure could be prepared.
 - Heather Mitchell of the Hopkinton Historical Society addressed the Board. Ms. Mitchell noted that the comments on Facebook were very helpful, but she believed the horseshoe pile should remain on site and tell the story of the site and of the horses that were important to the construction of the capital. Discussion continued regarding potential funding, including the Moose Plate Program.
 - Loren Clement addressed the Board. Mr. Clement commented that the first problem that must be solved is identifying how to move the pile and how many horseshoes are salvageable. Moving and securing the horseshoes, he explained, might be an important first step. Discussion continued about the cabins and whether the organization that manages

those might be a helpful partner in the perpetual care of the structure, and other volunteer caretakers that could be considered.

- Ian Hart addressed the Board. Mr. Hart expressed support for a solution that met the objectives of the Board and the volunteers. Mr. Hart stated he was glad to see so much enthusiasm for the project.

Chair Dunlap summarized the main themes that emerged in the public email comments, including a desire of the community to honor the history and not to spend a great deal of Town resources. Chair Dunlap called for more time for discussion and deliberation on the subject, but also expressed support from DPW in addressing the immediate concerns related to winter exposure. Ms. McKeon also expressed support for preserving the horseshoe pile while also protecting the pile from winter exposure. The Board discussed options for moving and securing the pile in coordination with Public Works Director Blanchette and asked the Town Administrator to discuss options with Mr. Blanchette.

ii. Chief Hennessey - Towing Policy (06) (59:53)

Chief Hennessey stated he would prefer not to have a towing policy that ties the Police Department down to one provider. Ms. McKeon stated that other towns have such policies that require their Town to utilize a local provider first. Chief Hennessey stated that he would prefer to maintain the flexibility that is part of the current practice. Chief Hennessey stated that JM Towing is a good and reliable company, but there may be occasions when another company may be used. The Board discussed the merits of having an in-town company first policy in place. The Board agreed to continue the discussion at a later date.

V. OLD BUSINESS (1:08:34)

i. Revenue/Expense Follow-up (07)

Ms. Hambleton summarized the Town's revenue through the end of June. Ms. Bram noted that the Town was 41% complete toward its revenue goal. Ms. Hambleton noted that the Town had not received the Rooms and Meals for the year yet. Ms. Hambleton explained that adjustments to the revenue estimates will be made in the third quarter of the year, if needed.

Ms. Hambleton summarized the year-to-date expense report and responded to questions regarding printing expenses and IT/computer replacements. Ms. Hambleton indicated that staff were doing an inventory of services to ensure that the Town was only paying for what it needed. Ms. Hambleton discussed expenses related to the community well and pump replacement expenses for both water and wastewater.

ii. Riverside Park – Follow-up from August 25th (08) (1:16:34)

Chair Dunlap summarized the discussion related to the Riverside Park subcommittee to date. Mr. Ian Hart addressed the Board. Discussion ensued regarding who the subcommittee would fall under. Questions were raised about the Fountain Square Project, which was listed in NHDOT's 10-year plan. Ms. Hambleton noted that the \$3.1 million Fountain Square Project has been removed from NHDOT's 10-year plan due to budget constraints. Ms. McKeon noted that this development requires greater focus and dedication from the Town in solving pedestrian and safety issues. Discussion continued about establishing the subcommittee. It was agreed that the subcommittee would be housed under the EDC and that a charge and three-year plan should be developed for the subcommittee. Mr. Hart indicated that he would work on membership and agreed that goals should be established that reflect the 16 summary recommendations presented at the last meeting. Mr. Hart indicated that the EDC would develop both a charge and recommendations for membership and

bring those back to the Board. Discussion continued regarding the identification of an appropriate name for the subcommittee that will reflect the broader goals of the subcommittee.

iii. Hopkinton Fair Debrief (09) (1:29:51)

Ms. Hambleton indicated that over 1,900 wristbands were distributed. Discussion ensued about community feedback related to advertising and parking. Chief Hennessey addressed the Board and indicated that the event ran smoothly. Ms. McKeon indicated that it might be useful to have someone posted at certain locations to assist with traffic.

iv. Summer Concert Series (10) (1:34:33)

Ms. Hambleton reported back to the Board that Legal Counsel had indicated that the Board has the authority to disburse funds. Discussion ensued regarding the appropriate amount to spend on the summer concert series and the need for clarification on the policy.

Chair Dunlap made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$1,000 for the summer concert series. The motion was seconded by Ms. McKeon.

Discussion continued regarding whether the Board should be limited to expending on the interest of the trust fund or if expenditure of the principal is also an appropriate option consistent with the intent of the Donor and the precedent set by previous Boards. General discussion continued regarding the language in the policy providing discretionary authority to the Board.

