State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the fifteenth day of June 2026 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, Philip Scalise; Town Manager Brian Rosso and Town Clerk Marita Murray. Solicitor Stephen Sypole attended via Zoom.

ROLL CALL

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Justin Bentley of Ashaway provided an update on the Chariho School Committee meetings and congratulated the high school graduates and winners of the Skills USA competition. The School Committee unanimously approved a revised health and wellness policy covering physical health, nutrition, social and emotional learning which is already in place in the district. One member had expressed concern that the policy might allow teachers to diagnose or treat mental health conditions without medical oversight, but administrators clarified that only licensed school psychologists and social workers would handle those responsibilities. The Committee also approved a redesigned K-12 physical education curriculum which had no major changes; however, is now shorter and more accessible for families and members of the community. Brian Tetro, Director of Chariho's Alternative Learning Academy (CALA) gave a presentation noting that twenty-two students graduated and advocated for fairer state accountability programs. Also Greg Zenion provided an update regarding the unified elementary school project, noting that after reviewing sixty-three parcels of land across all three towns, the district determined Charlestown Elementary was the best site option. The current design has evolved into two separate buildings and there was a presentation regarding that which Mr. Bentley encouraged anyone interested to attend any future presentations. The facility assessment is expected to come out this month, which Mr. Bentley

believed would show an estimated $52 Million Dollars in needs across the elementary schools over the next five years. This figure would not include an estimated $28 Million Dollars in deterioration costs from natural aging. The School Committee has added a September 8th meeting to review the Stage 2 application. The bond referendum will be on the November ballot and Charlestown will be holding their own local referendum on August 4, 2026, to authorize the use of the elementary site and a public hearing will be held on July 7, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Charlestown Elementary School should anyone wish to attend. Lastly, the Committee approved a roughly One Million Dollar Rural Health Transformation grant to support student health and career pathways, and it also approved routine procurement bids for grounds maintenance and emergency management training.

Jean Arthur of Hopkinton appreciated Councilor Burns' heartfelt speech at the June 9, 2026, School Committee meeting where his protégé Matthew Murray won the MFG Maritime National Welding Championship held in San Diego. She felt that Mr. Murray was very lucky in having Councilor Burns as his mentor. She also noted that she disagreed with the Council's resolution in support of Senate Bill 2239 and House Bill 7632, regarding unfunded education mandates that should not be the town's responsibility but should be fully funded by the state. She believed that RIDE's educational mandates given to the school systems have been discussed at length by professional people who are very informed about the needs of students and have access to educational ideas and information far beyond a layperson's scope. She thought that educational mandates do not come from an authoritative power but are reasoned through voices of many minds. She agreed with Councilor Roy that increases in taxes to pay for unfunded mandates is difficult for the constituents of the town, but maybe the real issue is one of priorities. Currently, the federal government provides 12.7% funding for K-12 education, falling short of the UNESCO's 15% standard. The United States spent $919 Billion Dollars on national defense and $103 Billion Dollars for the education department in 2025. She noted that President Trump planned to expand defense spending to $1.5 Trillion Dollars for 2027, and cut $8.5 Billion Dollars for public schools, $240 Million Dollars for school meals, and $1.5 Billion for vocational training. She felt the defense budget was important for very good reasons, but allocating a percentage towards education

would help alleviate the stress residents feel at local levels. Her other concern was the dialogue that took place at the June 1, 2026, Council meeting when Councilor Davis discussed House Bill 3334 and Senate Bill 3133, the voting rights act. She felt there was very little discussion and a lot of steam rolling and talking over a person. She noted that there were a lot of Hopkinton residents who favor this bill and a lot who do not. It was the Council members' job, representing a diverse voting population to have a discourse that involves multiple perspectives. This type of discourse needs respectful listening, not high volume of voice used to stampede over another Councilor's views and the use of emotionally charged stories that have not been adequately fact-checked. She stated that this act prohibits state and local governments from using election methods or policies that result in voter suppression. It allows courts to require specific jurisdictions with a history of violations to get approval before changing election rules and it mandates that voting booths are provided with multilingual voting materials. In the 2024 presidential election held in Hopkinton, there were no reported cases of voter fraud, and she felt that nationwide instances of voter fraud are rare. She wished for the Council to be careful with how they use the word immigrant in dialogues, and her great grandmother came to the United States from Ireland, she and her family were looked down upon. She wished for all to remember that we are all human beings first and all come from immigrants.

Ron Prellwitz of Ashaway, stated that he supported how the Council voted regarding the Voting Rights Act, and felt the bill was a loophole to let non-citizens vote.

