



# Town of Hopkinton

Office of Select Board

330 Main Street, Hopkinton, NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – [www.hopkinton-nh.gov](http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov)

## SELECT BOARD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES Hopkinton Town Hall – 330 Main Street, Monday, November 17, 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:** Chair Sabrina Dunlap, Victoria Bram, Steven Whitley (arrived 5:36), and Jeffrey Donohoe.

**Staff Present:** Karen Hambleton, Town Administrator; Jeff Yale, Fire Chief; Thomas Hennessey, Police Chief; and Dan Blanchette, Public Works Director.

### II. ADMINISTRATIVE (1:40)

#### i. Approval of Consent Agenda (03)

TOWN OF HOPKINTON - SELECT BOARD			
CONSENT AGENDA			
17-Nov-25			
ITEM	DATE	ACTION	COMMENT
AP MANIFEST			
EMPLOYEE PAYROLL DATED 11/02/2025 to 11/15/2025			
DIRECT DEPOSIT:	11/17/2025	APPROVE	97,942.22
PAYROLL CHECKS:	11/17/2025	APPROVE	\$2,483.76
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED - NO ACTION NEEDED			
OTHER			
PERSONNEL ACTION   TRANSFER STATION PART-TIME HIRE (34 HOUR/WEEK)	11/17/2025	APPROVE	

*Mr. Donohoe made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.*

#### ii. Approval of the Public Meeting Minutes November 3, 2025 (04A)

Ms. Bram made a motion to approve with the following corrections:

- Lisette Cid’s name was incorrectly spelled and should be corrected; and
- The non-public meeting minutes were noted as unsealed and should be identified as sealed.

*Approval of the Public Meeting minutes was postponed.*

#### iii. Approval of the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes, November 3, 2025, Session I (04B)

*Approval of the Public Meeting minutes was postponed.*

### III. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS (5:37)

#### i. Charge of Riverway Park – Ian Hart (05)

Chair of the Economic Development Committee (EDC), Ian Hart, presented the Board with the proposed charge for the Riverway Park/Contoocook Village Working Group. He

reminded the Board that this new Committee would operate as a subcommittee of the EDC. Ms. Bram read the Charge aloud. The Board discussed the potential membership of the working group with Mr. Hart. Mr. Hart stated that the working group was expected to include about 10 members representing a variety of interests, including recreation, public works, and Contoocook River Canoe and Kayak, as well as representatives from the EDC and the Select Board. The Board discussed the process for elevating recommendations for approval.

*Mr. Whitley made a motion to accept the charge of the Riverway Park/Contoocook Village Working Group as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bram and unanimously approved.*

ii. Economic Development Committee (EDC) – Mission, Vision, Values, Goals (06)

The Board discussed the mission, vision, values, and goals presented by the EDC Chair, Ian Hart. Chair Dunlap noted that much of the Committee's work concerns Community Development, and that the Committee's name and values should reflect that. Mr. Hart indicated that the EDC's work encompasses both economic and community development. Mr. Donohoe stated that he believed the Committee had been more focused on community development and would like to see the Committee focus on economic development.

The Board discussed previous work on Exit 6 and requested the full studies for extending water and sewer service to Exit 6. Mr. Hart indicated that he would send the reports to the Board. The Board discussed the development potential of Hart's Corner, which Mr. Donohoe stated was the most developable parcel in the Town.

Chair Dunlap asked about the Committee's role. She indicated that she expected a continued focus on important community development goals and supporting existing businesses. The Board discussed the level of funding to dedicate to the Economic Development Director position. Chair Dunlap indicated that she was comfortable funding the role with a focus on community development. Ms. Hambleton provided an updated proposed EDC budget reflecting a minor reduction.

*Ms. Bram made a motion to rename the Economic Development Committee to the Community and Economic Development Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Donohoe and unanimously approved with Mr. Whitley abstaining.*

The Board discussed the Economic Development Committee's value, goals, and mission. The Board suggested the following minor change to the language regarding removing barriers to economic development.

“The Community and Economic Development Committee values the assessment and reduction of unnecessary barriers to entry, expansion, and success.”

*Ms. Bram made a motion to approve the amended values, goals, and mission of the newly renamed Community and Economic Development Committee. The motion was seconded by Chair Dunlap and unanimously approved with Mr. Whitley abstaining.*

**IV. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS (07) (40:31)**

i. Fire Department

Chief Yale presented the Fire Department's Proposed Budget. Chief Yale noted the following key changes.

- Overtime. Overtime represented the largest proposed increase based on current annual expenses. He noted similar increases in neighboring communities.
- Recruitment. There have been difficulties in hiring qualified individuals due to market competition. Labor costs have risen since 2020 due to competitive pay offered in neighboring jurisdictions with unions.
- Second Fire Station. Chief Yale responded to questions about the need for the second Fire Station, stating that the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) required it to maintain optimal fire insurance rates for the community.

