

# localtownpages Hopedale

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January 2022

## Select Board votes not to accept free legal advice

*Discussion contentious, offer unclear*

By THERESA KNAPP

After a 90-minute discussion during a mostly-contentious meeting, the Select Board voted on Dec. 13 not to replace current legal counsel Peter Durning of Mackie Shea Durning PC, who is handling environmental matters for the Town of Hopedale in a lawsuit regarding 364 West Street, with David Lurie of Lurie Friedman LLP.

The vote was 2-1-0 with Brian Keyes and Louis Arcudi III in favor, and Glenda Hazard abstaining.

The issue was put on the Dec. 13 agenda after it was introduced by Chairman Keyes during “Public and Board Member Comments” at the board’s Nov. 22 meeting. At that time, Keyes mentioned a social media post by resident Liz Reilly, who is the lead plaintiff in the so-called “10-citizen lawsuit” against the town re-

garding the purchase of Chapter 61 land at 364 West Street; those citizens are represented by Lurie in that suit.

According to Keyes, the November social media post said Lurie had offered to represent the town for free in its litigation against the Grafton & Upton Railroad. As of press time, Hopedale Town News had not seen documentation regarding that offer.

On Nov. 22, Keyes said, “This board has shown that it has faith in who is currently representing them. At the end of the day, we feel very comfortable with the competency of both Mr. Riley from KP Law as well as what Mr. Durning has been able to provide now for quite some time.” He listed several reasons why a change would not be appropriate and said Lurie would likely have a conflict of interest if he represented the town in one

matter while suing the town in another matter.

“Anyway, I did want to respond to that. That we’re going to stay with who’s currently representing us on the matter and that’s how it’s going to be,” Keyes said.

At that Nov. 22 meeting, Hazard said the board had not yet discussed the matter. Keyes clarified his comments were his personal opinion.

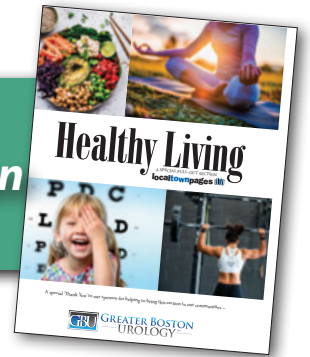
That November exchange kicked off the social media thread referenced by Keyes on Dec. 13.

Hazard also commented on the post which Keyes said “opened it up to an open meeting law violation.” Hopedale has a three-member Select Board. Both board members posted using their personal social media accounts.

**LEGAL**

*continued on page 2*

See our  
*Healthy Living Section*  
Inside...



## Fire Chief says department understaffed and “playing with fire”

*HFD has had 12 resignations in 13 years*

By THERESA KNAPP

Hopedale Fire Chief Thomas Daige is frustrated with yet another resignation from the fire department and says the town is “playing with fire” with an understaffed department.



**FIRE**

*continued on page 3*

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**LEGAL**

*continued from page 1*

Keyes said, "I put a comment out there, on social media, saying — paraphrasing here — that I felt personally 'No way, Jose' on Mr. Lurie representing the Town of Hopedale for free. I got challenged by that by this particular board member [Hazard]...the item is on the agenda because of that."

Hazard said at the start of a contentious discussion that was moderated by third board member Arcudi, "I think this started because there was a representa-

tion on social media about the board having already discussed this, and I wanted to point out that that was not a foregone conclusion - that we haven't had that discussion and I appreciate having this discussion now."

Keyes said, "I don't recall ever making a statement that the board had discussed it and that we had made a decision or I had single-handedly made a decision that Mr. Lurie wouldn't get consideration to represent the Town of Hopedale...My statement was that I am, back it up, in the last open discussion [Nov. 22], I'm perfectly comfortable with our representation that we have;

I think they've served us up until now, so I wouldn't even bring this up for discussion and vote until I was pressed by you [Hazard] in an open forum so here we are."

Keyes said he has the authority as chairman to decide what items are placed on the agenda.

Because the board had not heard from Lurie himself, it was not clear if Lurie was offering to become sole town counsel; to replace current counsel, serve as co-counsel, or serve as a consultant to current counsel in the West Street matter only; or to assist the town only if it goes before the Surface Transportation Board, a possibility if the cur-

rent settlement agreement with GURR becomes void.

"Until we have clarification, we have no idea what the next steps are, and until then I don't see a reason that we would even consider changing counsel or doing anything," Arcudi said after an hour of discussion. "We all agree right now, there's no need to change counsel. Peter Durning is our counsel for West Street, KP Law is our counsel to fight the 10 residents lawsuit, and we are going to move on to the next topic."

Hazard abstained from the vote, saying the matter had "escalated" and that Keyes had

missed her point.

"I'm surprised that this is the motion on the table. This was not the point I was trying to make. This is not a good time to simply fire our attorney and I never suggested that. What I'm saying is that I think Attorney Lurie has something that he can add to the mix going forward but right now we don't know what 'forward' is. So why this motion is on the table is confusing to me from the start."

The matter can be revisited by the future.

Municipal meeting recordings can be found at [www.townhallstreams.com](http://www.townhallstreams.com)

## Town renews licenses for 2022

By THERESA KNAPP

At its meeting on Dec. 13, 2021, the Select Board renewed the licenses for the following businesses for 2022:

- Class I (for new car dealers): D.C. Bates Equipment
- Class II (for used car dealers): Milford Auto Sales; A&S Detailing & Auto Sales; Costa Auto Group, Inc.; Duet Mo-

tors; Lord & Son Auto Body & Paint; Off Lease Auto; Patriots Custom Auto, Inc.

