

Select Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 21, 2022, 6:30PM

Present: Chair Hazard, Selectman Keyes, Selectman Stock and Interim Executive Assistant Martha White

Chair Hazard called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

6:30 p.m. FY23 Tax Classification Hearing – Review Board of Assessors' Recommendation Cheryl Hanly, Principal Assessor

The Hopedale Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing at 6:30 PM on Monday, November 21, 2022, in the Draper Meeting Room of the Hopedale Town Hall at 78 Hopedale Street, Hopedale MA and via ZOOM. The purpose is to receive comments on the classification of taxable real property in the Town of Hopedale, and to determine the percentage of the tax levy for Fiscal Year 2023 that each class shall bear by multiple tax rate or by a single classification and single tax rate. Interested Hopedale taxpayers are encouraged to provide written or oral comments prior to or during the hearing.

Hanly stated that Chair of the Board of Assessor's, Ellen Murphy, is present during this hearing. Hanly provided the Select Board and meeting participants with a presentation, noting that each year before the tax rate can be set, the Select Board must hold a public hearing to consider the available tax rate options. Prior to the hearing, the Assessors determined final values, classified all properties and reported this information to the Department of Revenue. Hanly explained that the tax rate options voted by the Select Board at this hearing do not determine how much money can be raised nor does the Select Board decide the tax rate for the Town. It only determines the distribution of the tax levy among the property class types. Hanly provided the meeting participants with a report called the LA4, which shows the number of parcels in the Town and value for each property class. This report shows Hopedale's total taxable value for FY2023 is just over one billion, and the average single-family home value (property type 101) is \$448,169, an increase of \$36,569 from last year's average single-family value of \$411,600. Hanly continued that the values for FY2023 are determined on the Full and Fair Cash Values as of January 1, 2022. Hanly explained that the Town is required to determine assessed values under the guidelines of the Department of Revenue and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59 and that properties must be assessed at 100% full and fair cash value and must reflect the market (i.e., what properties are selling for). Hanly noted that overall, compared to FY22 values, residential/single family increased 8.8%, residential/condominium increased 14.6% and commercial/industrial increased 7.2%.

Motion made by Mr. Stock that the town adopt a residential factor of 0.9257, 1.5% shift and to not adopt a residential exemption. Seconded by Mr. Keyes.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes-Aye

7:00 p.m. Interviews with Interim Town Administrator Candidates

The Board conducted interviews with the three candidates who have expressed interest in the Interim Town Administrator position, Mr. Robert Reed, Mr. Greg Balukonis and Mr. Jeffrey Nutting. Board members noted that all three candidates were very well qualified. (Resumes for the candidates can be found on the town website with the meeting packet information. The video recording of interviews is also available on the town website.). Mr. Stock indicated that he would like to get this position filled quickly given that the budget season is very close. He stated that he would put his support behind Mr. Nutting.

Motion made by Mr. Stock to appoint Mr. Nutting as the Interim TA pending contract negotiations. Seconded by Mr. Keyes.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Consent Items

Approve Select Board Meeting Minutes of 5/23/22 and 9/12/22

Mr. Stock made a motion to approve both sets of minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Keyes

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Accept donation from Eagle Scout William Adamski for trees, plants and associated materials.

Mr. Stock made a motion to accept this donation near the bathhouse in Hopedale in the amount of \$1,600.36 Seconded by Mr. Keyes.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Presentation of Citizen Lifesaving Award to Caitlyn Heffernan

This was Awarded to Ms. Heffernan, BBC school nurse, in praise and consideration for her heroic efforts on the scene of a pediatric trauma. Standing applause and congratulations from all those in attendance.

Appointments & Resignations

Accept Resignation of Call Firefighter Jarrod Taranto effective 11/4/22

Motion made by Mr. Stock and seconded by Mr. Keyes to accept the resignation.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Accept Resignation of Firefighter/EMT Jennifer Richard effective 12/2/22

Motion made by Mr. Keyes and seconded by Mr. Stock to accept the resignation.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Call Firefighter Candidate Timothy Morse to position of Call Firefighter effective 11/7/22 .