The motion failed due to a lack of a majority vote (two to two).

The Board agreed to revisit the topic at the following meeting after a careful review of the policy.

VI. PUBLIC FORUM (1:52:16)

Louise Carr addressed the Board and expressed concern that the Summer Concert Series event organizers did not provide a more detailed budget in advance of the event. She explained that the event budget is typically developed before the event and dictates what is possible for the event to achieve. Ms. McKeon indicated that the Town did receive the request in advance of the event, but the Town misplaced it. Discussion ensued regarding the typical process observed for the summer concert series funding requests.

Ms. Carr asked for permission to provide decorations for Halloween around town. Discussion ensued regarding previous concerns regarding public art around town. General discussion ensued regarding the lack of policy direction for public art. Ms. Carr emphasized that the community response to holiday decorating is very positive. Chair Dunlap indicated that she would prefer that the decorating stick to the status quo, which includes the typical signs. Ms. Carr asked about the triangle. Ms. McKeon indicated that she thought this was generally acceptable and should continue until a more detailed policy is developed.

General discussion continued regarding posting public meeting information in a timely way.

- Matthew Plante of J&M Towing addressed the Board. Mr. Plante summarized his research relating to typical policies regarding in-town towing. He expressed concern that leaving the decision to the Police Department staff could affect the consistent use of in-town businesses and result in the use of less qualified service providers. He reminded the Board that J&M Towing is the only in-town qualified towing company and asked once again for a policy that

prioritizes the in-town service provider over out-of-town providers. The Board indicated that they were still reviewing this item.

VII. NEW BUSINESS (2:10:50)

i. Boards and Committees Discussion (11)

Ms. McKeon indicated that she was still researching other websites and working to identify some basic technical standards and any limitations in the Town's technology. She stated that she is also working to identify standardized information that should be provided across all committees to improve the overall user experience and enhance process transparency. She indicated that she is still compiling membership information from all committees and will conduct a deeper review of the websites of some other communities, as well. Ms. Hambleton discussed the appointment of a new member to the Human Services Advisory Committee, as a qualified candidate has been identified. Discussion ensued regarding typical application and appointment procedures.

ii. Select Board Goals (12)

Chair Dunlap summarized the history of Select Board goal development and overall strategic governance. Ms. Bram summarized how the work of the Budget Committee raised questions about how to better direct budget development for department heads. Ms. Bram referenced recurring themes in the Master Plan as a starting point for developing Select Board goals. Chair Dunlap indicated that there will be further discussion on this topic as the Board moves to more strategic governance.

VIII. BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES (2:26:57)

Ms. McKeon informed the Board that the Housing Committee had met the prior week and had finalized their recommendations to the Planning Committee, summarizing the votes that were under consideration and the action taken.

IX. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES (2:27:52)

Ms. Hambleton provided the following updates:

- She and Mr. Blanchette had met with Central New Hampshire Regional Planning representatives to discuss a condition assessment of town roads, including the town's gravel roads, to help develop a plan for prioritizing the maintenance of the town's roads.
- She was exploring utilizing a keypad for the front door, as distributing and monitoring keys was becoming problematic.
- The Town of Webster has requested a joint meeting regarding the Transfer Station. She will be working to identify a date for that meeting.
- The preliminary budget timeline was drafted; however, she was working to resolve software issues related to budget development. The Board discussed upcoming presentations from department heads, overall guidance to department heads, and the timeline.

Ms. Bram asked for a George Park bathroom renovation update at the next meeting.

X. NONPUBLIC SESSION (2:54)

Chair Dunlap made a motion that the Select Board go into a Nonpublic Session to discuss hiring a person as a public employee under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A:3 II (b). The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board, the Police Chief and the Town Administrator went into a nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 8:13 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 8:28 p.m.

Chair Dunlap made a motion that the Select Board go into a Nonpublic 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). The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into a nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 8:29 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 9:04 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Ms. Bram moved to seal the minutes of the just completed nonpublic session because it was determined that divulgence of this information could adversely affect the reputation of someone other than a Board member. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

Chair Dunlap made a motion that the Select Board go into a Nonpublic Session to discuss consideration or negotiation under the provisions of Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A:3 II (e). The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

The Board and the Town Administrator went into a nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 9:05 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 9:19 p.m.

Vote to seal nonpublic minutes:

Mr. Donohoe moved to seal the minutes of the just completed nonpublic session because it was determined that divulgence of this information could render the decision ineffective. Ms. McKeon seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes
Alyssa McKeon	Yes

MOTION PASSED 4-0.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Donohoe moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chair Dunlap seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the meeting was declared adjourned at 9:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Mesa-Zendt
Executive Assistant/Grant Coordinator