- Common Victualler (for food service establishments that cook, prepare, and serve food for immediate consumption): Christiano Pizza, Cumberland Farms, Maria's Pizza, Hong Kong House, Dunkin Donuts, Beyond Full, Hopedale Country Club

- All Alcohol (Restaurant): Hopedale Country Club
  - All Alcohol (Package Store): Brother's Liquor, Hopedale Package Store
  - Non-Sunday Entertainment: Hopedale Country Club
- For more information, visit [www.hopedale-ma.gov](http://www.hopedale-ma.gov) under "Licenses & Permits."*

## Volunteers wanted

### Seeking Grandfriends for Hopedale Pre-School

Bright Beginnings Center is looking for seniors who would like to volunteer in the classroom. Volunteers will interact with students, helping them in various ways; reading to students, helping them with their work or joining them for lunch. What a wonder-

ful way to start the new year! And interview and CORI check are required. Please contact Carole Mullen at the Hopedale Senior Center — 508-634-2208 — for more details.

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**FIRE**

*continued from page 1*

Daige was before the Select Board on Nov. 22 to present the resignation of the latest full-time firefighter to leave the department which led to a discussion about staffing.

“This is the 12th full-time member that I have hired and watched go out the door to go to a more-staffed fire department as well as better pay in 13 years,” Daige said. “This is a recurring theme, like you’ve dealt with with the police department - same thing with us. We’re investing in these employees for three to four years and they’re walking out the door and leaving it all behind.”

In the employee’s letter of resignation, the firefighter said he was leaving Hopedale after eight years to join the Hopkinton Fire Department where he will be “working with more [personnel] per group and better benefits along with higher competitive wages.”

**Chief says ‘call firefighter’ model is fading away**

The Hopedale Fire Department currently has eight full-time members and three open shifts; they have one out on medical leave and one who was [at press time] set to graduate from the academy in December.

Fire Chief Thomas Daige says Hopedale has a “very young department” - in number of career years - except for three who have been there 22 years, 15 years, 10 years which leaves little room for career advancement.

At a Select Board meeting on Nov. 22, Daige told the board the call firefighter model is “fading away,” noting in frustration, “I’m averaging 3.2 call firefighters on a call - a little over 3 members out of 20 call firefighters are showing up on an average!”

Select Board Chairman Brian Keyes said he issue needs to be addressed “or we’re just going to have a revolving door of some sort and we just can’t afford to do that as a community regardless of our size.”

Daige said Hopedale needs to adopt an officer candidacy program and start developing staff early in their career, and the town has to “make it lucrative to get these guys to stay around.”

Daige said ideal staffing would include hiring eight more firefighters to staff four per shift, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“We can do a lot more on a fire engine with four than we can with two,” he said citing an example of a house fire on Nov. 21 at 9:30 p.m.

“It took the first engine 11 minutes to get there so, I mean, you’re playing with fire, no pun intended, and we have been,” Daige told the Select Board. “I had to explain to the residents, ‘Sorry it took so long but the two firefighters you have on duty are out on a medical call and everybody has to come from home.’”

Keyes said the town has a “critical need” to increase fire staffing.

“If we’re not going to make the investment, regardless of a grant option or not, we’re either going to lose [employees] that we bring in and train, and we’re going to be less safe. Period. It’s that simple,” Keyes said. “And if residents feel like they don’t want to make the investment of their tax dollars and choose to be less safe - I mean 11 minutes to get to a fire call in a basement, are you kidding me?”

Selectman Louis Arcudi III requested the issue be on a future agenda so it can be discussed in detail with Daige.

“I know that, with the police department, we did a revamp of some of the ways we were doing steps and paying people and... it seems that has actually added some value,” Arcudi said. “I’m hoping we can share some of these statistics with the residents as we go into the budget cycle. It may be something that we may be taking a very deeper dive and potentially a very significant increase in next year’s budget, by increasing some of those salaries or changing the payment metrics in order to not be paying for all of these people to come in and train and then leave after two or three years to go to another town.”

**Fire Department receives life-saving equipment purchased through grant**



Source: [www.facebook.com/hopedalefiredepartment](http://www.facebook.com/hopedalefiredepartment)

By THERESA KNAPP

The Hopedale Fire Department has received breathing equipment purchased with a grant and is expecting to receive additional life-saving tools in the near future.

“Today we put our 36 self-contained breathing apparatus units in service that we got from the AFG grant...All the members have been trained to use those new units,” Fire Chief Thomas Daige told the Select Board at its Dec. 13 meeting.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, “Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) are one of the most important items of personal protective equipment used by firefighters and rescue personnel. SCBA allow firefighters to enter hazardous environments to perform essential interior operations including offensive fire attack, victim search, rescue and removal, ven-

tilation, and overhaul. They are also used at non-fire incidents involving hazardous materials and confined spaces where there is a threat of toxic fumes or an oxygen-deficient atmosphere.”

Daige said the department should soon receive an estimated \$50,000 in Department of Fire

Service grants for various equipment such as thermal imaging cameras, multi-gas meters, battery-operated hydraulic auto extrication tools, personal flashlights, etc.

For more information on SCBA, visit <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/>

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# Hopedale signs legal agreement regarding PFAS

By THERESA KNAPP

The Town of Hopedale has entered into a legal services agreement with a series of firms to identify the source of any PFAS that might be in the town's water.

The stated purpose of the agreement is for "investigating and assessing potential claims arising out of the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances ("PFAS") containment in water supply wells affecting the Town's water systems" and to represent the town in any legal action it might pursue related to PFAS.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, "PFAS are widely used, long lasting chemicals, components of which break down very slowly over time."

"The big takeaway is there is no cost to the town," said Selectman Louis Arcudi III. "They are doing this basically as part of a suit. They take on all the expenses as far as fighting the lawsuit... If they were to prevail, they would get 32.75 percent [of any monetary judgment]; if there's no settlement, we don't owe them anything, they don't owe us anything."

Select Board Chairman Brian Keyes said this is similar to the mass tort action the town joined against the opioid industry.

Arcudi noted the suit seeks to identify the manufacturer of any material that triggered the PFAS, not necessarily the physical origin within the town.

Ed Burt, Chairman of the Water & Sewer Commissioners, said his board supports entering the agreement, adding the firms do not require any additional testing for the lawsuit.

