State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the second day of September 2025 A.D. said meeting was called to order by Town Council President Michael Geary at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 1 Town House Road, Hopkinton, RI 02833.

PRESENT: Michael Geary, Robert Burns, Sharon Davis, Jasmin Roy, Edwin James; Town Manager Brian Rosso and Town Clerk Marita Murray. Town Solicitor Scott Levesque attended via zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Councilors Burns, Davis, Roy, James and Geary announced they were present.

POLICE CHIEF MARK CARRIER

Citizen Citation to Brett Gough and Jesse Carpenter

Chief Mark Carrier noted that he wished to issue two civilian citations regarding an incident which occurred on Monday, August 11, 2025. After reading the police report regarding this incident, he noticed that two individuals, Brett Gough and Jesse Carpenter, were at the scene, did some great work and went above and beyond, so he wished to recognize them. He read the citation which was for outstanding bravery and composure under pressure:

"The Hopkinton Police Department hereby recognizes and commends Brett H. Gough and Jesse S. Carpenter for their extraordinary courage, decisive action, and unwavering composure in the face of a dangerous and uncertain situation.

On 08/11/2025, you demonstrated selfless commitment to the safety of others. Confronted with a victim trapped under a 1,500-lb cement slab, you acted swiftly, remained calm under extreme pressure, and made critical decisions that directly safeguarded lives.

Your actions reflect the highest ideals of citizenship and mirror the courage and dedication we strive for within the law enforcement profession. Through your bravery, you have brought great credit upon yourself and set an enduring example for this community.

The Hopkinton Police Department proudly presents this citation in grateful recognition of your heroism, composure, and service above self."

The victim who was trapped under the 1,500-lb cement slab, Scott, was also present. Scott noted that this accident happened very quickly. When doing your job you always need to pay attention and that day he missed a step. He added that Mr. Gough and Mr. Carpenter are his heroes and he thanked the Council and Chief for recognizing them.

The owners of Jolly Precast were also present and thanked Mr. Gough and Mr. Carpenter. They noted that this was the worst day of their lives for they have never had an employee hurt. She also thanked all of the first responders and appreciated their honoring of their employee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Louise Dinsmore of Richmond and Chair of the Chariho School Committee advised that she was speaking for herself and not on behalf of the entire School Committee. She wished to inform the Council and Hopkinton residents about several upcoming meetings that will be crucial in determining next steps related to facilities planning for the elementary schools in our school district. By law in 2018 school districts around Rhode Island were required to have an elementary school facility plan as part of their five-year capital plan. Chariho has not had a comprehensive plan in many years which makes this work that they are about to tackle quite urgent. The district always has a capital budget to receive reimbursement; the RI Department of Education must approve a five-year plan. She extended an invitation for anyone interested to attend the next School Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle School auditorium. At that meeting the architectural firm, SLAM, will make a presentation as part of this process. This is a critical step that positions Chariho for state review and potential reimbursement for any future projects. SLAM will be presenting options to the School Committee that include renovating the three existing elementary schools, constructing one new elementary school or constructing three new elementary schools. In making this decision, everyone in the district can voice their opinion, whether they have a child in the system or not. She wished to invite all voters, parents, taxpayers, staff and community members to attend the School Committee meeting on September 16, 2025. Following that, there will be town hall style meetings taking place at each elementary school which are to educate the public on the various planning options.

Ashaway Elementary School's meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 6, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. At the School Committee's October 19, 2025, meeting, they must identify which option to pursue for the elementary schools. That option will be put into what is called a Stage Two application to the RI Department of Education in February. She asked the town if they would consider advertising these meetings on their website and on their Facebook page for maximum exposure.

Councilor Geary stated that it sounded like there would be another bond vote coming in 2026. He noted that the Council's biggest job is to look out for the taxpayers. Hopkinton, Richmond and Charlestown do not have open checkbooks, and we are not the same as Providence. Nobody has learned from the other towns who have found out their new schools have cost them millions of dollars more than they expected. Enrollment at the schools is down and Switch Road cannot handle more traffic.

Councilor Davis noted that renovations are one of the options.

Joseph Moreau of Old Depot Road advised that before we knew it, it would be budget time again. He stated that Mr. Rosso was great at obtaining grants and resources. He suggested that there be pickleball courts installed at Crandall Field for it was the fastest growing sport in the country. Possibly there is a recreation grant that could be obtained to assist in installing these courts. He acknowledged that Crandall Field was very wet but hoped this could be done. Mr. Rosso advised that there was a DEM recreation grant that comes out every year. This alternates between land acquisition and recreation. This year it was for land acquisition. When they redid the basketball court it cost more for the drainage system than for the actual basketball court. Possibly they could look at putting pickleball courts at Langworthy Field. Mr. Moreau suggested one court at Crandall Field and another at Langworthy Field to give people an opportunity to play. Mr. Rosso noted that there was research that needed to be done.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER

There were no changes to the agenda order.