Chief Yale reviewed EMS call volume, fuel costs, apparatus maintenance, firefighter safety requirements, and capital planning for engine and ambulance replacements. Chief Yale noted the following additional key points.

- Increased training costs due to NFPA updates.
- Apparatus nearing end-of-life remains a concern.

The Board discussed shared services and regional mutual aid.

ii. Police Department.

Chief Hennessey presented the Police Department's Proposed Budget. Chief Hennessey noted there were only a few changes. Chief Hennessey identified FY26 needs, including staffing, equipment replacement schedules, vehicle lifecycle, training budgets, and anticipated technology upgrades. Chief Hennessey noted the following additional budget items.

- He is working to migrate mobile communication systems to IMC Mobile, allowing better coordination with surrounding communities.
- Increased costs related to body-camera data storage.
- Cruiser replacement schedule remains on track.

The Board raised questions about overtime management and recruitment challenges.

iii. Department of Public Works (DPW) (except Transfer Station)

Dan Blanchette presented the Public Works Proposed Budget. Mr. Blanchette noted the following changes in the proposed budget.

- Uniforms. Costs have increased due to rising provider costs.
- Shimming and Paving. It has increased 5% due to a goal set by the Select Board nine years ago. He noted that the actual road improvement plan will be developed at a later date.
- Highway Sand. There is a credit with Foster Materials that will be utilized in 2026.
- Culverts. The Town has two culverts on the State-issued Municipal Red List that need to be replaced and are identified in the Capital Improvement Program. He noted that the East Penacook culvert replacement would cost approximately \$1 million, and that Board Cove would need to be replaced as well, at a lower cost.
- Building and Grounds Maintenance. Maintenance equipment, dam registrations, and new equipment have increased.
- Sewer. There are significant increases in sewer maintenance. Professional services are going up \$20,000 to hire a company to conduct wet well servicing, which is unsafe for staff.

- There was a recent pump failure that required emergency service over the weekend, which will result in a \$10,000 cost.
- Testing has increased.
- Propane costs have increased.
- Materials have increased due to the cost of treatment chemicals.
- Office supplies have run over.

Discussion ensued regarding the impact of the sewer septage removal and disposal at the septage lagoons. Mr. Blanchette indicated that the amount removed would be negligible compared with the volumes at the Septage Lagoons.

iv. Revenues

Ms. Hambleton provided an overview of revenue, highlighting the following.

- Current Use Change Tax is level.
- Timber taxes projections are still unclear.
- Motor vehicle and boat fees are up.  
Discussion ensued on how to identify fees collected for the state.
- Building Permit fees and driveway fees are a new account.
- Rooms and meals taxes are not in for the year yet. Early estimates suggest \$600,000 in revenue from the Rooms and Meals tax.
- State Highway Block grant funding has increased slightly.
- Ambulance reimbursement costs are also uncertain due to changes in state laws regarding those fees. Currently, if an ambulance is in-network with a commercial insurance company, the rate is 325% of Medicare. If they're out-of-network with a commercial insurance company, the rate's 100% of Medicare or the carrier's out-of-network rate, whichever is higher.
- Recycling revenue is strong despite the elimination of the green bag program.
- Investment account interest is up due to the reinvestment of funds into accounts with more favorable rates.
- The Town is still looking at options for the contract for waste management.

The Board decided to meet on November 24 to consider and review the Budget and on December 8, 2025, to finalize the Budget.

**V. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

i. *Request to Close Portion of Cedar Street (08)*

The Board considered a request to close a portion of Cedar Street for Starry Starry Weekend.

*Mr. Donohoe made a motion to request the closure of a portion of Cedar Street for Starry Starry Weekend. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whitley and unanimously approved.*

ii. *Follow-up Webster Conversation (09)*

Ms. Hambleton informed the Board that staff had confirmed that the term of the loan agreement for the Septage Lagoon Cleanup would be set at the time of repayment at the conclusion of project construction. Ms. Hambleton noted that this response allows the Town the flexibility to determine whether the loan should be for a 10-year or a 20-year term.

**VI. NONPUBLIC SESSION 2:15:06**

*Ms. Dunlap made a motion that the Select Board enter into a nonpublic session to consider the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community under RSA 91-A:3 II (d). The motion was seconded by Mr. Whitley and was unanimously approved by a roll-call vote.*

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Sabrina Dunlap	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes
Jeff Donohoe	Yes
Victoria Bram	Yes

**MOTION PASSED 4-0.**

The Board and the Town Administrator went into a nonpublic session, as recorded separately, at 7:45 p.m. The Board returned to public session at 7:50 p.m.

These minutes were not sealed.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Whitley moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Donohoe seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the meeting was declared adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Mesa-Zendt  
Executive Assistant/Grant Coordinator