Janaina Stanley of Mechanic Street wished to thank the Council for prioritizing residents' needs by approving a sidewalk snow-removal ordinance. Now that it is summer more children are outside playing and riding bikes and visitors are driving through town at unsafe speeds; she referenced the recent weekend vehicle/pedestrian accident. She felt there were proven cost-effective solutions, such as signage. She added that she was putting together a full proposal which she hoped the Council would support. She asked which Council members would be willing to work with her to submit a formal safety request to the State Traffic Commission for the portions of Route 3 and Route 138, that fall under State

jurisdiction. Councilor Geary thought that the whole Council would support this and expressed his desire for a stop light at the Route 3/Spring Street location. Ms. Stanley noted that she would be doing the research and that she had already mailed a letter to the State to ask for public records regarding traffic and had also emailed the Department of Transportation.

Martha Botelle-Vida of 1066 Main Street suggested that Hope Valley did not have pedestrians before COVID. Since COVID, the pedestrian traffic on Main Street is constant; as well as vehicles travelling in excess of 40 mph. She wished there to be an effort by the Hopkinton Police to monitor the speed of the traffic. She also asked for two more crosswalks, one near Ma & Pa's, and one near St. Joseph's Church. Even though the Hope Valley Elementary School has closed, there are still a lot of children who use the Langworthy Park and she felt there needed to be more signage throughout this area as well. Councilor Roy noted that when Hope Valley School closed, she asked Mr. Rosso to put children at play signage up, because she felt people would speed on the road behind the post office. For safety control, Mr. Rosso noted that the State would need to conduct a study, meaning the process would not be quick, but the Council could begin initiating it. In the meantime, additional signage could be installed. Ms. Vida added that improved crosswalks would also help slow traffic.

Joseph Moreau of Old Depot Road agreed with Ms. Vida that the traffic is very fast in Hope Valley. He added that he attended the Special Planning Board meeting for the proposed Clarks Falls project which is expected to be eighty two-bedroom homes in the area. Clarks Falls Road is an old country road with several farms and he felt that the potential increase in traffic would not be good. Meetings for this project in the past had to be held at the Ashaway Elementary School; however, after the last meeting they now will be held at the Town Hall due to the lack of attendance. He wished more residents would show up to meetings.

Councilor Geary indicated that the Town Council email had been down all last week, and if anyone was trying to email them, they did not receive it and they should try again. He also asked if something was going on in town do not go directly to social media, but to instead call or email the Council to discuss it so they would get the correct information.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER

There were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR DAVIS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROY TO APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2026; APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2026; APPROVE REFUND SUBMITTED BY TAX COLLECTOR; APPROVE MONTHLY REPORT – TOWN CLERK.

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

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

NEW BUSINESS

Congratulations to Chariho High School students for their Skills USA awards

This matter was scheduled for a presentation of congratulations to Persephanie Brass, Jared Minick, Chase Caswell and Matthew Murray for their accomplishments in the Skills USA Rhode Island competition, as well as Matthew Murray for taking 1st place in the Project MFG National Maritime Welding competition.

Councilor Davis read a congratulatory Certificate for Persephanie Brass: “The Hopkinton Town Council hereby extends its warmest congratulations to Persephanie Brass for earning gold at the 2026 Skills USA Rhode Island competition for Industrial Motor Controls. The Town Council extends its sincere pride and admiration for your hard work, dedication and exceptional skill. Your accomplishment reflects not only your personal commitment to excellence but also the strength and promise of our community’s next generation. Thank you for representing our town with such distinction. We look forward to all you will continue to achieve.

Councilor Scalise read a congratulatory Certificate for Jared Minick: “The Hopkinton Town Council hereby extends its warmest congratulations to Jared

Minick for earning bronze at the 2026 Skills USA Rhode Island competition for welding sculpture. Your work demonstrates both artistic vision and mastery of a demanding trade, and it brings pride to your school, your mentors, and the entire Town of Hopkinton. We commend you for representing our community with distinction. We celebrate your accomplishment and look forward to the continued success your talent will surely bring."

Councilor Roy read a congratulatory Certificate for Chase Caswell: "The Hopkinton Town Council hereby extends its warmest congratulations to Chase Caswell for earning the silver medal at the 2026 Skills USA Rhode Island competition for Carpentry. This outstanding achievement reflects exceptional dedication, talent, and perseverance in mastering career and technical skills. Your accomplishment brings pride not only to your school, but to the entire Town of Hopkinton. The Council recognizes the hard work, discipline, and passion required to excel at this level and we thank you for representing our community with such distinction. We commend your hard work and wish you continued success as you pursue your goals."

