

Hingham Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 18th, 2026, at 7:00 PM
Town Hall, 210 Central Street, Third Floor, South Meeting Room

In Attendance: Carol Tully, Chair, Kevin Freytag, Vice Chair, Ted Ciolkosz, Secretary, Brenda Black, Ben Burnham, Tina Sherwood, Jerry Seelen, Brian Stack, David Leiphart, Elaine Cusker, Michael Herde, Mary Power, Alan Macdonald, John Germain

Absent: Steven Pohl

1. The Chair called the meeting to order and read the following statement. This meeting is being held remotely/or in person 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.
2. Town Financial Discussion Part 4 – Refer to attached presentations (4). Discussion on strategies for utilizing unassigned fund balance for capital projects, including HCAL and “clawback option” (rolling soft costs into borrowing; only Ted Ciolkosz and Jerry Seelen were amenable to a potential clawback related to HCAL per AdCom straw poll). Further discussion covered fund balance growth, stabilization funds, and future capital planning.
3. Warrant Articles - Q Public Library Chiller with liaison David Leiphart. Has not yet received final project figures from Linda Harper Stone. Postpone to the 24th.

Article S, School Dept Extraordinary Capital Needs. The School Extraordinary Capital Needs account is almost exhausted, and the remaining balance is already accounted for with an estimated 770k needed for emergency repair work at Hingham High School, Plymouth River School and South Elementary, which would come from Fund Balance for this purpose to be overseen by the School Committee. These funds would be a bridge to pay for repairs, not a permanent solution. Unanimously approved.

Article NN, Additional School Capital Needs. Presented by Tina Sherwood. The Capital Outlay Committee (COC) referred this matter to the Select Board as the request was too large for COC to address yet critical the work be done to address a failing fire alarm system at Hingham High School and energy recovery units (ERU's) at South Elementary School. The fire alarm system is 26 years old and parts to replace can no longer be obtained. No MSBA funding would be available for either of these projects and while the fire alarm system has been on the COC list for many years is now fully failing and needs to be replaced. Similarly, the ERU's are well beyond their life expectancy, expensive to maintain and need to be replaced. As is it would take at least six months to create RFP's and put the work out for bids, and it would need to be done over the summer when schools are unoccupied; Could be as soon as 2027 but more likely 2028. Even if debt was used to pay for these projects, the Town would need to “float” the upfront money given the timing and urgency.

Article V, Sale of 86 Central Street with AdCom liaison Dave Leiphart and Chair of the Hingham. Affordable Housing Trust, Jack Falvey. The purpose of this Select Board (SB) sponsored article would be to sell the Lincoln Street Apartments (LSA) located at 86 Central Street in order for a private investor to provide the capital required for the major repairs and renovation needed for the building. It is also hoped a third party would be able to finance an expansion (to 90 units) of the

facility which would continue to be designated for affordable housing for seniors and those with disabilities. Significant improvements are needed over the next five years estimated at between 7-10mm. The Town lacks the resources and expertise to manage the LSA long term, and it was noted the Town is virtually alone among MA communities as far as owning and operating an affordable housing complex. Renovation and construction would be more feasible for a private entity to undertake. As a municipal project the Town would likely pay around 30-40% more for the same work. Jack Falvey has spoken with neighbors, abutters and residents to socialize and get the word out. If article is approved at ATM, an RFP process under direction of the SB would begin, along with additional public meetings, discussion, review of the plans by the Hingham Zoning Board, etc. with the intent of keeping the building designated as affordable housing.

Article II, Citizens Petition: Transfer of a Parcel of Land. Proponent is Hingham citizen Anita Ryan and liaison is AdCom Vice Chair Kevin Freytag. The intent of this article is to ask ATM to designate the land behind Plymouth River School, currently owned by the HPS, that was identified and designated as "replacement land" with regard to the HCAL project at Bear Cove Park Drive as conservation land. However, Hingham Public Schools retain the rights to this land unless the HCAL project proceeds; if it does not, the land remains protected but not formally conservation land. Town meeting does not have the authority to change the use of school land without prior approval from the controlling board. Therefore, any vote made by the Advisory Committee or at ATM would be moot as the School Committee would be the governing body in this instance. Further, this land may be needed in the future for other "replacement land" (refer to Article 97, the Public Lands Preservation Act, M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A) related projects in Town should the HCAL project not move forward. Recommendation to vote "No Action" was unanimous.

Articles CC, Civil Service Fire, & DD, Civil Service Police. Ben Burnham made a motion to recommend, both articles unanimously approved.

4. Approval of minutes – 2/10/26 (Elaine Cusker abstained), 2/12/26, 2/24/26, 2/26/26 (John Germain abstained). Unanimously approved among those voting.
5. Housekeeping – Article GG presentation on 03/24 with a vote on 04/14.
6. Motion to Adjourn – Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Theodore D. Ciolkosz, Jr., Secretary