



## **TOWN OF HOPEDALE**

78 Hopedale Street - P.O. Box 7  
Hopedale, Massachusetts 01747

Tel: 508-634-2203 Fax: 508-634-2200  
[www.hopedale-ma.gov](http://www.hopedale-ma.gov)

### **Select Board**

Glenda A. Hazard, Chair  
Bernard J. Stock  
Scott M. Savage

### **Town Administrator**

Mitch Ruscitti

**The Hopedale Select Board hereby gives public notice of its intention to call**

**2024 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**ON**

**TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024, 7:00 P.M.**

**IN THE**

**HOPEDALE JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

All articles requested for inclusion in the warrant for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting must be received in the Office of the Select Board, Hopedale Town Hall, 78 Hopedale Street, Hopedale, MA 01747 by 3:00 p.m. on *<suggested date: Thursday, April 18, 2024>*. The Select Board encourages petitioners and others submitting articles to provide such materials electronically to [mwhite@hopedale-ma.gov](mailto:mwhite@hopedale-ma.gov) by such date and time; if submitting through this format, petitioners are advised to request a "read receipt" to verify proper and timely receipt by Select Board's Office. The Select Board further encourages submission of articles in narrative format only, and that maps and other supplementary material not be included as part of the warrant article.

Glenda A. Hazard, Chair  
Hopedale Select Board



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### **Town Administrator**

Mitch Ruscitti, MPA

March 7, 2024

TO: Hopedale Select Board  
FROM: Martha White, Executive Assistant  
RE: One-Day Beer and Wine License Request  
Blackstone Valley Curling Club – April 6, 2024  
COPY: Mitch Ruscitti, Town Administrator

The above referenced application has been submitted to this office, including the fee and all required documentation. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that the Blackstone Valley Curling Club is hosting the Bay State Games Curling Competition.

### **Department Comments:**

Police Chief: No concerns/requirements

Health Director: Approved, with the conditions that there shall be no reuse of cups, beer must be kept cold, TIPS-trained people on site at all times, and no food to be served.

Building Commissioner: No concerns

Treasurer/Collector: n/a (business not in Hopedale, business owner does not reside in Hopedale)

Fire: Fire detail not required

Town Clerk: The Curling Club has applied for a raffle permit

## Martha White

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**From:** McDonald, Mia (DEP) <Mia.McDonald@mass.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024 1:30 PM  
**To:** Mitchell Ruscitti  
**Cc:** Schmitz, Judith (DEP); Roth, Kimberly (DEP); Hopedale Conservation Commission; Martha White  
**Subject:** Hopedale Conservation and the MA WPA  
**Attachments:** Interim RDA Web Instructions Final Draft 3.31.23 (1).pdf; Interim RDA Form Final Draft 4.28.23 (1).pdf

Hello Mitch – Thank you for taking the time to speak with me on the phone yesterday. As we discussed, it appears that Hopedale does not currently have a Conservation Commission with enough Commissioners to hold meetings and therefore the role of the Conservation Commission currently falls on the Board of Selectmen. You mentioned that your BOS intends to appoint new conservation commissioners, and then the ConCom will be meeting again.

In the meantime, MassDEP is in receipt of two complaints that appear to be violations of the MA Wetlands Protection Act, both located along, in or near Hopedale Pond. We received a complaint and photos of clearing of vegetation along an area referred to as the Peninsula and a footbridge. We also received a complaint and photos of a ramp installed on a building near the bank of the pond.

Any site work in a wetland resource area or within 100 feet of a wetland resource area and 200 feet of a perennial stream requires a permit from the Conservation Commission. In order to bring the ramp work into compliance, it is recommended that the project proponent file an after-the-fact (ATF) permit application for the work. I've attached a WPA Form 1 Request for Determination of Applicability and supporting instructions. Once the project proponent is identified, they should move forward with the permit applicant to avoid possible enforcement and fines.

The clearing of vegetation appears to not be associated with a project and therefore the Commission/BOS may want to address this as part of a violation and required restoration of the area. When a violator is not identified, the landowner is responsible for the violation and subsequent restoration. This violation should be placed on the next Conservation Commission/BOS agenda and a plan for issuance of an enforcement order with required restoration may be considered.

I remain available to you, your BOS, your new Conservation Commission and even the possible violator to assist in bringing these sites into compliance. I'm also available to train new staff and/or commissioners on the MA WPA.