Councilor Burns asked that the Council continue with this tradition every year for the students. He read a congratulatory Certificate for Matthew Murray: "The Hopkinton Town Council hereby extends its warmest congratulations to Matthew Murray for earning top honors at the 2026 Project MFG Maritime welding competition held in San Diego, California, as well as receiving the gold medal in the Rhode Island Skills USA welding competition. These outstanding achievements reflect exceptional skill, dedication and craftsmanship. Your success brings pride not only to your school and family, but to the entire Hopkinton community. The disciple and talent required to excel at this level represent the very best of our town's young people. We applaud your hard work and look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish in the future."

Save the Bay

This matter was scheduled for a presentation by Save the Bay regarding Hopkinton's Storm Drain Marking volunteer project.

Kate McCarthy, a community organizer from Save the Bay, explained that she wished to discuss their storm drain marking program. Storm drains flow directly into the streams, rivers, ponds, and eventually Narragansett Bay. So, anything that is dumped into the drains, such as chemicals, motor oil, pet waste then pollutes the Bay. She described Save the Bay's Storm Drain Marketing volunteer project, noting that volunteers go out and glue circle markers next to storm drains that say do not dump. The project is typically active from May until October, and is a flexible, family friendly opportunity for people to get involved in the community. She hoped the town would be interested in obtaining volunteers for this program and that the town would put this information on its website. Once signed up, volunteers receive a supply bag containing glue, disposable gloves, tracking sheets, a clipboard, a safety vest, a brush, and a Save the Bay T-shirt. The program has maps that allow volunteers to pick which areas they would like to go to, and she hoped to leave the supply kits at the Town Hall. Mr. Rosso noted that the Town previously had no storm drain markings and we needed the Public Works Director David Caswell to help identify them. He believed this was a good opportunity to engage volunteers for an important cause. Councilor Scalise asked whether volunteers would receive training. Ms. McCarthy explained that volunteers can sign up via the website or by emailing her directly. She would then provide step-by-step instructions, a YouTube training video, and an online tracking sheet for documenting completed locations.

Financial Resolution and Tax Resolution

This matter was scheduled to discuss, consider and possibly vote to adopt the Financial Resolution and Tax Resolution for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.

Elizabeth Draper, Finance Director, was present, and read the Financial Resolution.

TOWN OF HOPKINTON, RI
FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 1

RESOLVED: In accordance with R.I.G.L. 44-5-2(c) (4), that the electors of the Town of Hopkinton qualified to vote on any proposal to impose a tax or for the expenditure of money, in a Town Financial Referendum, lawfully assembled on the 9th day of June A.D. 2026 and **approved** the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. The estimated tax rates are as follows: Real property is $12.44 and Tangible property is $14.66. There is a decrease of 18.6% in the Real property tax rate from the current rate of $15.29.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

RESOLVED: that there were no other questions on the ballot.

RESOLUTION NO. 3

RESOLVED: That the Town Finance Director be and is hereby authorized and empowered to credit any appropriations, fund any receipts or donations which apply against that fund, and all others not so designated to the General Fund.

RESOLUTION NO. 4

RESOLVED: That the several appropriations specified be expended under the direction and supervision of the Town Council, except those pertaining to public school, bills payable, and interest which sum shall be disbursed and paid out by the Town Finance Director.

RESOLUTION NO. 5

RESOLVED: That the Town Finance Director of the Town of Hopkinton be and is hereby authorized and empowered to borrow upon the credit of the Town as the same may be necessary during the present Fiscal Year such sum or sums as may be required to meet the expenses and obligations of the Town, provided however, that such loans shall not at any time exceed the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars ($1,500,000.00).

RESOLUTION NO. 6

RESOLVED: That the over-expenditures in the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Budget, identified by the Town Finance Director, are hereby approved.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED: June 15, 2026

Councilor Davis read the Tax Solution.

