

# Select Board

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March 9, 2022

Present:

- Select Board: Mr. Bill Ramsey, Chair, Ms. Liz Klein, and Mr. Joseph Fisher
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Ms. Michelle Monsegur, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance
- Mr. Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations

## **6:00 PM: Call to order**

Mr. Ramsey called the meeting to order and read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending 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.

He announced that Select Board members participating in the meeting were himself, Bill Ramsey, Ms. Liz Klein, and Mr. Joseph Fisher. The meeting was conducted both in person and remotely via Zoom.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

6:08 PM: Ms. Michelle Ayer, Chair, called to order the meeting of the Hingham School Committee and adopted the Open Meeting Law language as previously read by Chair Ramsey.

## **Approval of Minutes**

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 16, 2023. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 21, 2023. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 28, 2023. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Hingham Sports Partnership: Special (One Day) license for Comedy Night 2023**

Mr. Ray Estes, 92 Fort Hill Street, presented on behalf of the Hingham Sports Partnership. He explained that the fundraiser would begin at Loring hall, with three headlining comediennes, followed by a dinner at Tosca. He requested approval of his application for a special one-day license to serve beer and wine at Loring Hall. Mr. Mayo noted that Police Chief Jones had reviewed and approved the application. Mr. Estes added that they have requested a Police detail to assist with traffic flow. Ms. Klein said that she attended the event last year and said that it went very smoothly.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the request of Hingham Sports Partnership, Inc. for a Special (One Day) Wine and Malt Beverages license for Comedy Night 2023 to be held at the Loring Theater on April 2, 2023 from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Amendment to Agreement with Mass Pavement Reclamation, Inc.**

Town Engineer, J.R. Frey and Ms. Kathy Reilly, Procurement and Contracts Manager were present. Mr. Frey explained that Mass. Pavement Reclamation is a paving contractor who assists the Town with a variety of right-of-way improvements throughout Town. He said that they have been very responsive to work with. In addition to a variety of paving projects, they also do a lot of sidewalk work throughout the Town. Mr. Frey reported that they typically get their work done in a timely and efficient manner. Ms. Reilly added that Hingham's agreement with Mass. Reclamation was originally approved in 2021 and explained that the Board is being asked for approval for a third year of the contract. She expects to rebid the contract sometime towards the end of this year or the middle of next year. Mr. Ramsey asked if the company would use their own equipment, which Mr. Frey confirmed. Mr. Fisher asked for more details about pricing. Ms. Reilly confirmed that the contract allows for Mass. Pavement Reclamation to work with Hingham on an "as needed" basis, for a total amount not to exceed \$400,000.

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Amendment to Agreement with Mass Pavement Reclamation, Inc. for Equipment Rental and Labor for the Department of Public Works in an amount not to exceed \$400,000.00. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Agreement with Rotti McGroddy Design Collaborative, LLC**

Mr. Frey and Deputy Fire Chief Dave Levenson were present. Mr. Frey explained that Hingham undertook a selection process through a RFQ process. Ultimately they chose Rotti McGroddy Design. Rotti McGroddy are already working with the Town at the South Shore Country Club on their Master Plan, the pool and the new Maintenance Facility. Mr. Frey reported that he is comfortable with the quality of their work. Ms. Reilly added that the funds for this work were approved by last year's Town Meeting Article 16. Mr. Mayo noted that the amount voted on by Town Meeting was \$2.2M. This agenda item is not related to the proposed Public Safety Facility at 335 Lincoln Street.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to sign the Agreement with Rotti McGroddy Design Collaborative, LLC for the Fire Station 1 Facility Upgrades, including roof, façade, and HVAC replacement in an amount not to exceed \$186,160.00. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Submission of an additional Warrant Article from the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust**

Ms. Jennifer Oram, Zoning Administrator, and Ms. Susan Murphy, Special Real Estate Council, were present. The Hingham Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT) Chair, Mr. Jack Falvey, was in attendance as well. Ms. Oram informed the Select Board that the HAHT is seeking approval to amend the existing deed on the property at 270 Central Street so that it is included in Hingham's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). This would enable the Town to keep Hingham's SHI percentage at or beyond its current 11%. Ms. Murphy added that the current deed includes "local preference" restrictions that would only allow current or former residents or a Town of Hingham employee the ability to purchase the home. Currently, DHCD does not allow this for a single unit. Developments of multiple units, with written permission from the DHCD, currently can have a local preference of up to 70% of its units. Ms. Oram noted that the property is currently unoccupied and has recently been purchased by the Town. Ms. Klein said that she had discussed this with members of the Affordable Housing Trust, who voted unanimously to approve the change.

