

Select Board

March 15, 2022

Present:

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

7:15 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. Joe Fisher. The meeting was conducted both in person and remotely via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated March 9, 2023. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Agreement with Sealcoating, Inc. d/b/a Indus

Mr. Matt Cahill, Assistant Superintendent for the DPW, and Ms. Kathy Reilly, Procurement and Contracts Manager, were present. Mr. Cahill explained that this contract would help them get caught up on their paving projects, including top coating and crack sealing. The contract was done through the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Hingham is one of a consortium of towns that contract with Indus. It is a one-year contract with two extensions. Ms. Reilly also noted that Hingham has worked with Indus before. The \$750,000 is an estimate for a planned set of roads and projects. Mr. Cahill did not anticipate requesting more money during the subsequent contract extensions and will be paid for by the DPW budget.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Agreement Sealcoating, Inc. d/b/a Indus for Roadway Management Construction Services (Micro-Surfacing & Random-Crack Sealing by Fiber Reinforced Method) in an amount not to exceed \$750,000.00. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Submission of applications to Plymouth County for sub-awards of American Rescue Plan Act grants

Ms. Monsegur requested approval by the Select Board to submit sub-grant applications to Plymouth County to access the ARPA funds that the county is making available to their member communities. There is a total of \$3.48M available to Hingham. The Town may use it for three of the four ARPA categories that are outlined in the Federal guidelines. Hingham would like to use these funds for the following projects:

- Reimbursement for the costs associated with the Covid-19 testing center that the Town ran at 325 Lincoln Street during January and February of 2022 - \$20,000
- Sewer main replacement project on Route 3A that the Sewer Commission that the DPW brought forward this spring
 - Phase 1: \$900,000 – the design, engineering, and permitting work that will help define what kinds of main improvements or replacements might be necessary

Ms. Monsegur noted that, while the associated Warrant Article refers to borrowing money for this project, any ARPA funds the Town received would offset that borrowing. ARPA funds could fully offset the first phase of the project, should the Select Board decided to do so.

- Phase 2: \$13m-\$15m – construction work to make the improvements or replacements in the spring of 2024
- Phase 3: \$400,000 for the design of a Stormwater Master Plan. Under the Federally mandated MS4 Permit, Hingham is required to make repairs to the stormwater infrastructure, mapping of the system, and public outreach efforts to make sure the Town is minimizing stormwater runoff.

Ms. Monsegur noted that Hingham signed a grant agreement last year with Plymouth County so that the Town could accept ARPA funding. The next step would be to submit the projects for reimbursement in Plymouth County's online portal. Ms. Monsegur noted that the Town is requesting the maximum allotment available for these projects. The permitting process has not yet begun for this project; the Town is still doing some work with engineers and consultants to define what the Town would need to submit for the Master Plan and for the sewer project. Ms. Monsegur expects this to be complete in the next few months. Additionally, she has been in touch with Plymouth County Treasurer, Tom O'Brien, to confirm the amount of funds allocated to Hingham.

Mr. Clark Frazier, Sewer Commissioner, was in favor of submitting the applications for the grant money. Mr. Matt Cahill, Assistant DPW Superintendent, will help manage the stormwater contract, once awarded, including assessing any illegal sewer connections.

Special (One Day) license for Hingham Yacht Club Social

Mr. Steven McCauley, Manager of Boat House Bistro, explained that they are catering a “trivia night” event for the Hingham Yacht Club on Friday, March 31 from 5:00pm to 10:00 pm, for which they are requesting a one-day beer and wine license. Approximately 80 guests are expected. Parking will be available in the adjacent public lot. This event has been approved by Police Chief Jones.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the request of MCC4LBD d/b/a Boat House Bistro for a Special (One-Day) Wine and Malt Beverages license for the Hingham Yacht Club Social to be held at the Hingham Community Center on Friday, March 31, 2023 from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

FY24 Proposed Budget

Ms. Monsegur explained that, now that the Advisory Committee voted on the budget the previous night, the Select Board votes should match theirs, so she recommended that the Select Board re-vote a few budget items. The new balanced budget vote would include some additional Opioid Settlement Funds that the Town will receive. In addition, the balanced budget vote would also include an additional position to be added to the Weir River Water System (WRWS) and funded by Enterprise Funds. There were also two additional items that were switched around in the Culture and Recreation part of the Balanced Budget. She proposed that the Board should re-vote these items so that the votes matched exactly with what was voted by the Advisory Committee.