## "Your water is safe"

Tim Watson, manager of Hopedale's Water Department, addressed the issue of PFAS at the Select Board's meeting on Nov. 11. He had a message for the public:

"I just wanted to let you know and assure the residents that your water is safe. The well that has the high concentrations of PFAS has been shut off, and requested to be deactivated to save us a few dollars, and that your finished water that's going out to the system at this time, and in the very foreseeable future, is safe to drink... There is no worry about PFAS contamination; we are well, well, well below the limits that are required."

Burt said once the source is identified, "it could become our choice to pursue where that source actually came from in the town."

For more information on PFAS, visit [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

# Hopedale has a new Library Director

The Trustees of Bancroft Memorial Library are pleased

to announce the appointment of Tricia Perry to the position of Library Director, effective November 15, 2021. Tricia earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Smith College and her Master's Degree in Library and Information Science from Simmons College. Tricia has a strong background in library service with over 35 years of experience in public and school libraries in the Greater Boston area. For the last seven years, Tricia was the Library Director at the Westwood Public Library, including the Main Library and the Islington Branch Library. Prior to that Tricia was the Library Director (2009-2014) and Children's and Youth Services Librarian (2006-

2014) at the Millis Public Library. Other experience includes working in the Sharon Public Schools, the Sharon Public Library and the Boston Public Library. She has worked as a children's youth, teen, adult services, reference, circulation, and technical services librarian throughout her career. As someone who genuinely enjoys the daily interaction with patrons, Tricia is looking forward to expanding the customer service and community outreach the Bancroft Memorial Library offers. The Trustees are confident that Tricia is a great fit for the Bancroft Memorial Library and look forward to working with her in Hopedale.

# Town accepts annual wreath donation from Evergreen Center

By THERESA KNAPP

by Select Board Chairman Brian Keyes.

For the 13th year, the Town of Hopedale has accepted a holiday wreath made by the residents of the Evergreen Center in Milford.

The handmade gift was presented by John Morin and two crafters from Evergreen, and was accepted on behalf of the town

According to [www.evergreenctr.org](http://www.evergreenctr.org), the Evergreen Center was founded in 1982 and provides day and residential treatment services for children and adolescents with severe developmental disabilities.

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Select Board Chairman Brian Keyes [left] accepts a wreath from the Evergreen Center of Milford on behalf of the Town of Hopedale. Source: Facebook/Hopedale MA Bulletin Board, post by Brian Keyes on Dec. 13, 2021.

Your Money, Your Independence

# Resolutions Gone Bad: Rein In Your New Year

Making New Year's resolutions to improve your financial wellness in 2022?

Let's help you start by recognizing questionable resolutions, including three destined for failure plus what should be considered for successful planning outcomes.

**Bad Resolution:** *Need to start buying some "X" to make more money.*

Please, tell me more. If due to FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) or based on this year's performance, give pause.

Yes, momentum, innovation, social & macro themes, niche' and/or value could be part of your investing strategy, but let's back up - do you have a strategy?

Is a core of low-cost, diversified index funds present to allow for explore ideas like X? How does X correlate with what is already owned? Impact on overall risk? Without mentioning performance, can you articulate why you own X and when wouldn't own X?

**Better Resolution:** *Need to save \_\_\_% and take \_\_\_ risk with investments to reach \_\_\_ goal.*

To truly build assets, you need to save a specific percentage each year, take opportunistic or measured risks AND invest towards your established goal, not an investment benchmark or The Joneses.

**Bad Resolution:** *Pay down debt.* Sounds important, but is it? It depends. Tax deductions, interest rates, duration, fixed or variable, inflation, deflation, and depreciation ensure all debt is not equal.

**Better Resolution:** *Execute a debt reduction plan.*

Access all debt, then prioritize on high-interest debt, variable rates, and unsecured. If down to a 3% of lower mortgage, 2% auto loans, and a MassSave at 0%, then maintain required payments, reap benefits of low, fixed rates in an inflationary environment and allocate towards investments outpacing inflation.

An exception, if not at ~40% home equity ownership, can make a case to get there and open a HELOC. Beyond flexibility to access equity built and lower total interest paid, can eliminate the opportunity costs of a large cash position for the "what ifs" in life.

**Bad Resolution:** *Do more for my retirement.*

Buy a lottery ticket, as greater chance of success than this vague "lose weight" resolution tossed by January 10th.

**Better Resolution:** *How do I retire at 55 or semi-retire in 5 years.*

Now you're analyzing cash flows, balance sheet, contribution rates, investment allocations, taxation, work benefits, college funding, planning for the unexpected and desired lifestyle with expenses in retirement. You'll establish a set of base facts, allowing to then create scenarios, see projections, reverse engineer action steps, and track goals within timelines.



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How to ensure resolutions are not misguided, outdated, or simply unrealistic?

Use common sense, socialize with your spouse, and/or leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2022 resolutions happen.

*The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.*

*Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.*

# Green River Cannabis receives one-year HCA extension

BY THERESA KNAPP

Green River Cannabis has received a one-year extension on its Host Community Agreement as it works to open an adult cannabis retail store at 5E Condon Way.

CEO Constant Poholek recently changed the proposed location of his business after concerns that the original site, 54 Mellen Street, was not ideal.



Poholek told the Select Board on Dec. 13 that Green River Cannabis is making its way through the Zoning Board of Appeals process, and they are

working on retrofitting the Condon Way facility.

"We're trying to tie up some loose ends to present to the [Zoning] Board at their next meeting," said Poholek, adding they have a provisional license from the state but will have to submit an address change to the Cannabis Control Commission once they make it through the ZBA process.

The HCA is extended through Dec. 13, 2022.