TAX RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That the Town Council of the Town of Hopkinton based on the budget adopted by vote of the Town Council on May 5, 2026, pursuant to section 2370 of the Hopkinton Town Charter following **approval** of the proposed FY 2026/2027 budget by the voters at the Financial Town Referendum on June 9, 2026, hereby impose a tax levy at a Town Council Meeting held this 15th day of June 2026, and order the apportionment and collection of a tax on the ratable real estate and tangible personal property in a sum not less than $20,995,150 and not more than $21,995,150. Said tax is for ordinary expenses and charges of the Town, for payment of interest and indebtedness, and for the purposes authorized by Law. The Assessor shall apportion said respective taxes upon the assessed valuations of the ratable property of said Town as determined by the said Assessor of the Town as of the 31st day of December A.D. 2025, at twelve o'clock midnight, according to Law. The said respective Tax Levies shall be applied to the assessment roll as aforesaid and the resulting tax roll certified by the Assessor to the Town Clerk not later than the 15th day of July A.D. 2026. The Town Clerk on receipt of said completed tax roll shall forthwith make a copy of the same and deliver it to the Town Finance Director, who shall forthwith issue and affix to said copy a Warrant under her hand, directed to the Collector of Taxes of said Town, commanding her to proceed and collect said taxes of the persons and estates liable, therefore. Said Taxes shall be due and payable on and between the first day of August and the eighth day of September A.D. 2026 next, and/or may be paid in equal quarterly installments, the first installment of twenty-five per centum on or before the eighth day of September A.D. 2026, and the remaining installments as follows:

Twenty-five per centum on the eighth day of December A.D. 2026, twenty-five per centum on the eighth day of March A.D. 2027 and twenty-five per centum on the eighth day of June A.D. 2027. Each installment of taxes, if paid on or before the last day of each installment period, successively and in order shall be free from all charge for interest.

EXCEPTING HOWEVER, that where the combined total of said tax and additional tax levied is an amount not in excess of one hundred dollars ($100.00) it shall be due and payable in a single installment on and between the first day of August and the eighth day of September A.D. 2026.

If the first installment or any succeeding installment of taxes is not paid by the last date of the respective installment period, or periods, as they occur, then the unpaid quarterly payments shall be due and payable immediately and shall bear interest on any unpaid quarterly payments at the rate of twelve (12) per centum, per annum.

RESOLVED: That the Collector of Taxes shall collect and pay unto this Town's Treasury, as the same is collected, the tax this day ORDERED.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED: June 15, 2026

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR DAVIS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR SCALISE TO ADOPT THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTION AND TAX RESOLUTION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026.

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

OPPOSED: None

SO VOTED

Joseph Moreau of Old Depot Road stated that a friend who had not voted in several years participated this year but was unsure what a yes or no vote meant. He suggested that a brief summary explaining the budget be provided to residents. Ms. Murray noted that the proposed budget and the capital improvement plan were available at the entrance as residents arrived. She explained that the wording of the question is limited by the Town Charter, but a summary sheet could be made available in the voting booth at the next vote.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Rosso noted that the town was awarded a state and local cyber security grant award. They are in the process of finalizing the paperwork now but were awarded $155,000 for end-of-life equipment. The project will include the replacement of aged services, networks, visualization software, edge network connectivity and storage. This would mean the town's switches and servers could be replaced, which is very much needed. There was a lot of vulnerability with the town, and when UpLink was brought aboard, they did a town wide assessment and helped with the grant application. Mr. Rosso felt UpLink has been instrumental in identifying the town's needs and where the vulnerabilities are, including in the Police Department.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Williams of Wich Way thanked Councilor Davis for her efforts with Village Common Rhode Island and Wood River Village. He attended an event in Pawcatuck this past Sunday, where the Executive Director, Caroline Dylan, had nice things to say about Hopkinton, Richmond, and Exeter for their involvement in the Wood River Village. When Councilor Davis first discussed this, he noted that it was about keeping elderly in their homes, taking people to doctors' appointments, and just communicating with them. He felt this was true but also felt there was a

social component involved because they hold events. They have been invited to different events in Westerly and not only are they getting to help people, but they are getting to meet a lot of people too and it's a wonderful thing.

Martha Botelle-Vida noted that she does use the internet but did not know where to find notices. She stated that she did not go to the town's website, but she does read newspapers. She suggested posting the Council's meeting dates in the Hope Valley post office, as well as other post offices. She added that she literally heard about the town's budget vote in that day in the afternoon. Mr. Rosso noted that there was a townwide Robocall that went out; it was posted on the police trailer boards; notice in the Westerly Sun; and, on the town's website. Councilor Burns asked how someone would sign up for a Robocall and Mr. Rosso noted that they can sign up through the town's website. Ms. Murray also indicated that the Town Clerk's office was happy to assist residents in signing up.

Justin Bentley fully supported Councilor Burns suggestion to recognize the students in Hopkinton for their accomplishments.

ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

Marita D. Murray

Town Clerk

Sydney Fernandes

Deputy Town Clerk

A full audio and video transcript of this meeting can be found at:

https://www.youtube.com/@HopkintonRI/streams