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to open the 2023 Town Meeting Warrant for submission of Warrant Article EE: Revise and Update Restrictions to 270 Central Street, to recommend favorable action on EE and to close the Warrant. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**FY24 Forecast Update**

Ms. Michelle Monsegur presented the Select Board with an update on the FY24 Forecast, which included the following:

- a 5-year preliminary forecast
- details of Article 6
- FY24 revenue projections
- A breakdown of the forecast categories for FY24
- Totals per fiscal year since 2013

Changes since Ms. Monsegur's last forecast update to the Select Board include:

- The debt service schedule was updated, based on what we borrowed for the Foster School and Public Safety Building projects and updated the projection for the out years.
- The new growth number for FY26 has been updated to \$800,000, based upon the fact that Linden Ponds is planning to build a new Memory Care facility and have begun the permitting process. Ms. Monsegur projected new growth of \$150,000 for the project in FY26.
- The State Aid number has been updated to \$10,592,393, based upon the Governor's first budget proposal. This widened Hingham's budget deficit by approximately \$100,000.
- The Board of Assessors has recently voted to release \$150,000 in excess overlay, which helped the Town's budget.
- The DPW recently came to an agreement with the Union, which increased their budget slightly.
- The Town recently received the new health insurance rates from GIC, which decreased the budget by approximately \$350,000.

Overall, the deficit for the level services budget is just over \$6M, which is down by about \$200,000. The next steps would be a review by the MA Legislature.

**Discussion and potential vote of FY24 Proposed Budget and FY24-28 Financial Management Plan**

Mr. Mayo's presentation to the Board included the following:

- **FY24 Budget Context:** The Town is entering the FY24 budget season with a significant deficit that results from adding critical capacity to school and municipal departments during Covid-19. In addition, Hingham is experiencing the same challenges as many Massachusetts communities, in which the cost of providing services has outpaced growth allowed under Proposition 2 ½. The result is to either reduce services or require an override.
- **A balanced budget:** Mr. Mayo explained that the Town is required by State law to adopt a balanced budget. As of March 3, 2023, the current deficit was \$6,015,216. If the override fails to be approved at Town Meeting, the proposed cuts would go into effect on July 1, 2023. The proposed reductions include the following:
  - General Government – 4.7 FTEs - \$451,006
  - Public Safety – 3.6 FTEs - \$500,503
  - Public Works – 9.0 FTEs - \$536,047
  - Human Services – 2.1 FTEs - \$148,440
  - Culture and Recreation – TBS - \$469,330
  - Total: 19.4 FTEs - \$2,105,326

- The Town Administrator’s Recommended Budget: Mr. Mayo recommended the level of services from FY23 with no service reductions, including \$673,377 of the total \$1,164,277 additional requests from department heads. His recommendation included a \$500,000 additional request to be added to the Capital Budget, to put Hingham in compliance with its Financial Policy. The School Committee’s recommendation included their level serviced from FY23, with no service reductions. It also included additional requests of \$701,874 of the total \$1,547,174 identified unmet needs. A total FY24 override of \$7,890,467 was recommended, which resulted in a total Article 6 amount of \$147,079,365. Mr. Mayo went on to explain in detail the additional requests.
- Projected Tax Impacts and Tax Relief: Ms. Monsegur explained some projected tax impacts of an override. The tax impact on a median assessed value home (\$898,850) would be as follows:
  - Base FY24 property tax bill: \$9,393
  - FY24 estimated tax increase for override: \$781
  - FY24 tax increase for Foster School & Public Safety Facility: \$241
  - New FY24 property tax bill with Override and both projects: \$10,385
  - % increase from base property tax bill: 10.6%Once the Override number is available, a tax impact calculator will be added to the website. Ms. Monsegur explained the 12+ tax relief programs that are offered by the Town. For more information on tax relief programs, please visit the Assessor’s Office or contact them at [assessors@hingham-ma.gov](mailto:assessors@hingham-ma.gov).
- The FY24 Financial Management Plan: Mr. Mayo explained that the FY24 Financial Management Plan has also been called an MOU during its development. It is a tri-party agreement signed by the Select Board, the School Committee, and the Advisory Committee. The Town Administrator and the School Superintendent will also sign, signaling their agreement to implement and manage the terms of the agreement. Key points in the agreement will be, but will not be limited to:
  - No override again until FY28 at the earliest
  - Both Municipal and School Departments commit to growth rate of 3.5%
  - An override amount of \$7.89M.
  - Allow the School Department access to the Reserve Fund Transfer process for Out of Department Special Education tuitions and specialized contracts above a 2% increase.
- Outreach Efforts to date: Mr. Art Robert outlined public outreach efforts that have taken place thus far, including:
  - Two Public Information Sessions have been planned for March 30 and April 11.
  - An information session is planned at Linden Ponds in late March.
  - An informational flyer will be mailed on March 22.
  - A series of five weekly videos explaining the Budget and the Override will be released, beginning on March 14.
  - The members of the Select Board plan to hold office hours to answer questions from residents.
  - Interviews will be released through Harbor Media and local news outlets.
  - The Central Times, the Senior Center News Letter, will continue to contain information on Town Meeting.

- An “information hub” with information about the Override has been published to the Town website. Updates will continue to be posted at [www.hingham-ma.gov/override.com](http://www.hingham-ma.gov/override.com). Residents can also email questions to [override@hingham-ma.gov](mailto:override@hingham-ma.gov).

Mr. Mayo added that budget appropriations (Article 6) require a majority vote at Town Meeting on April 24, 2023. Additionally, an override ballot question requires a majority vote at the Town Election on April 29, 2023. He then walked the board members through the FY24 Override Framework and FY24 Financial Management Plan. The purpose of the document is “to make a public commitment to the residents of Hingham to implement a Financial Management Plan (“the Plan”) in conjunction with a proposed operational override for Fiscal Year 2024. The Select Board, School Committee, and Advisory Committee acknowledge the necessity of following the Plan’s parameters and pledge to work together in Fiscal Years 2024 to 2028 in order to achieve balanced budgets consistent with the Plan’s fiscal restraints.”

Ms. Monsegur then explained the Five-Year Preliminary Forecast that was developed using a financial model created by town volunteer, Mr. John Asher. She said that it has been updated with the most recent numbers as presented by the Town Administrator. The model assumes a 3.5% increase yearly, as outlined by the Financial Management Plan.

There were a number of questions from the Select Board members. Mr. Ramsey asked how long it would take for the recommended four new firefighters to begin work. Mr. Mayo noted that it would be close to a year due to the mandatory training time, etc. so the overtime issue would not be immediately solved with their hiring, but it would be well on its way.

Ms. Klein felt that the creation of a Stabilization Fund is a best practice that is being implemented by several other communities. She encouraged people to think about the services that Hingham residents value and what residents want to continue while also acknowledging that these things may evolve and changed may be needed over time. She also said that before coming up with the level services budget, that process was gone through to look for efficiencies, possible redundancies, and non-critical unfilled positions. She added that the Sustainable Budget Task Force started with looking at expenditures, not revenues. They began by evaluating the four main budgets, Education, DPW, Police and Fire, for redundancies or waste. During their evaluation they found that the budgets were very lean. She acknowledged that many of the additional requests have been requested for many years. She felt that the Assistant Town Engineer position was critical, especially while the Town looks to new development in South Hingham, climate resiliency programs and grant opportunities. She also felt that the Senior Center Program Coordinator was a critical position and noted that the senior population has been saying that they need more services and programs. Additionally, she felt that the budgeting software that was requested would be very helpful going forward. She was confident that the addition of new firefighters would be helpful to solving the overtime issues in the Fire Department. She felt comfortable that these additional requests were in line with Hingham’s Master Plan.

Regarding an override, Mr. Fisher felt that it is necessary but that the Town should proceed with a commitment to the residents to adhere to the proposed plan and its 3.5% annual increase. There was some additional discussion about any additional cost that could be associated with the Foster School

and Public Safety Building (PSB) projects. Mr. Mayo noted that the only new costs that he expects for the PSB are for a custodial person for energy costs. Ms. Margaret Adams, School Superintendent, commented that the costs for the Foster School Building project utilities are within the budget. She did anticipate some custodial costs. The School Building Committee has been diligently seeks efficiencies during their planning process. Fees for preschool and pre-K programs could help offset any additional costs.

Mr. Fisher stressed the importance of the requested budgeting software because it would provide for a better and more sophisticated budget process. He also felt that future economic development is important. Since growth is key to avoiding future override, he felt it will be extremely important for the Town to be properly staffed. He also advocated for a focus on the needs of the seniors in Town.

Ms. Diane DeNapoli, 19 Gardner Street, spoke on behalf of those residents in Hingham who are on the lower economic margins and those with disabilities. She brought to the attention of the Board that there are residents in Hingham who are struggling financially for one reason or another.

Ms. Mary Power, 1 King Philip Path, made some comments regarding concerns about Unassigned Fund Balance, funding for the pool, interest rates, and the Senior Means Tested Circuit Breaker Tax Rebate.

Mr. Fisher explained that the Select Board members are required under Massachusetts State Law to provide a “Balanced Budget” and he wanted to make it clear that the Board’s vote on the balanced budget is not an endorsement of that budget. He wanted to make sure that residents are clear that the Select Board members are endorsing the “Recommended Budget” with their subsequent votes.

Ms. Klein noted that she would like a bit more time to review the MOU, especially since hearing Ms. Power’s comment on Unassigned Fund Balance.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 General Government balanced budget of \$5,477,139. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Public Safety balanced budget of \$16,924,899. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: abstain**

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Education balanced budget of \$61,992,221. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Public Works balanced budget of \$9,745,564 and a recommended budget of \$. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Human Services balanced budget of \$854,385. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Culture and Recreation balanced budget of \$2,295,873. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: abstain

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Enterprise Fund balanced budget of \$16,359,253. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Debt Service balanced budget of \$8,783,729. Ms. Klein seconded.



**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Employee Benefits balanced budget of \$16,584,348. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Unclassified balanced budget of \$1,225,910. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Mr. Ramsey noted for the record that the total FY24 balance budget voted on by the Select Board is \$139,343,321.

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 General Government recommended budget of \$6,027,145. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Public Safety recommended budget of \$17,817,682. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: abstain

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Education recommended budget of \$65,703,985. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Public Works recommended budget of \$10,377,611. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Human Services recommended budget of \$1,339,499. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Culture and Recreation recommended budget of \$2,765,203. Ms. Klein seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: abstain

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Enterprise Fund recommended budget of \$16,454,253. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote:** Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a FY24 Debt Service recommended budget of \$8,783,729. Mr. Fisher seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Employee Benefits recommended budget of \$16,584,348. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a FY24 Unclassified recommended budget of \$1,225,910. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

Mr. Ramsey noted for the record that the total FY24 recommended budget voted on by the Select Board is \$147,079,365. The Select Board will discuss and possibly vote on the MOU at their next Select Board meeting.

8:12 PM: The meeting of the Hingham School Committee adjourned.

**2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article Discussion: Article D: Report of the Personnel Board**

Mr. David Pace, Chair of the Personnel Board, presented. Mr. Pace thanked Mr. Russell Conn for his work on the Personnel Board for over ten years. He reported that they recently approved a collective bargaining agreement with the DPW. The Personnel Board recommended a 3% wage increase for all non-Union employees for FY24. Approximately \$302,000 would cover this cost as well as any unanticipated wage increases, reclassifications or new hires. Over the course of the past year, three positions were reclassified, a number of seasonal positions were adjusted, they created the new position of a Community Response Clinician, which is part of the Police Department, and they managed a number of promotions, transfers and revised job descriptions. He thanked Mr. Bob Curley for joining the Personnel Board.

**Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article D. Mr. Fisher seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Appointments (for a list of Talent Bank Applicants, please visit [Hingham-ma.gov/SB](https://www.hingham-ma.gov/SB))**

There were no appointments.

**Public Comment**

“The Hingham Select Board encourages community engagement and welcomes questions and comments as agenda items are discussed at the meeting. In addition, we have set aside up to fifteen minutes for public comment for items that fall under the purview of the Select Board and are not already on tonight’s agenda. If any guests wish to speak, please seek to be recognized. Once recognized, state your name and address and address your comments to the Chair. Comments will be limited to three minutes per speaker and must relate to topics within the scope of the responsibilities of the Select Board. Speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner and not to indulge in personalities. The Public Comment period is not a time for debate by members of the Select Board. The Select Board is not adopting or endorsing any of the comments made during the Public Comment period.”

There were no comments from the public.

**Town Administrator/Select Board Reports**

Mr. Mayo thanked Ms. Monsegur for her work on the budget process and presentations.

Ms. Klein reported that she has held two sets of office hours regarding the override and said that feedback from residents has been great. She encouraged residents to continue to reach out with any questions.

Mr. Ramsey thanked all the residents who attended his office hours at the Senior Center last week. He also reported that he has an opportunity to tour the Scituate Senior Center with others last week. Mr. David Altshuler and others also toured the Marshfield Senior Center last week.

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM**

**Documents:** A complete meeting packet of supporting documentation is on file and available for public review in the Select Board office