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# Bancroft Memorial Library - January 2022

50 Hopedale Street, Hopedale MA 01747  
Contact: Tricia Perry, Library Director 508-634-2209  
tperry@cwmar.org

## January Holidays

The Library will be CLOSED the following days this month:

Saturday, January 1 (New Year's Day)

Monday, January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

## Hygge at the Bancroft Memorial Library

The holiday rush is over and it's time to relax and unwind and enjoy life's simple pleasures. This January, you are invited to experience hygge (pronounced "hoo-guh") at the Bancroft Memorial Library. A Danish concept, hygge embodies coziness and a feeling of contentment. Come in to read or help us complete a jigsaw puzzle. We have some fun, low-key activities planned for the month!

## Coloring for Relaxation

Every Tuesday this month we will have coloring pages and markers in the Reference Room for ages 12 to adult as part of Coloring for Relaxation. This is a great activity to de-stress!

## Game Night

Spend some time with your family and friends on Wednesday evenings in January from 4-7:30pm with Game Night at the Bancroft Memorial Library. We will put out some games for all ages in the Reading Room.

## Hygge At Home Kits

Starting January 3, pick up a Hygge At Home Kit. There are kits for children and kits for teens and adults. Each kit contains an easy candle holder craft (flameless tealight included), a packet of hot cocoa, some word puzzles, coloring pages, and book recommendations. Check out a music CD, book or audiobook, and you will be ready to experience hygge at home!

## Jigsaw Puzzles

Do you have a puzzle in good condition (with all pieces intact) that is looking for a new home? If you have puzzles you would like to donate, please call us at (508)634-2209, or stop by the Circulation Desk.

## Curbside Pickup

Did you know that we are still doing curbside pickup at Bancroft Memorial Library?? It's true! Call or email us with a request for curbside pickup. We will let you know when your items are

bagged and ready to be picked up. To pick up, just walk in the front door and grab the bag with your name on it. The items are checked out and ready to go. If you can't pick up right away, no need to worry. Just let us know when you can pick up your items and everything will be ready for you. It's that easy! Please email the library at [hopedalelibrary@cwmar.org](mailto:hopedalelibrary@cwmar.org) or call 508-634-2209 for info about curbside pickup.

## Ongoing Monthly Library Events

Helen Symonds Book Group  
The Hopedale Book Discussion Group meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month at 1:00pm in the Bancroft Memorial Library meeting room. New members are always welcome. If interested in joining the group, please leave your contact information at the Circulation Desk.

The group will meet on Wednesday, January 5 at 1pm to discuss *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman. "Taken hostage by an unsuccessful bank robber while attending an open house, eight anxiety-prone strangers--including a redemption-seeking bank director, two couples who would fix their marriages, and a plucky octogenarian--discover their unexpected common traits." - CW-MARS catalog

The book to be discussed in February will be *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett.

"The Vignes twin sisters are identical, growing up together in a small, Southern black community in the 1950's and running away at age sixteen. We follow the sisters as they take different paths, one returning home and the other passing as white. Brit Bennett produces a story that is at once a riveting, emotional family story and a brilliant exploration of the American history of passing." -Book Summary

## Wednesday Needlework Group

Have you been completing needlework crafts for a while but want to spend time with others? Perhaps you have always wanted to learn how to knit? Join Knovel Knitters for an evening of needlework every Wednesday night from 6:00pm until 7:45pm. No commitment required - come when you can!

## Friends of the Hopedale Library

Thank You!  
The Friends of the Hopedale Library would like to thank all of the donors that made our November Raffle Baskets such a great success. Thank you to everyone who supported us by buying a ticket as well. With your help and support we have raised over \$700 to go towards future children's and adult programming. Our donors were:

Ace Hardware, the Bancroft Memorial Library staff, Beyond Full, Billi Manning, Cumberland Farms, Dairy Queen, Honeydew Donuts, Hopedale Package Store, Hopedale Town Hall staff, Janice Fielder, Karen Pendleton, Lambert's Garden Center, Lowes, Liquor World, Mac Package, the Ross/Rosse family, Southwick's Zoo, and Sue Henley.

## Book Donation Day

The Friends of the Hopedale Library will be holding a "Book Donation Day" in the downstairs program room on Saturday, January 8th from 10 am to 2 pm and Wednesday, January 12th from 4 pm to 8 pm. Books should be in good, non-yellowed condition. We ask that adult titles be 10 years old or newer. Children's books of any age in good condition will be accepted. Donated books will go into our Ongoing Book Sale, which is open whenever the library is! All monies earned from our book sales go right back to the Library to pay for programming and other unbudgeted needs.

Are you interested in joining The Friends of the Hopedale Library? The Friends meet the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. New members are always welcome! Please call or stop by the upstairs circulation desk to join.

## LIBRARY

*continued on page 9*



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# Winter Bluesfest comes to HCA

The HCA, your regional arts center located at 98 Hayden Rowe Street in Hopkinton, is delighted to announce that they will be hosting four amazing musicians for a Winter Bluesfest on January 22nd. This is just one of the many exciting events coming to the HCA this year.

“We’re so pleased to head into 2022 with a full year’s line-up of music, dance, theater, gallery and other special events” says Kelly Grill, Executive Director for the HCA. “Some events will have a ticketed price, while others will be free or ask you to pay what you can. We are working towards the goal of having live entertainment happening every weekend. Keep checking our calendar on the website to see what’s coming up”

The January 22nd festival-style event will feature Chris Fitz, Racky Thomas, Ken Clark and Sonya Rae. Chris Fitz’ music resonates with Woodstock era Baby Boomers all the way to young adults who have never listened to a blues record in their life. His energy and enthusiasm for his profession shines through every performance. The Racky Thomas Band has been a torchbearer for the blues since its formation in 1995, when Racky Thomas collaborated with bassist Todd Carson, guitarist Nick

Adams, and drummer Ted Larkin to make a demo cd, and do some gigs around the Boston area. Ken Clark is internationally known as one of the world’s greatest jazz organists. Ken’s technical ability joined with his natural feel for funk and soul makes for a great experience. Sonya Rae is part of the new breed of blues and soul musicians, always searching for new ways to revitalize the form. A triple threat, her striking musical ability is immediately evident through her soaring vocals, scorching guitar work and savvy song-craft. Often joined by guitar phenom (husband) Ryan Taylor, she and her band are quickly becoming one of the most sought after acts on the scene today.