Motion made by Mr. Keyes and seconded by Mr. Stock to appoint Timothy Morse as Call Firefighter effective 11/7/22.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Call Firefighter Casey Sweet to Provisional FF/EMT effective 11/21/22
Motion made by Mr. Stock, seconded by Mr. Keyes to appoint Casey Sweet as Provisional FF/EMT effective 11/21/22.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Juan Rueles-Garcia to position of Call Firefighter Candidate effective 11/24/22.
Motion made by Mr. Keyes and seconded by Mr. Stock to appoint Juan Rueles-Garcia as Call Firefighter Candidate effective 11/24/22.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Jacob Fantini to position of Call Firefighter Candidate effective 11/24/22
Motion made by Mr. Stock and seconded by Mr. Keyes to appoint Jacob Fantini to position the of Call Firefighter Candidate effective 11/24/22.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Elenore Alves to Conservation Commission effective 11/21/22, term to expire 6/30/2025.
Motion made by Mr. Stock and seconded by Mr. Keyes to appoint Elenore Alves to the Conservation Commission effective 11/21/22, term to expire 6/30/2025.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

Request Appointment of Jayme Solomon-Zissu to the Personnel Committee
Motion made by Mr. Keyes and seconded by Mr. Stock to appoint Jayme Solomon-Zissu to the Personnel Committee.
Motion made by Mr. Keyes and seconded by Mr. Stock.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Aye

New Business

Old Business

Consider and Vote on Proposed Order of Taking for Land at 364 West Street Pursuant to Article 1 of the July 11, 2022, Special Town Meeting

Mr. Stock made a motion to sign the order of taking as was directed by the voters at Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Keyes.

Chair Hazard- Aye Selectman Stock- Aye Selectman Keyes- Nay

Finalize Town Planner Position for Posting

Discussion surrounding pay scale and posting for this position. Ms. White feels that the Interim Town Administrator should weigh in on this hire. The Board decided to repost this position with “salary negotiable” and then they would go from there.

Public and Board Member Comments (votes will not be taken)

Update re Special Town Meeting, 11/14/22

The STM minutes can be viewed here: [SKM 22722112213410 \(hopedale-ma.gov\)](https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/22722112213410)

Litigation update re 364 West Street

Chair Hazard read an update regarding two different court hearings that took place the previous week. Mike Milanowski, from GURR spoke and noted that the Settlement Agreement provides an opportunity to seek out a water source and expressed confusion that the Town would be opposed to this. Also, the Town has 10 days to reply and has not yet met to go over this. Mr. Stock feels that this is not appropriate open session discussion as these matters are in litigation. Board members agreed.

Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items (votes will not be taken)

- Request from the Preserve Hopedale Team for Appeal of Court’s Default Judgment re: Rosenfeld Concrete Corp. v. Town of Hopedale
- Complaint Received from Member Keyes re Chair Hazard’s Comments of 10/24/22.
Counsel Zessin believes that the complaint itself is a public record. Keyes feels that he is being censored where Chair will not respond to the complaint whereas it threatens litigation. Mr. Keyes is upset and suggests that people review the complaint on the town website.
- Permanent Solution with No Conditions Statement, 7 Fitzgerald Drive
- Gobble Wobble Race, November 24, 2022
- Benefit for Toys for Tots, Sponsored by the US Marines; Saturday, Nov. 26th, 2022, 10:00 am-1:00 pm; Roadside Collection for Spare Change, Rt. 16, Main St., and the Cumberland Farms Store.
- A/P Warrant #23-10, \$1,001,613.25, 11/17/2022
- P/R Warrant #23-10, \$992,012.09, 11/17/2022

Requests for Future Agenda Items

- Annual Select Board License Renewals, 12/12/22.

Administrator Updates (In Packet)

- Activities/Projects Workbook effective 11/18/22 : These will need to be reviewed by the Interim TA and the Select Board.
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Executive Session(s):

Anticipated executive session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss threatened litigation (Berger v. Town of Hopedale), Attorney Tim Zessin present, and in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(7), to act under authority of the Open Meeting Law to review executive session minutes of 6/21/22.

Motion made by Mr. Keyes to go into executive session, not to return to open session. Seconded by Mr. Stock.

Stock- Aye Keyes- Aye Hazard-Aye

Chair Hazard dissolved the regular meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Submitted by: Kelly Grant

Board Approved: