

Hopedale Select Board
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2023
Draper Meeting Room

In Attendance: Chair Hazard, Mr. Stock, Mr. Savage (via zoom), Town Administrator Ruscitti

Meeting Called to order at 6:46pm.

A Consent Items

1. Review/Approve meeting minutes of 11/21/2022: Motion made by Mr. Stock to approve the meeting minutes of 11/21/2022, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage-Aye Hazard-Aye

2. Accept \$2,000 donation from Hopedale Friends of Elders, Inc. to supplement program funding: Motion made by Mr. Stock to accept the donation, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock-Aye Savage-Aye Hazard- Aye

3. Accept \$63,519.41 donation from an anonymous donor to fund legal fees associated with West Street litigation: Motion made by Mr. Stock to accept the donation, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock-Aye Savage-Aye Hazard- Aye

B Appointments & Resignations

1. Appointment of Timothy Morse as Provisional Full-Time Firefighter/EMT effective 11/15/23. Motion made by Mr. Stock to appoint Timothy Morse as Provisional Full-Time Firefighter/EMT effective 11/15/23, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage- Aye Hazard- Aye

C New Business

1. Tax Classification Hearing – Cheryl Hanly, Principal Assessor: Assessor Hanly was in attendance to present this year's tax classification hearing. The entire presentation is available on the meeting video on the town website, and on the Assessor department page on the town website. The Board of Assessors (BOA) recommends that the Select Board adopt a Residential factor of 0.914 which shifts the levy 1.60 towards Commercial/Industrial/Personal properties. This brings the average residential tax bill to \$8,000 for FY24. The Select Board must also decide whether to have a residential exemption and/or a small commercial exemption. Currently Hopedale has neither. The BOA does not recommend adopting either exemption. Motion made by Mr. Stock to adopt a residential factor of 0.914 and to not adopt either the residential or small commercial exemption, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage- Aye Hazard-Aye

2. Public Hearing – Complete Streets project (Adin Street): The purpose of this hearing is to allow the public to have input on the project design and engineering before plans are finalized by Tighe & Bond engineering firm. Representatives from T&B attended via zoom and presented a

virtual walk-through using a drone video, available on the meeting video on the Town website. Also presented were renderings of what the street will look like upon completion of the project. Resident Len Guertin asked if there will be any markers denoting where the “bump-outs” are as the road is dark and they will be hard to see. TA Ruscitti explained that there are ways to address those concerns (crosswalk signs, gradual bump outs, signs on curb extension, mixed use reflective paint).

3. Review & possible adoption of Policy regarding Disposal of Surplus Supplies: This was put together by the School Superintendent and Martha White and is required under MA procurement law. The policy is included with the packet available on the website. Mr. Stock would like to give the public time to comment on it. The Board will wait and vote on this at the next meeting on 11/27.

4. Schedule December meeting(s): The Board will meet as scheduled on Monday Dec 11, and will tentatively meet on Tuesday Dec 26 if needed.

5. Review & possible adoption of new fee schedule for annual licensing: Fees have not been studied for over a decade. Recommendations (and in the packet) are to increase just a small amount to bring them in line with some other communities. Motion made by Mr. Stock to approve the recommendations as presented in the packet, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage- Aye Hazard- Aye

6. Request for \$3,365 in ARPA funds to supplement \$23,549 already committed for Jr.-Sr. High School boiler as the amount the Board previously approved did not factor in that the boiler needed to be dropped into the building by a crane. Motion made by Mr. Stock to approve the request for \$3,365 in ARPA funds to supplement \$23,549 already committed for Jr.-Sr. High School boiler, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage- Aye Hazard- Aye

D Old Business

1. 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: Motion made by Mr. Stock to sign the Order of Taking for Land at 364 West Street Pursuant to Article 1 of the July 11, 2022 Special Town Meeting, seconded by Mr. Savage.

Stock- Aye Savage- Aye Hazard- Aye

E Administrator Updates: TA Ruscitti advised the Board that a legislative “earmark” was awarded to the Town in the amount of \$100,000 for the Mellen/Phillips field; we will work with the Parks Commission on this project. The Police Department received two grants: an award of \$46,000 for radios and a federal grant over \$150,000 to help in support of the department’s accreditation efforts.

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

Chair Hazard: will host an office hour from 5:30-6:30 on 11/27 for any resident who would like to discuss anything. She suggested it may be helpful to have a comprehensive list of grants that we have applied for and have been awarded.

Mr. Stock thanked Carol Mullen for the Veterans' program that was held this week.

Mr. Savage thanked the police and fire departments for their diligent pursuit of grant funds, and congratulations to Hopedale HS volleyball and Golf teams on their tournament placements.

G. Requests for Future Agenda Items: None

H Correspondence and Select Board Informational Items (votes will not be taken): Letter from a young man in PA asking for a public safety patch for his collection. TA Ruscitti will fulfill this request.

Motion made by Mr. Stock to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Mr. Savage.
Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.

Respectfully submitted: Kelly Grant

Board approved: _____