Tickets for this event can be purchased online at [hopartscenter.org](http://hopartscenter.org)

### About the HCA

The HCA offers arts to all people. Classes, theater productions, and gallery exhibitions serve an inclusive community of students, performers, and exhibiting artists diverse in age, ability, experience, ethnicity, and geography. Created in 2011, HCA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community arts center, fosters and celebrates the creative spirit in everyone.



The Chris Fitz Band



The Racky Thomas Band



Ken Clark Organ Trio



Sonya Rae & Ryan Taylor



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# DECA Holds STEM Event at Woodland Elementary

For their DECA project, the Project Management-Community Awareness team made up of Samantha Pannenberg, Lauren Montville, and Ashleigh Bourgeois planned and executed the Growing Minds event at Woodland Elementary School on November 30th. This event consisted of five STEM-focused activities for students of the extended day program to rotate through.

The goal was to encourage kids to get more involved in science, but also to increase awareness about the non-profit organization Children Across America. This organization is

based in Milford with locations nationwide, and strives to provide kids with the tools they need to better their futures. They offer free educational programs, like the Saturday STEM club, which this DECA project was inspired by, hoping that kids who enjoyed the stations in the Growing Minds event would be eager to participate in programs that offered similar activities. In order to promote them, the volunteers and students watched a short video on Children Across America's missions and programs before beginning the activities.

The most popular station with the Woodland students was creating articulated hand models

out of felt, straws, and string. One of the volunteers leading this station, Emma Bourgeois, described it as "a very fun experience for me, and I really enjoyed talking with the children while doing the anatomy craft to learn more about them." Another station students participated in was engineering-focused, where the kids constructed towers out of marshmallows and toothpicks, and the team with the tallest structure -and most unique name- was crowned winner. "It was really interesting to see the critical thinking skills of different aged students and how creative they were", says engineering station volunteer Madelyn DeMaio.

There was also a coding station, where students learned to use the website Scratch to create unique animated videos; an art station that had kids make their own bookmark by gluing cutouts from magazines that represented their personalities; and a reading station, where volunteers read a book aloud and the kids would draw a picture of their favorite character or scene.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive from coordinators, students, and volunteers alike. 100 percent of volunteers surveyed stated they felt prepared for their station, were likely to volunteer for this event again and would look into helping

out at Children Across America programs in the future. Casey Young, the Woodland Extended Day Coordinator, said of the event: "The kids loved it and it went really smoothly, great planning!"

If you or someone you know is looking for FREE, educational, fun programs for children in grades K-5, please check out Children Across America's website [childrenacrossamerica.org](http://childrenacrossamerica.org), or find them on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

*Submitted by Samantha Pannenberg*

# Commodore Builders Names Hopedale Resident Brandt Wajda Project Executive for its Strategic Projects Group

Commodore Builders is pleased to announce that Brandt Wajda has been named project executive for the company's Strategic Projects Group. Wajda brings nearly 23 years of relevant experience to his new position.

Prior to joining Commodore Builders, Wajda worked at NEI

General Contractor where he held the roles of senior project manager and project executive. Before that, he was a project manager at Consigli Construction, a land development services engineer at Toll Brothers, and a project engineer/surveyor at Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. Over

the course of his career, Wajda has been tasked with a variety of responsibilities from contract execution, project pricing, and subcontractor procurement, to maintaining schedules and relationships with owners, architects, and partners, and more.

"As a surveyor, I was able to see raw land transformed and developed. Now, as my own career has developed, I've continued to value the process of participating in the lifeline of a project," said Wajda. "Collaborating with

internal and external teams and jumping over hurdles together, that's what makes each day interesting for me."

"We are pleased to welcome Brandt to Commodore Builders and have confidence in his ability to execute and support our team's vision for success," said Joe Albanese, CEO, Commodore Builders. "I look forward to working closely with Brandt and to seeing his contributions shape the future of our Strategic Projects Group in 2022 and beyond."



Wajda graduated from The University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth from which he holds a degree in civil engineering. A native of Milford, MA, he currently resides in Hopedale, MA with his wife Amy and their three children, Brady, Bethany and Shayla.

### About Commodore Builders:

Commodore Builders is a veteran-owned construction management firm based in Boston. We're fiercely focused on the art of client service and dedicated to the science of building. Our executives take an active, hands-on approach to every project, leading teams in the field, proactively engaging clients, driving strategy and delivering on our mission to make the process easy. From pre-construction through to project closeout, we serve the commercial, corporate, healthcare, hospitality, institutional, life science, technology and public sectors with passion, precision, and a commitment to getting the job done right.

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# Resignation, appointments, and not seeking re-election

By THERESA KNAPP

At its meeting on Nov. 22, the Hopedale Select Board accepted the following resignation, made two related appointments, and discussed two open seats in Town Hall.

The board accepted the resignation of Jarrod Taranto who served as a full-time firefighter/paramedic with the fire department through November 2021. Taranto was with the depart-

ment for eight years, starting as a Call Firefighter in 2014 and later promoted to Call Fire Lieutenant in 2017. He has accepted a position with the Hopkinton Fire Department.

To fill Taranto's position, the board appointed current Call Firefighter Jennifer Richard as a provisional Step 1 Firefighter/EMT effective Dec. 6, 2021. They also appointed Taranto as a Call Firefighter/Paramedic ef-

fective Dec. 1, 2021, after his resignation went into effect.

At the same meeting, Assessor Donald Howes informed the board that he will not be seeking reappointment at the end of this term (June 2022); and Selectman Louis Arcudi III restated that he will not be seeking re-election at the end of this term (May 2022).

If you're interested in running for town office, contact the Town Clerk's office.