Thank you,

Mia McDonald  
Circuit Rider/Environmental Analyst  
MassDEP Wetlands Central Regional Office  
Cell: 857-303-2114

Excerpts from the SLFRF<sup>1</sup> Compliance and Reporting Guidance  
December 14, 2023/Version: 5.4

**Deadlines for committing and expending funds:**

- Recipients may use SLFRF funds to cover eligible costs incurred between March 3, 2021 – December 31, 2024<sup>2</sup> (page 7) (*All funds must be committed by December 31, 2024*)
- Funds must be expended by December 31, 2026 (page 7)

**Reporting requirements:**

- Recipients must submit an initial Interim Report and, for communities with population less than 250,000, an annual Project and Expenditure Report. (pages 8, 18 and 20) (see also Treasury Department's 2022 final rule and 2023 IFR for further information)
- Interim Reports were required to be submitted by August 31, 2021. *It appears that the Interim Report was not submitted.*
- The initial Project and Expenditure Report was required to be submitted to Treasury by April 30, 2022 for the period March 3, 2021 through March 31, 2022. Subsequent "P&E Reports" cover the period April 1 through March 31 and must be submitted to Treasury by April 30 each year. *It is unclear if these reports have been submitted, however, it is our intent to submit a P&E Report by April 30, 2024 that covers all expenditures to date.*
- A final P&E Report covering the period April 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026 must be submitted to Treasury by April 30, 2027. (page 20-21).
- Recipients that expend more than \$750,000 during a fiscal year are subject to an audit under the Single Audit Act and regulations at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F. (page 14) *We have not expended more than \$750,000 in any one fiscal year.*

<sup>1</sup> The State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) was established through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which was signed into law March 11, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Organizations may use SLFRF funds to cover eligible costs incurred between March 3, 2021 and December 31, 2024; award funds for obligations incurred by December 31, 2024 must be expended by December 31, 2026.

Hopedale ARPA Tracking 26-123-5153-5700

Non-Entitlement Community Allocation \$ 311,441.28 \$ 311,441.28  
 Non-Functional County Redistribution Amount \$ 1,155,912.00 \$ 577,955.99  
 Total: \$ 1,778,795.00 \$ 889,397.27 \$ 1,778,794.54

**\*\*UP TO DATE AS OF 2/27/2024\*\***

Item/Project	Department	Committed by SB	Expended * FY22	Expended * FY23	Expended * FY24	Balance	Date of SB Vote/ Other	UNSPENT BALANCES/ AVAILABLE FUNDS
Water Sourcing	Water	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 197,731	-	\$ 2,269.00	\$ 2,269.00		\$ 2,269.00
Water Tank	Water	\$ 165,000.00	-	\$ 149,865.00	\$ 15,135.00	\$ 15,135.00		\$ 15,135.00
COVID Tests	Police	\$ 122.34	\$ 122.34	-	-	-		-
COVID Test Kits for Distribution	Town	\$ 4,408.00	\$ 4,408.00	-	-	-		-
COA Pandemic-related services	COA	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 1,456.00	\$ 2,304.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00		\$ 40.00
Emergency Tree Work - Town Trees	Town Manager	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 15,275.00	\$ -	\$ 2,225.00	\$ 2,225.00		-
Lucas Auto Pulse	Fire	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00		-
2024 Freightliner 108SD Plow Truck	Highway	\$ 279,756.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 279,756.50	\$ 279,756.50		-
Status of Hope	Library	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,100.00	\$ 14,100.00		-
Town Park Renovations & Cost Determination	Parks	\$ 17,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 375.00	\$ 375.00	STOP SPENDING	\$ 375.00
Cruiser (Chevy Tahoe)	Police	\$ 56,770.00	\$ -	\$ 56,015.00	\$ 755.00	\$ 755.00		\$ 755.00
JSHS Boiler(1)	Schools	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -	\$ 133,879.00	\$ -	\$ -	STOP SPENDING	\$ -
Security System/Cameras	Treasurer	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,940.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00	STOP SPENDING	\$ 60.00
Fuel Dispensing Equipment Upgrade	Highway	\$ 19,000.00	\$ -	\$ 15,700.00	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 3,300.00		-
Generators @ Schools (for sheltering)	Town	\$ 400,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 400,000.00		-
Hire Recruiter for TA search	Town	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 9,200	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00		-
MS4 Stormwater Permitting	Highway	\$ 120,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,140.33	\$ 115,859.67	\$ 115,859.67	11/14/2022	-
Dam Inspection	Town Hall	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,875.00	\$ 10,625.00	\$ 10,625.00	3/13/2023	-
Design of Adin Street	Town	\$ 70,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	3/27/2023	-
Fire Dept Hose (was \$56,000)	Fire	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,265	\$ -	\$ -	rescinded 9/11/23	-
Police Motorcycle	Police	\$ 26,000.00	\$ -	\$ 24,725.00	\$ 1,275.00	\$ 1,275.00	4/10/2023	\$ 1,275.00
Hardware and Software	TA	\$ 29,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	4/10/2023	-
Tax Title	Collector	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,427.00	\$ 18,573.00	\$ 18,573.00	4/10/2023	-
Tree Funds	Town Manager	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 19,500.00	\$ 19,500.00	6/12/2023	-
Office security measures	Town Building	\$ 6,784.00	\$ -	\$ 6,534.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	8/14/2023	\$ 250.00
GIS Cartography	Assessor	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	8/14/2023	-
Bancroft Library HVAC engineering	Library	\$ 52,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 52,000	\$ 52,000	9/11/2023	-
Dance/Movement & Literature classes	COA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	9/25/2023	-
Jr.-Sr. High School water heater	Schools	\$ 23,549.00	\$ -	\$ 23,549.00	\$ -	\$ -	10/2/2023	-
Jr.-Sr. High School water heater	Schools	\$ 3,365.00	\$ -	\$ 3,365.00	\$ -	\$ -	11/13/2023	-
Assessor Migration Services	Town Building	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ -		-
Total Expended to Date		\$ -	\$ 208,717.34	\$ 446,493.33	\$ 73,090.00	\$ 723,301.00		
Total Committed		\$ 1,722,754.84	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,774,699.17		
Balance Available/Uncommitted:		\$ 56,040.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,975		\$ 20,959.00