CONSENT AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR DAVIS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

SESSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 4, 2025; APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2025; APPROVE GRANT OF EASEMENT FOR 188A AND B MAIN STREET.

IN FAVOR: Roy, Burns, Davis, James, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Board members

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote to advertise positions on the Zoning Board.

Councilor Geary noted that they needed two alternates and one full member. There was discussion regarding whether these openings should be posted on the website and in the local newspaper. Councilor Burns felt that a lot of people still read the newspaper, and advertising in the paper was the consensus of the Council.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR DAVIS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROY TO ADVERTISE THE OPEN POSITIONS ON THE ZONING BOARD.

IN FAVOR: Roy, Burns, Davis, James, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

RFP for Rooftop Solar - DPW

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote to award the RFP for the Rooftop Solar Project at the Public Works' building to Sol Power for the total amount of $153,282.

Town Manager Rosso explained that they had previously gone out for a loan through the RI Infrastructure Bank for the installation of solar at the Police Department and Public Works. They previously went out to bid on this project tbut only received one bid which was significantly higher than what they expected. They decided to hold off and wait for the new fiscal year and went out to bid again.

They received two bids, one from Sol Power for $153,282 and the other from Hillview Environmental for $177,325. These amounts are for the total project cost; however, they should be receiving a grant for $41,000 and a 30% tax credit, for a total reduced cost of $66,645. Mr. Rosso noted that this particular project will produce 135% of the total electricity needed for Public Works, so they will have no electric bill going forward and there will actually be a credit which will be used for the town hall or other town electric bills. We will see a significant savings right off the bat for seven years. The warranties include 25 years on the panels, 20 years on the inverters, labor is covered for ten years and installation for five years. The debt service will be paid off in seven years. After seven years, 100% will go back to the town. There will be a net positive in year one because we are going to save more on electrical cost than we are going to pay in debt service. Councilor Burns asked if there were contingency funds paid for this project and Mr. Rosso indicated no, this was a hard bid. Councilor Burns asked what the condition of the roof was and Mr. Rosso advised that this roof was just redone approximately three to four months ago. Councilor Burns also asked if the electrical panel would support this solar project and Mr. Rosso explained that all improvements were done knowing that eventually solar would be placed on this roof.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR BURNS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR DAVIS TO AWARD THE RFP FOR THE ROOFTOP SOLAR PROJECT AT THE PUBLIC WORKS' BUILDING TO SOL POWER FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF $153,282.

IN FAVOR: Roy, Burns, Davis, James, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Ronald Prellwitz of Main Street noted that Mr. Rosso had indicated that they would be producing 135% and asked if the overage would be coming back to the town in kilowatt hours or dollars. Mr. Rosso advised that it would be dollars. He indicated that it would be a net credit towards the town hall or Crandall House bills. Mr. Prellwitz noted that the dollar amount fluctuates but the kilowatt hours remain constant. Mr. Rosso advised that he would look into this. Mr. Prellwitz also wished

to mirror Councilor Geary's comments about the elementary schools and added that the people in this town could not afford to build new schools; the current school budget was killing us and if they add more this is going to bankrupt the town. Councilor Geary added that the state is giving Three and Four Million Dollar bonuses to developers who are building low income housing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Farm Winery

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote on a motion to either approve or reject a Zoning Ordinance Amendment of the Hopkinton Code of Ordinances, Appendix A, regarding Farm Winery following completion and closing of a public hearing on August 18, 2025.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR ROY AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR BURNS TO APPROVE THE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT OF THE HOPKINTON CODE OF ORDINANCES, APPENDIX A, REGARDING FARM WINERY.

IN FAVOR: Roy, Burns, Davis, James, Geary

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Noury of Maple Court noted that he had a letter signed by all of the residents of Maple Court requesting that the town either remove the 25 mph speed limit sign or reduce it to 15 mph. Maple Court is narrow and has a hard right-hand turn in the middle of it. This road is a dead end and there are no sidewalks. The residents on this road would like some assurances from the town that they are watching out for the children. It is not the residents of this street that go too fast, it is the delivery trucks and other commercial vehicles.

Councilor Geary acknowledged that they did put up a dead-end sign on this road.

Chief Carrier believed the Council would need to pass an ordinance. Councilor Burns wished to have something prepared, and Mr. Rosso advised that he would speak with the Solicitor in that regard.

Councilor Davis advised that the Villages is moving forward and they are looking for volunteers as well as members.

Councilor Geary wished to remind everyone about the car show scheduled for Saturday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Councilor Davis also noted that Richmond Transfer Station now accepts brush.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR BURNS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROY TO ADJOURN IN MEMORY OF SYLVIA STANLEY.

SO VOTED

Marita D. Murray
Town Clerk

A full audio and video transcript of this meeting can be found at:
https://www.youtube.com/@HopkintonRI/streams