## LIBRARY

*continued from page 6*

The Friends of the Hopedale Library support the Library by providing funds for equipment, materials and programs to supplement the regular operating budget. They offer adult events September- June and fund the children's summer reading and other programs. More information can be found at <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/bancroft-memorial-library/pages/friends-library>.

## News from the Marjorie Hattersley Children's Room

**Wingmasters**  
Bancroft Memorial Library is very excited to bring Julie Collier of Wingmasters to Hopedale on Wednesday, January 19 at 3:45pm with her wonderful program, North American Birds of Prey. Ms. Collier, who has been rehabilitating raptors in western

Massachusetts for more than 30 years, will bring an American Kestrel falcon, a Peregrine falcon, a Red-tailed Hawk, and three owls, including a Great Horned Owl, the hero of the well-known story by Jane Yolen, Owl Moon. Ms. Collier and her partner, Jim Park, are licensed raptor rehabilitators and have a group of non-releasable birds, which they present in educational programs throughout New England. This program is open to children 6 years and older, as well as adults. Registration and masks are required. Please call Mrs. Kraimer to register at (508)634-2209. This program is made possible by the generosity of the Friends of the Hopedale Library.

## Winter Story Hours

January 25, February 1, 8, 15, and 22 at 3:15pm  
It's time for Winter Story Hours with Mrs. Kraimer for ages 3 and up! Come in from the cold and listen to stories, sing songs, and make a craft. Space is

limited. Please call Mrs. Kraimer to register today at (508)634-2209.

## Take Your Child to the Library Day

Celebrate "Take Your Child to the Library Day" on Saturday, February 5 at 11am. Start the morning singing with perennial favorite, Kathy Earabino, and then create a special winter craft afterwards. This program is for children of all ages. Please call Mrs. Kraimer to register today at (508)634-2209.

For updates throughout the month, Friend us on Facebook, sign up at <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/subscribe> to receive library news via email, add the Mobile App to your phone for up-to-date reminders, and sign up at [www.wowbrary.org](http://www.wowbrary.org) to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music. The library webpage is <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/bancroft-memorial-library>.

# Hand-building with Clay Classes at the Hopedale Senior Center

Classes start January 20, 2022 \$5/class  
Instructor: Jackie Alagna  
All levels welcome.  
All supplies provided.  
Sign-up required. Classes will continue throughout the year if there is continued interest. Call 508-634-2208 for more information.





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# Living Healthy

## Glaucoma Treatment: DURYSTA

### Commonly Asked Questions

BY: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.  
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

Glaucoma is a condition that can damage our field of vision. It affects us when the pressure inside the eye is higher than what the eye can tolerate. Glaucoma is treatable with drops targeted at lowering the eye pressure. There are patients who have problems remembering to use the drops and sometimes the preservative in the drop cause irritation, redness and intolerance to the drops. In other instances, one can be traveling and forget to carry the eye drops during the trip. In those instances, a novel treatment using DURYSTA glaucoma implants can help manage the pressure while reducing or eliminating the need for drops.

#### What is Durysta?

Durysta is a breakthrough in the treatment of open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension with FDA approval. Durysta (made by Allergan) will be a game-changer for those patients who have difficulty taking daily medicated eye drops for glaucoma because it frees patients from having to apply drops altogether.

#### How does Durysta work?

Durysta is the first biodegradable sustained-release implant that continuously delivers Bimatoprost, a prostaglandin analog, within the eye that helps reduce and maintain healthy eye pressure levels. The preservative-free medication is housed within a

tiny rod-shaped cartridge that is inserted in the eye's anterior chamber by an ophthalmologist during a safe 5-minute office procedure.

The implant comes pre-loaded with 10 mcg of Bimatoprost in a single-use applicator that your ophthalmologist uses to inject the implant directly into the front side of your eye. This means that the drug delivery system is a one-time use sterile applicator used on you and you alone.

The bimatoprost implant is biodegradable and breaks down naturally over time, so you do not require another procedure to remove the delivery system. It simply dissolves and is eliminated by your body. In fact, most patients continue to have controlled intraocular pressure levels even after Durysta has broken down.

#### How long does Durysta last?

The great news for patients with open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension is that the Durysta implant is designed to last up to 6 months. However, most patients continue to have controlled intraocular pressure levels after Durysta has broken down. This means you'll continue to benefit from Durysta for months and sometimes a year or 2 later. Meanwhile, you'll be free from having to deal with inserting eye drops and worrying about whether the correct amount of medication actually got into your eye.

#### Who is a candidate for Durysta?

Durysta is indicated for people diagnosed with open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. That said, not everyone is an ideal candidate for Durysta and it is contraindicated under the following circumstances:

If you have an infection within or surrounding your eye

If you have undergone a corneal transplant

If you are diagnosed with corneal endothelial cell dystrophy

If your posterior lens capsule is ruptured or absent

If you are allergic to bimatoprost or to the components of the implant

#### What are the side effects of Durysta?

As with any medication, clinical trials have shown that some people can experience side effects from Durysta. However, the interesting thing about the Durysta trials was that patients who were randomized to receive Durysta actually experienced fewer side effects than the control group patients taking standard glaucoma eye drops.

It's highly unusual for a new medication to exhibit fewer side effects than the standard medicine it's being compared to, but that's exactly what happened with Durysta. The Durysta patients had fewer complaints and tolerated the medication better than the patients using traditional glaucoma eye drops. Fewer side effects and better eye pressure



control make for a compelling argument to consider switching to Durysta.

Some adverse events for Durysta patients can include:

- Eye redness
- Eye irritation
- Eye pain
- A foreign body sensation within the eye
- Light sensitivity (photophobia)
- Blurred vision
- Headache
- Conjunctival hemorrhage
- Iritis
- Increased intraocular pressure

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Also, the safety of taking Durysta during pregnancy has not been studied.