(1) \$33,879 was deducted from School Dept. budget (ARPA allocation not overspent)

## Special Warrant Language Request

**BLACKSTONE VALLEY VOCATIONAL  
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Member Town Hopedale**

**Article** : To see if the Town will vote to approve the creation of a stabilization account, voted by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District Committee on September 14, 2023, which will enable the Regional District to address capital improvement items via self-funding and avoid dependence upon operational budget funding.

### **Stabilization Account Rationale**

This article seeks no fiscal appropriation. The creation of a stabilization account is consistent with account classification practices recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, the Regional School District Treasurer, and independent auditors.

The establishment of a stabilization account will enable the Regional District to address capital improvement items via self-funding and avoid dependence upon operational budget funding. It is a common procedure among the Commonwealth's eighty regional school systems.

## Special Warrant Language Request

**BLACKSTONE VALLEY VOCATIONAL  
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Member Town Hopedale**

**Article** : To see if the Town will vote to approve the \$10,000,000 debt authorized by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District Committee on February 15, 2024, to pay costs of roof reconstruction and the replacement of rooftop HVAC units at the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, located at 65 Pleasant Street, Upton, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, or to take any other action relative thereto.

### **Suggested Motion**

**Motion:** That the Town approves the \$10,000,000 debt authorized by the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District Committee on February 15, 2024, to pay costs of roof reconstruction and the replacement of rooftop HVAC units at the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, located at 65 Pleasant Street, Upton, including payment of all costs incidental or related thereto.

**From:** Murray, Brian - Rep. (HOU) <[Brian.Murray@mahouse.gov](mailto:Brian.Murray@mahouse.gov)>

**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 6:32 AM

**To:** Chief Daige <[firechief@hopedale-ma.gov](mailto:firechief@hopedale-ma.gov)>

**Cc:** Mitchell Ruscitti <[mruscitti@hopedale-ma.gov](mailto:mruscitti@hopedale-ma.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Hopedale Civil Service

Chief Daige,

As a follow-up to you on this bill, I received the following email from the House Chair on the Joint Committee on Public Service last week:

“Colleagues:

You are receiving this email from the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Service because you have filed one of 18 home rule petitions in which a municipal department is seeking to leave civil service. We understand that as the sponsor of a Home Rule Petition it is your desire for the Committee to release these bills, and that our municipalities feel the need for more flexibility in hiring than is offered through the Civil Service system. However, the Committee feels this need must be balanced with the interest of our veterans, labor, our marginalized communities and others. The Chairs have filed the attached bill to propose a 10-year pilot program to augment our current system. Should this bill move through the legislative process favorably, it promises to be a compromise that meets the needs of the municipalities and these other groups.

The bill number is H.4436 and we will have a hearing for it on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. To give you the best opportunity to read through the legislation, we have attached it. Here is a summary of the most significant proposed changes:

Sections 5 and 8 of this bill will create an “alternate path” to municipal civil service jobs in police and fire for civil service departments. It will allow municipal civil service departments to hire up to 50 percent of their openings outside of the current civil service system. That means that through this alternate path they are free to hire the candidate of their choice, without the need for that candidate to take the civil service exam or be included on an eligible list, as long as they adhere to a vetting process. Once a municipal department files a Memorandum of Understanding (“MUA”) with the Human Resources Division (“HRD”) of Administration and Finance, agreeing to use Basic Merit Principles as defined in statute, they may make use of this system.