Ms. Beth Rockoff, 36 Pleasant Street, asked how the Town would vote Article 6 at the Town Meeting. Mr. Ramsey said that, ultimately, that decision will be up to the Moderator, however he expects that each line item for both the Balanced Budget and Override amount would be voted individually. He advised that this is generally the way it is voted in other Towns, but it would be up to the Town Moderator. Mr. Mayo agreed and reported that Mr. Puzo is still reviewing the recommended procedure. People would potentially be able to hold and discuss individual line items in each budget. Mr. Fisher added that the Town has a statutory obligation to present a balanced budget, which does not mean that the Select Board members are advocating for the balanced budget.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend an FY24 Human Services balanced budget of \$1,104,962. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend an FY24 Culture & Recreation balanced budget of \$2,362,373. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: abstain

Ms. Klein: yes

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend an FY24 Enterprise balanced budget of \$16,454,253. 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 balanced budget, including capital outlay, is \$143,471,374. He added that the total FY24 recommended budget, including capital outlay, is \$151,361,841.

FY24-28 Financial Management Plan

Mr. Mayo said that they have made two substantive and clarifying language changes to the Financial Management Plan that was previously presented to the Select Board, along with a couple grammatical changes. Changes that were added or changed include the following:

- In the other commitment section under the eighth bullet a line was added that reads, “The Town will maintain unassigned fund balance in compliance with the Town’s Financial Policy.”
- In the commitments section 1, D, regarding out of district Special Education tuitions and special contracts, some clarifying language was added so that it is clear how the 2% increase in the special education out of district tuitions and special contracts line would be calculated for the next year.

Mr. Mayo also noted that this Financial Management Plan would include a commitment from both the municipal and school departments to maintain and not to exceed a 3.5% growth rate for their budgets. Mr. Ramsey was comfortable with the proposed changes and appreciated the cooperation of all those involved. Ms. Klein and Mr. Fisher were also in favor of the changes.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion that the Select Board of the Town of Hingham hereby votes to 1) approve and adhere to the FY24-28 Financial Management Plan dated March 13, 2023 attached hereto, 2) authorize the Chair of the Select Board to execute said plan, and 3) authorize the Town Administrator to manage the implementation of said plan on behalf of the Select Board in accordance with its terms. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Discussion and potential vote to include a question on the ballot for the April 29, 2023 Town election

Mr. Mayo and Mr. John Coughlin, Town Counsel, were present. Mr. Mayo reminded the public that, for the proposed override to pass, it would need to pass at both Town Meeting and at the election on April 29. Mr. Mayo read the proposed ballot question:

“Question 1: Shall the Town of Hingham be allowed to assess an additional \$7,890,467 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding operational budgets of the Town and the Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023?”

Mr. Coughlin said that the language of the question came directly from the statute. Ms. Klein noted that those who prefer to vote early by mail will be allowed to vote on this question prior to Town Meeting. The Select Board members discussed different options for voting. Mr. Ramsey proposed keeping the process as simple as possible so as not to create confusion amongst voters.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion pursuant to M.G.L. c. 59, § 21C and all other applicable laws, to place the following question regarding an override on the official ballot for the April 29, 2023 Town election:

Question 1: Shall the Town of Hingham be allowed to assess an additional \$7,890,467 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the operating budgets of the Town and the Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023

and to direct the Town Clerk to file an attested copy of this vote with the State Secretary by March 24, 2023? Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