#### Is Durysta for me?

If you have tried other treatments for glaucoma, including eye drops and they did not work, or If you've found eye drops are challenging or you can't use them as prescribed, contact us. Eye drops are not always the best option for every patient, and Durysta may be a better solution.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, Dr. Kaldawy was among the first surgeons in the area to offer Durysta. We perform the procedure in a state-of-the-art surgery center in Milford and closer to home. With this center available to you here in your backyard there is no reason to travel hours to have eye surgery and laser glaucoma surgery. If your eye provider is still recommending you travel far away to have eye surgery, we are available for a second opinion. We are proud to offer excellence in glaucoma management and surgery with world class outcomes and here is the great news: In Milford, and closer to home than ever before!

For more details, see our ad on page 10



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# Tribute garden dedicated to memory of Abbe Lawrence

**Beloved educator and teacher started her career at Bright Beginnings**

By THERESA KNAPP

In November, the community gathered to dedicate a tribute garden and granite bench in memory of Abbe Lawrence, a beloved educator and friend, who died earlier this year from pancreatic cancer.

Lawrence began her career at the Bright Beginnings Center. This garden lines the sidewalk as one enters the building.

According to the “abbe-lawrence-tribute-garden” GoFundMe page, which raised nearly double its original goal, the dedicated space highlights “Abbe’s love of gardening, birds and nature along with her joyful time working with the children. It is our hope that the students



**This granite bench is part of the Abbe Lawrence Tribute Garden at the Bright Beginnings Center. Lawrence started her career at Bright Beginnings and died earlier this year from pancreatic cancer. Credit: Theresa Knapp**

will add their whimsical, unique touches and will care for the garden, making it a magical place for their annual release of butterflies.”

Lawrence retired from the Hopedale school system in 2019

where she was an applied behavioral analyst and special education therapist. She also worked at the Memorial Elementary School where another bench is planned, according to the GoFundMe page.

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# Spotlight on the Little Red Shop Museum

## Part of the Bi-State Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

A small staff of volunteers, at the Little Red Shop Museum, has been quite busy with tasks related to the resumption of Museum operations since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in June 2021. The Museum has kept regular hours, open for visitors on the first and third Sundays of each month from 1 – 4 p.m. and every Wednesday evening from 6 – 8 p.m. During the colder months, the plan is to maintain the Museum’s established Sunday hours.

Due to the demolition of the Draper factory over the last year or so, there is an increased interest in Hopedale history, attracting numerous visitors from near and far. The availability of souvenir bricks at the Museum, from the Draper factory buildings, has helped to spur this increase. Many individuals have chosen to make donations to the Museum as they select bricks to take home as keepsakes or gifts for others. A special certificate accompanies

the bricks. The donations go directly into the Little Red Shop Museum donation account, held in a Town ledger account and overseen by the Hopedale Historical Commission.

The Museum has resumed its participation in community events, having been present at the annual Hopedale Day in the Park on September 18th, and participated in the 10th annual Hopedale Downtown Winter Stroll on December 4th, co-sponsored by the Friends of Historic Hopedale and the Hopedale Community House. The Museum also hosted two Plein Air Painting events; the first during Day In The Park, and the second on November 10th by noted local artist Verne Thayer.

We have begun the process of replacing interpretive signage here in Town explaining the history of Hopedale from its inception as a utopian communal settlement based on principles of Christian Socialism, equality of all, shared ownership, pacifism,



abolitionism, and temperance to its evolution as an industrial community with expansive employment and planned housing and services provided by the Draper Corporation. We are partnering with both the National Park Service and the Blackstone Heritage Corridor on this interpretive sign project.

As we gear up the operations inside the Museum, volunteers have curated a few revolving exhibits: artifacts from the Draper

Corporation, early 20th century Draper Corporation Employee Field Days, Hopedale community life, and recognition of Hopedale veterans. In January, we plan to have a small exhibit about ice cutting on the Hopedale Pond, and in February plan to have a presentation and exhibit about the history of Valentines, especially as the history pertains to nearby Worcester, Massachusetts. We are also working on a children’s area at which we hope

to have exhibits and activities of particular interest to young people.

If you are interested in the valuable work of educating the public and helping to connect our rich history to present day life in Hopedale, please visit the Museum or contact Sue Ciaramicoli, Volunteer Curator, at [sciaramicoli@comcast.net](mailto:sciaramicoli@comcast.net).

*Authored by Sue Ciaramicoli, Volunteer Curator, December 2021*



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## Sports

# Sejal Abraham Hoping Cross Country Season Translates to Winter Track

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Five years ago, when she was entering the seventh grade at Hopedale Junior Senior High

with my efforts over the years I've been getting better by the year."

In fact, according to Assistant Coach Sarah Rafferty, Abraham had a really good cross-country season this past fall and she is

ning participating in the likes of the 600- and 1000-meter races. She will also be a co-captain this season being one of the older girls on the squad where she and the other captains took it upon

ing the cross-country season, she is much more comfortable with track and hopefully she can take her running to the next level this season as well.

"Track is a nice change of pace from cross-country for me. While you're running cross-country on the terrain, track is a totally different game inside and on a much shorter distance," Abraham said. "I like the way the mile is broken up (4 laps) instead of running a straight 5K. Inside you can watch the clock and work on your goal time in your head."

Abraham originally started by running the 200 and 400 during the spring season, but now she prefers the mid-distances up to the mile. Her goal is to improve her speed while building up her stamina and getting in better

shape as she believes they'll still have to wear masks while running indoors this upcoming season.

"Last year due to Covid we had to start wearing masks. The masks made it really tough and obviously compromises your breathing; it's uncomfortable and annoying," she said. "We'll probably still have to wear them this year, but it should be a little better as we'll be somewhat used to them. It will be interesting to see how things go; hopefully, they don't interfere as much and we're running better than a year ago."

Abraham and her track teammates are hoping to get back to running like the Blue Raiders of the past, near the top finishers of each event.



