

Select Board

February 24, 2026

Present:

- Select Board: Mr. Bill Ramsey, Chair, Ms. Liz Klein, and Ms. Julie Strehle
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations
- Ms. Katie Dugan, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance

Call to order:

6:00 PM: Chair Ramsey called the meeting to order and read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held in person and/or remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 and all other applicable laws temporarily amending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording.”

No one indicated that they were recording the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 3, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 17, 2026. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

Discussion and possible votes on the 2026 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

• **Article MM: Citizen Petition: Amend the Noise By-law**

Hilary Tutko, 22 Hillside Terrace, presented a citizen petition proposing an amendment to the Town’s Noise By-law. The proposed amendment would add language stating that no new pickleball courts shall be constructed in locations where none currently exist unless appropriate noise mitigation measures are implemented.

Clark Frazier, 50 Bonnie Brier Circle, recommended that the Town’s Noise Control By-law be rewritten to provide clear and enforceable standards.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend no action on Article MM, Amend the Noise By-Law. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

• **Article P: Construction of Center for Active Living**

Tom Carey, Chair of Hingham Center for Active Living Building Committee, stated that the committee strongly supports the article, noting it is the result of years of review and addresses a long-standing need. He emphasized that the proposed senior center design is efficient, includes standard programming spaces used throughout Massachusetts, and responds to the community’s needs. Carey urged support for the article on behalf of the committee and the Council on Aging.

The Select Board will hear a further presentation and take a vote at the next Select Board meeting.

Maureen Spillane, 3404 Tuckers Lane, supported the new senior center, citing limited space, crowded programs, and the center's positive impact on seniors' well-being.

Jessica Neafsey, 133 Chief Justice Cushing Highway, asked about the decision for a Senior Center rather than a Community Center, and use for other groups.

Diane DeNapoli, 16 Gardner St, asked if there was flexibility to modify the plans past town meeting.

Clark Frazier, 50 Bonnie Brier Circle, suggested a sidewalk on Bare Cove Park Dr.

Anita Ryan, 37 Baker Hill Dr, asked a question about funding from the sale of the Hersey House to benefit PSF. Ms. Ryan also commented on the cost of the project.

- **Article FF: Health Care Subsidy**

Mr. Mayo presented the article, explaining that it responds to long-standing employee and union concerns about rising health care costs. Currently, Hingham operates a 50-50 health care cost-sharing program through the state's Group Insurance Commission (GIC). The article proposes temporarily increasing the Town's share from 50% to 60% and reducing employees' share to 40% for one year, helping employees with escalating costs and supporting recruitment and retention.

Margaret Curran, 9 Harborview Dr, an 18-year teacher at Hingham Middle School, supported the proposed 60/40 health insurance split, citing steep premium increases that outpace salaries. She said the change would provide financial stability, help retain and recruit employees, and demonstrate the Town's commitment to its workforce.

Jaqueline Beaupre, President Hingham Education Association, supported the 60/40 health insurance split, noting rising premiums strain staff, complicate negotiations, and affect retention and morale, especially for new employees.

Sue Eddy, Town of Hingham employee, a longtime Town employee, supported the 60/40 health insurance adjustment and stressed the need for long-term investment in staff.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article FF, Health Care Subsidy. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

- **Article X: Real Estate Transfer Fee**

Mr. Mayo explained that Article X would allow the Town to implement a 1% real estate transfer fee on sales above 80% of the median assessed value (\$863,000) to fund affordable housing until Hingham meets the state's 10% goal, after which funds could be used for any legal purpose. He noted the program could have generated \$2.7 million in 2025 and would be pursued via a home rule petition.

There was discussion among the Select Board regarding pro and cons of the fee.

Melissa Tully, 29 Backriver Rd, commented on the potential income from commercial sales.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article X, Real Estate Transfer Fee. Ms. Klein seconded. The vote passed 2-0 with Mr. Ramsey and Ms. Klein in favor and Ms. Strehle not in favor.

- **Article G: Transfer from the Stabilization Fund**

Ms. Dugan presented Article G, a recurring transfer from the Capital Stabilization Fund, which was originally funded with bond premiums from school capital projects and currently has a balance of approximately \$1.77 million.

The recommended FY27 transfer is \$178,836, consistent with prior years. She noted the fund has accrued over \$300,000 in interest income, which is not recommended for use in FY27 but may be used in future years to mitigate tax impacts from excluded debt. For modeling purposes, the interest income is currently reflected in FY29 and may be adjusted based on future Advisory Committee recommendations.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article G, Transfer Stabilization Fee. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

- **Article AA: Transfer from the Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund**
Ms. Dugan presented Article AA on the CPC Debt Service Stabilization Fund, established with \$7 million to offset excluded debt for schools and public safety. The recommended FY27 appropriation is \$2.3 million from the \$4.7 million balance, with \$2 million planned for FY28 and \$492,000 for FY29.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article AA, Transfer from the Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Joint Session with the Community Preservation Committee and Advisory Committee:

7:15 pm Carol Tully, Advisory Chair, called the Advisory Committee to order, adopting the opening language previously read by the Chair.

Nancy MacDonald, Chair of Community Preservation, called CPC to order, adopting the opening language previously read by the Chair.

- **Article M: Community Preservation Committee Recommendations and possible vote**

Ms. MacDonald provided a brief overview of the Community Preservation Act, noting that the total FY27 grant funding is \$1,863,538. Recommended allocations include:

- Administrative Fund (Community Preservation Coalition dues, legal fees, administrative assistant) – \$40,000
- Lehner Debt Payment – \$209,179
- Hingham Affordable Housing Trust – \$605,487
- 30 Thaxter St., Roof Replacement – \$299,572
- Victory Statue (Iron Horse) Restoration – \$30,300
- Grand Army Hall Elevator Replacement – \$160,000
- John Thaxter House Restoration/Preservation (Hingham Community Center) – \$185,500
- Plymouth River School Basketball Courts – \$333,500

Advisory Committee and CPC adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article M, Community Preservation Committee Recommendations. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

FY26 Community Preservation Grant Agreements

Emily Wentworth, Director of Community Planning, explained that this is a recurring article to approve awards from the previous year.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to authorize the Chair to execute Community Preservation Committee Grant Agreements to implement the awards approved pursuant to Article 21 of the 2025 Annual Town Meeting for the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund, the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Net Proceeds, Old Ordinary Campus Improvement Project, and Pickleball Courts. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

FY27 Departmental Budget Requests:

- **Medicare**
Ms. Dugan presented the FY27 budget request for Medicare employment tax.
- **Debt Service**
Ms. Dugan presented the FY27 budget request for Debt Service.

Appointments and/or reappointments (for a list of Talent Bank Applicants and Board and Committee vacancies, please visit [Hingham-ma.gov/SB](https://hingham-ma.gov/SB))

There were no appointments to be made.

Public Comment

No members of the public came forward.

Select Board/Town Administrator Reports

The Select Board and Town Administrator thanked the DPW, HMLP, Police, and Fire for their efforts during the recent blizzard.

Ms. Klein wished luck to the High School Hockey Teams who are in the playoffs.

Ms. Klein made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

The Select Board meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Documents:

1. SB Minutes – 2/3/26, 2/17/26
2. 2026 ATM Warrant Articles
3. Warrant Article M – CPC Packet
4. FY26 Community Preservation Grant Agreements
5. FY27 Departmental Budget Requests