To authorize remote participation under the open meeting law regulations

Mr. Coughlin explained that the special law that has been in effect during Covid expires March 31, 2023. A bill at the State House has already passed through both the House and the Senate that would extend the current remote participation access through 2025 and would extend outdoor dining until April 2024. Mr. Coughlin expected that bill would also get passed by the Governor. If this bill does not pass, all public meetings would have to take place in person under the Open Meeting Law. He stressed that remote participation under the proposed bill is not identical to the remote participation that the Town has been operating under. This bill offers limited remote participation. It allows certain members of boards to participate remotely but a quorum of the board would still be required to be in person and

the person chairing the meeting would have to attend in person. A vote on this could be a back-up, in the event that the Governor does not extend the current remote participation access. Mr. Ramsey reported that he recently spoke to Senator O'Connor, who indicated that he was confident that the extension of the current remote participation would be passed. Ms. Klein asked about time limits on this. Mr. Coughlin advised that if the Select Board adopts this, they can repeal it at any time.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to authorize remote participation by public bodies of the Town of Hingham in accordance with the provisions of 940 CMR 29.10. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: not available (Mr. Fisher was participating remotely and had to step away from the Zoom meeting during this agenda item.)

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Installation of a Plaque and Boulder at the Powers Field Playground

Mr. Fisher returned. Mr. Mayo said that this agenda item was brought to the Select Board by a group of residents who recently pooled their efforts, money and time to donate funds to pay for new playground equipment at Powers Field, which was installed about a year ago. This group would like to install a memorial plaque on Town property in the playground area, which would recognize all the donors. They are proposing to gift to the Town a boulder with a plaque embedded in it. It would be installed near to the playground area and would not be in the way of the baseball field. Mr. Mayo showed the public a photograph of the boulder and the proposed plaque, as well as the proposed location. Ms. Klein and Mr. Mayo confirmed that the installation of this plaque would not conflict with anything in the Naming By-Law and would be at no cost to the Town.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion that the Select Board, acting as the Board of Park Commissioners, hereby authorizes the installation of a plaque and boulder at the playground at Powers Field in accordance with the project proposal attached hereto pursuant to Town of Hingham General By-law Article 40, § 3 (5) and further that the Select Board hereby accepts said plaque and boulder as an unconditional gift to the Town of Hingham pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44, § 53A. Mr. Ramsey 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))

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to appoint Matthew Gallagher to the Hingham Industrial and Development Committee to fill an unexpired term ending June 30, 2026. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes
Mr. Fisher: yes
Mr. Ramsey: yes

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to appoint Tricia Van Buskirk to the Harbor Development Committee to fill an unexpired term ending June 30, 2023. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:
Ms. Klein: yes
Mr. Fisher: yes
Mr. Ramsey: yes

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.”

Ms. Beth Rockoff, 36 Pleasant Street, asked when the Tax Calculator would be up and running on the website. Mr. Mayo said that they expect to have it online by Friday or next Monday, March 20.

Town Administrator/Select Board Reports

Mr. Art Robert reported that Town staff and Harbor Media are in the midst of developing a series of videos that highlight different aspects of the override and provide information. These will be released on a weekly basis over the next five weeks. The Town is also in the process of finalizing a mailer that will be sent to all residents which would let people know the various places they can obtain information on the override, including on the Town of Hingham website and at upcoming Public Information Sessions. These public information sessions are planned for Thursday, March 30 at 7:00 PM at Town Hall and Tuesday, April 11 at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

Executive Session

Declaration by Chair: Before I entertain a motion to go into executive session under item 13 of the agenda, I hereby declare that discussion of this agenda item in an open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Town.

Vote: Chair Ramsey made a motion to enter Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6) to discuss potential acquisition of real estate and not to reconvene in Open Session. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

The Select Board entered Executive Session at 8:40 PM.

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