School, Sejal Abraham had a lot of friends who were going to try out for the cross-country team, so she decided to tag along with them. After falling in love with the sport following that tryout the now junior is running three seasons for the Blue Raiders.

"I found that cross country had a fun dynamic to it, and I really enjoyed going to practice being with my friends. Running in general clears my mind," she said. "When I joined in middle school and even in the beginning of my high school career, I honestly was not that good, but

hoping that it translates into the winter track season.

"Obviously, we had the ups and downs of a season, but by putting in the time and effort in my running and workouts I've gotten better," Abraham said. "Last year I was the seventh runner on the cross-country team, this year I've moved up to fourth and I'm hoping my improvement carries over to the track season."

Abraham believes that her focusing on her summer running helped her cross-country season. Entering the winter track season Abraham sees herself focusing on middle distance run-

ning themselves to organize the captain practices and runs. Like her summer training she is looking to improvement this winter.

"Sejal has been running cross country and track and field all three seasons since the seventh grade and has improved over the years," Hopedale Coach Tim Maguire said. "She made a big jump from last year to this year in both her racing performances and as a team leader. With a very young group of girls she will definitely be a key factor in their development."

Although she found herself performing on a higher level dur-

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**JANUARY 2022 - HOPEDALE SR. CENTER ACTIVITIES (508)634-2208**



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	4 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	5 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	6 1:00 pm Tai Chi	7 8:30 am Podiatry Clinic 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance
10 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	11 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	12 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	13 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	14 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance
17  Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. Martin Luther King Jr. Martin Luther King Holiday	18 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	19 9:30 am Nurse Clinic 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	20 9:00 am New Years' Breakfast 10:00 am Watercolor Class 10:00 am Knitters' Group 1:00 pm Tai Chi 1:30pm Hand-building w/ Clay	21 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance
24 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	25 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	26 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 11:30 am Grab & Go Meals 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	27 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm COA Board Meeting 1:00 pm Tai Chi 1:30pm Hand-building w/ Clay	28 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance
31 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO			<b>HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>  <b>2022</b>	



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# Town awaits clarification on court decision regarding citizens' lawsuit

**Officials say ruling is seemingly contradictory**

BY THERESA KNAPP

Worcester Superior Court issued a judgement in November regarding the 10-citizens' lawsuit filed by 10 Hopedale taxpayers who contend the Select Board (and representatives for the Grafton & Upton Railroad) did not follow the directive of an Oct. 2020 special town meeting to purchase 155 acres of land at or near 364 West Street.

The suit has been making its way through the courts for several months and is now before Superior Court Justice Karen L. Goodwin who issued a decision on Nov. 4 that was unclear to town officials and town counsel.

Attorney Peter Durning of Mackie Shea Durning, PC, is counsel for the town in this matter and provided a limited update to the public at the Select Board's

Nov. 22 meeting.

Durning said the town is in a bit of a "holding pattern" as it awaits clarification from the court.

"Upon review of Judge Goodwin's Memorandum of Decision and Judgement, Brian Riley [town litigation counsel], with my concurrence, came to the conclusion that the Memorandum of Decision just did not contain enough specific information to give the Select Board appropriate guidance about the avenues that it could pursue in the wake of that Memorandum of Decision."

Durning said clarification is needed on Count II.

"Judge Goodwin denied the plaintiffs their request for declaratory relief under Count II because Judge Goodwin determined that those parties lacked

standing to challenge the decision. But she also granted the Motions for Judgement on the pleadings by the town and the railroad with respect to Count II. Yet in her discussion, she notes that it is within the [Select] Board's sole discretion to determine to seek town meeting approval for the settlement agreement, to renew its attempts to enforce the option, or to do neither."

Durning said he and Attorney Riley "saw too many difficulties for the town and the Select Board to go forward on one of those three options without clarification from the court, particularly given the litigious nature of this matter and the competing interests of the parties who have already brought actions against the town on this issue."

Select Board Chairman Brian

## Town receives clarification on court order:

As Hopedale Town News was going to print, the town received a decision from the court dated Dec. 14 which reads, in part:

"As previously explained, although the terms of the Settlement Agreement are legal (including the Board's agreement to waive the Option), the Board exceeded its authority when it unilaterally entered into that agreement without Town Meeting approval of the reduced acquisition. Therefore, the Settlement Agreement is not effective. The Board might not hold the required Town Meeting or might fail to obtain enough votes to approve the acquisition. In either case, the Settlement Agreement would fail to take effect, meaning that the Railroad would retain the land and the Town would retain its money and the right to continue attempting to enforce the Option. [footnote omitted] Until the reduced acquisition is approved by Town Meeting, the agreement is not effective, and the Town may (but is not required to) attempt to enforce the Option."

The decision can be found on the Select Board's webpage at [www.hopedale-ma.gov](http://www.hopedale-ma.gov) under the packet for its Dec. 20 meeting.

Keyes said, "The need for clarity is there to make the most sensible decision on the matter and we want to get it right."

Selectperson Glenda Hazard said, "I just wanted to reassure the residents that us asking for clarification does not preclude us from taking any particular action

in the future, and that I understand how you all feel, and that the board has already agreed that we are going to return to that discussion as soon as possible."

A public discussion will be held after clarification is received from the court.

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Date	Hopedale	Amount
12/16/2021	9 Moore Road	\$678,900
12/16/2021	13 Inman Street	\$440,000
12/13/2021	10 Maple Street	\$380,000
12/07/2021	99 Laurelwood Drive	\$339,000
12/06/2021	393 South Main Street	\$220,000
12/06/2021	35/37 Progress Street	\$560,000
12/06/2021	200 Hopedale Street	\$375,000
11/30/2021	128 Hartford Avenue	\$215,000
11/24/2021	148 Laurelwood Drive	\$286,000
11/19/2021	75 Jones Road	\$497,000
11/12/2021	3 Lloyd Street	\$330,000

Source: [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) / Compiled by Local Town Pages



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