

Select Board

March 17, 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
- Katie Dugan, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance

Call to order:

6:02 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.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

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

FY27 Departmental Budget Request: Healthcare Insurance

Ms. Dugan reported that the Town received GIC guidance for FY27 healthcare premiums. The proposed budget of \$9,007,640 reflects a 7.1% increase and includes both OPEB funding and healthcare costs for employees, retirees, and surviving spouses. She noted Hingham’s increase is below the GIC average of 8%, with top plans rising between approximately 4% and 8.5%.

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

- **Article V: Sale, Lease or Conveyance of 86 Central Street**
Jack Falvey, Affordable Housing Trust, called the Affordable Housing Trust to order adopting the language read previously in the meeting.
Mr. Falvey stated that they previously presented three main reasons for advancing the warrant article and have no additional comments. He acknowledged residents’ concerns and noted they will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee and reflected as appropriate.
The Select Board discussed supporting the article with deed restrictions to address neighbors’ concerns, maintain affordability, and continue exploring options.
Clark Frazier, 50 Bonnie Brier Circle, recommended the proposal go before Town Meeting before a final transaction is made.
Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article V, Sale, Lease or Conveyance of 86 Central Street. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.
The AHT adjourned their meeting.

- **Article GG: Route 3A Project**

JR Frey, Town Engineer, explained that the 1.7-mile project will improve traffic safety along the corridor, enhance pedestrian and cycling accommodations, and support master plan goals connecting the harbor, downtown, and nearby neighborhoods.

Deirdre Anderson, Route 3A Task Force, noted that the project, which began over a decade ago to reconfigure the Hingham Harbor rotary, addressed high-injury accidents on the 3A Summer Street corridor. Following a citizen petition in 2013–14, Town Meeting approved funds for engineering and safety improvements. Over the years, additional funds were approved, and in 2025, MassDOT took over responsibility for the project's engineering design.

Mr. Frey explained outlined Route 3A improvements, including MBTA-accessible bus stops at Broad Cove Road, a road diet and upgraded signals at the bathing beach, a fifth turn lane on North Street, multi-use paths, and parking upgrades. The roundabout design enhances pedestrian safety with refuge islands and slows traffic to improve driver awareness.

Mr. Frey added that the Summer Street road diet, including a raised median, will improve safety by reducing vehicle speeds, limiting conflict points, and addressing sight-distance issues along the curved, narrow corridor where crashes have occurred.

Mr. Frey reported that the town has identified the parcels involved and obtained preliminary approval from the Conservation Commission and Trustees of the Bathing Beach to assign them to the Select Board, contingent on the Route 3A project moving forward. Staff is also identifying Article 97 mitigation parcels and coordinating with EEA and MassDOT. Next steps include an Advisory Committee recommendation (tentatively week of April 13), a Town Meeting vote, and, if approved, authorization for the Select Board to petition the General Court.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to vote That the Select Board does hereby vote to approve the provisions of the Town Meeting Warrant Article regarding the Route 3A Project in order to grant and/or acquire by gift, purchase, eminent domain or otherwise, the fee to and/or permanent and temporary easements in, on, under and over certain parcels of land abutting and/or near Route 3A for the reconstruction, installation, inspection, maintenance, improvement, repair, replacement and/or relocation of the roadway, rights of way, sidewalks, drainage, utilities, driveways, retaining walls, guardrails, slopes, grading, rounding and landscaping and other structures and/or appurtenances to enable the Town and/or MassDOT to undertake the Route 3A Project and for any and all purposes and uses incidental or related thereto, all as approximately shown on plans entitled "Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Plan and Profile of Route 3A / Summer Street / Rockland Street in the Town of Hingham Plymouth County Preliminary Right of Way Plans" revised 12/19/25, as said plan may be amended from time to time;

And, further, that the Select Board does hereby vote to accept the care, custody and control of those parcels of land shown on the aforesaid plans from the Conservation Commission and the Trustees of the Bathing Beach as previously voted by said boards and does hereby vote to transfer the care, custody and control of those portions of the property interests shown on the aforesaid plans which are presently under the care, custody and control of the Select Board to allow for use for said public way purposes, all of said transfers being made pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 15A and all other applicable laws for said public way purposes and contingent upon final approval of an Article 97 petition to be filed pursuant this Warrant Article.

Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article GG, Route 3A Project. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

- **Article F: FY27 Budgets**

Ms. Dugan presented the final Article 6 for Select Board consideration, covering budgets for general government, public safety, education, public works, human services, culture and recreation, enterprise funds, debt service, employee benefits, and insurance, totaling \$173,059,838.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 General Government Budget, which includes Select Board, Human Resources, Reserve Fund, Accounting, Information Technology, Assessing, Treasurer/Collector, Legal Services, Town Meeting, Town Clerk, Elections, Conservation, Community Planning, Land Use and Development, Bare Cove Park, Town Hall, and GAR Hall in the amount of \$7,425,416. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to recommend the FY27 Police budget of \$8,913,208. Ms. Klein seconded. Ms. Strehle and Ms. Klein were in favor, Mr. Ramsey abstained.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Public Safety Budget, which includes Police, (which has already been voted), Fire, Dispatch Services, Building, Animal Control, Harbormaster and Public Safety Utilities in the amount of \$21,454,224. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Education budget which includes the School Department in the amount of \$73,880,041. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Public Works budget which includes the DPW / Highway / Tree & Park, Transfer Station, and Sewer in the amount of \$12,817,359. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Human Services budget which includes Health, Center for Active Living, and Veteran's Services in the amount of \$1,073,368. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Culture and Recreation budget which includes Library, Recreation, Athletic Field Maintenance, Bathing Beach, Historic Preservation, and Celebrations in the amount of \$3,129,887. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Enterprise Funds budget, which includes South Shore Country Club and the Weir River Water System, in the amount of \$17,784,669. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Debt Service budget of \$13,893,125. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Employee Benefits budget which includes Group Insurance, OPEB, Contributory Retirement, Worker's Compensation, Unemployment, and Mandatory Medicare in the amount of \$19,848,370. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Unclassified budget which includes property and liability insurance in the amount of \$1,753,379. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a total FY27 Article F budget in the amount of \$173,059,838. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend favorable action on Article F, budgets. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

FY27 Financial Forecast Update

Ms. Dugan reported that the FY27 five-year forecast is now balanced at \$0. Key updates since February include final enterprise fund numbers reflecting approved debt service, finalized capital outlay recommendations totaling \$3,924,547 (from allocations, Municipal Waterways Fund, and Capital Stabilization Fund), and updated healthcare costs of \$9,007,000—a 7.1% increase versus the previously projected 10%, saving \$239,000 and a minor adjustment to motor vehicles finalized the balanced forecast.

Financial Discussion: Future Capital Projects (Tom / Katie)

Mr. Ramsey summarized recent discussions on capital projects, including the \$3.6 million recommended article and additional needs funded from unassigned balances, and then opened the discussion on future capital planning.

Mr. Mayo outlined future capital projects, dividing them into short- and long-term categories. Short-term projects (next 1–3 years) include:

- Inner Harbor Resiliency – \$5 million authorized for design, borrowing pending permitting.
- HCAL (Hingham Center for Active Living) – \$29.9 million proposal for ATM 2026.
- Plymouth River and South School Roof – town share \$9 million, likely FY27 borrowing.
- High School Roof and HVAC – town share \$28 million, likely FY28 borrowing.

Mr. Mayo emphasized these figures relate to tax levy funding only and that borrowing for some projects will follow later town meetings.

Mr. Mayo added that in the 3–5 year window, potential projects include:

- Dredging – estimated \$2–10 million, timing flexible to coordinate with neighboring municipalities and grant opportunities.
- Wharf Walls, Phase 1 – projected at \$22 million, likely FY31, largely grant-dependent.

It was noted the town will continue to strategically borrow and invest retained earnings for self-supporting Enterprise Fund projects (Weir River Water System, Hingham Sewer, South Shore Country Club, Hingham Municipal Light Plant), which are funded through ratepayers, not the tax levy. From a tax levy perspective, no other substantial projects are anticipated beyond those discussed.

Mr. Mayo noted the Town would still have about \$100 million in debt capacity under its conservative policy, with additional capacity under state limits, and that as new debt is added, some existing debt will roll off, maintaining a healthy outlook.

Nes Correnti, 17 Ward St, asked if the school roof estimates were net of MSBA reimbursement, noting they appeared lower than prior figures.

Jen Benham, 300 Gardner St, noted the presentation reflects thoughtful planning and clear timelines, appreciated the discussion, and added that it's good information to make publicly available on the website.

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

Mr. Mayo thanked the DPW and tree crew for their work clearing downed trees after a windy day, noting residents should be patient as they address all town trees.

Ms. Strehle thanked HMLP for quickly restoring power during the recent storm, praising their crews and staff for their hard work and leadership.

Ms. Klein wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day and noted the 250th anniversary of Evacuation Day.

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

The Select Board meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Documents:

1. Minutes – 3.3.26
2. FY27 Healthcare Budget Packet
3. FY27 ATM Article Packet
4. FY27 Forecast
5. Financial Discussion Slide