Section 11 provides for access to a new language certification list for Civil Service hiring, with certain restrictions. Section 13 requires participating municipalities to submit a hiring report every two years, to be reviewed by HRD for compliance.

Section 15 of the legislation provides for a new “regional” residency classification for appointments on the civil service side of hiring, for towns and cities with populations less than 75,000. These municipalities that exhaust a residency list (or choose not to use one) may call for a list of residents whose municipalities fall within 10 miles of the hiring municipality. Cities with a larger population may join with other municipalities to voluntarily create larger regional alliances for purposes of hiring. Graduates of public high schools that are not located in their residential communities, such as METCO students, may choose the community where they attended school to be their place of residence for the residency list.

Section 22 proposes to create an office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within HRD to help municipalities provide opportunities for applicants from diverse communities. Section 21 proposes a permanent board consisting of important stakeholders to oversee the pilot program.”

This is the legislation that I had discussed with the Chair last year and referenced in my December 1st email to you. As you can see from the Chair, it is the way that the committee is looking to proceed with the several similar bills to ours.

If you have any questions, please let me know. I would anticipate that the committee issues a favorable report on this bill following the public hearing and that it would most likely be passed by the full House prior to July 31st (the end of Formal Session) unless there is some significant, unanticipated opposition.

Sincerely,

Brian W. Murray  
Vice Chair Joint Committee on Transportation



# Excerpt from: The Chapter 30B Manual (Office of the Inspector General)

## CHAPTER 7. Disposal of Surplus Supplies

Chapter 30B sets out procedures to ensure that you obtain good value when you dispose of supplies that your local jurisdiction no longer needs.<sup>92</sup> These rules apply to all tangible surplus supplies with a resale or salvage value, including motor vehicles, machinery, computer equipment, furniture, and other materials and supplies. The term "supplies" does not include real property.

Local jurisdictions must have written procedures for surplus supplies valued at less than \$10,000. You may dispose of a surplus supply with a resale or salvage value of less than \$10,000 using any method authorized by the written procedures established by your local jurisdiction. Your local jurisdiction must adopt written procedures before disposing of surplus supplies. These written procedures might include a process for posting the sale of surplus supplies on your local jurisdiction's website, advertising them in the local newspaper or seeking informal quotes for the supplies. Alternatively, your procedures might allow your local jurisdiction to hold a yard sale or a silent auction to sell the items

**You can swap or sell surplus supplies within your own local jurisdiction, with other local governments, with the Commonwealth or other state governments, or with the federal government.** These transactions are not subject to the surplus supply disposal procedures of Chapter 30B because they are intragovernmental agreements or intergovernmental agreements.

Develop and distribute to all departments a set of the approved procedures related to the disposal of surplus supplies.

***Sale by bid or auction for surplus supplies valued at \$10,000 or more.*** For supplies with a resale or salvage value of \$10,000 or more, you can use either of two methods of sale: sealed bids or public auction.<sup>93</sup> As discussed in more detail in this chapter, you also may trade in surplus supplies when making new purchases.

The following steps apply to the sale of surplus supplies by either soliciting bids or holding a public auction:

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<sup>92</sup> M.G.L. c. 30B, § 15.

<sup>93</sup> Police departments must auction unclaimed property pursuant to M.G.L. c. 135, § 8.



# Town Of Hopedale

## Procedures for disposal of surplus supplies valued at less than \$10,000

As required by MGL Chapter 30B, local jurisdictions must have written procedures for disposal of surplus supplies valued at less than \$10,000, including motor vehicles, machinery, computer equipment, furniture, and other materials and supplies.

Any Hopedale Town Department that wishes to dispose of a surplus item with a resale or salvage value of less than \$10,000.00 must comply with the following requirements:

- Identify items the department needs to dispose of
- Identify the resale or salvage value of each item
- Have the list reviewed and approved by the Department Head
- Approval of the Select Board or School Committee, as applicable, is required before disposition of any single item valued over \$2,500
- Surplus supplies must first be offered to all other municipal departments (both General Government and School Department). This can be done via email to departments heads advising them they have 2 weeks to respond.
- Remaining surplus supplies can be offered to Town/School employees through an informal "word-of-mouth" or other notification, giving priority to members of the department in which the disposable items are housed. Employees must purchase the surplus item at the previously-identified resale value. The department head disposing of the surplus supplies may determine how long to make the items available to employees as well as the manner in which preference will be given when more than one interested party wants to purchase a surplus item.
- A list of all remaining items and their value will be sent to the Town Administrator or School Superintendent, as applicable, who will determine final disposition which may include:
  - Offering higher-valued items to the community via the Town website or other advertising method
  - Properly disposing/recycling of the items
  - Other, to be determined by the Town Administrator or School Superintendent

Adopted by the Hopedale Select Board \_\_\_\_\_