

Select Board

March 23, 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
- Ms. Susan Murphy, Special Real Estate Counsel

5:00 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.

Approval of Minutes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes dated March 15, 2023, as amended. 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 March 20, 2023. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Special (One Day) license for Hingham Youth Hockey Fundraiser

Mr. Kevin McDevitt, 280 High Street, explained that this is the 6th annual Hingham Youth Hockey Fundraiser to be held at the Hingham Historical Society. A live and silent auction is planned, along with food and a cash bar. A guitarist will provide music. They expect 125-150 guests. Mr. Mayo reported that Police Chief, David Jones, has approved the event and has requested that they hire at least one detail officer to help with parking and traffic flow. There was some discussion regarding the TIPS

certification for the servers at the event. Mr. McDevitt said that they would make sure to only use servers that have provided their certification.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the request of Hingham Youth Hockey for a Special (One-Day) All Alcoholic Beverages license for the Hingham Youth Hockey Spring Fundraiser to be held at the Hingham Historical Society on Saturday, April 1, 2023 from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Ms. Klein seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

FY24 Override: Tax Impact and Outreach Efforts

Ms. Monsegur gave an update on the estimated tax impacts of the proposed override. She shared a number of slides that will be posted to the website. They can be viewed at <https://www.hingham-ma.gov/1025/Town-of-Hingham-FY24-Override>. Topics discussed were:

- The estimated FY24 tax impact of the \$7.89M override
- The 5-year tax impacts of the override
- The 5-year estimated property tax impact for Hingham's median assessed home value.
- The FY23 average single family property tax bill in Hingham versus benchmark communities
- Hingham's 15-year history of the average family tax bill and per capita income
- Hingham's tax relief exemptions and programs

Mr. Art Robert discussed the various override outreach efforts that have been planned by the Town, including:

- Three upcoming public information sessions (March 21 at 7pm at Linden Ponds, March 30 at 7pm at Town Hall and April 11 at 7pm via Zoom)
- A postcard mailer was sent out to residents with important dates, ways to participate, and a QR code with easy access to information on the website
- An informational video series that will address questions about the override
- Social media posts (Facebook)
- Press releases and email alerts
- Additional office hours with Select Board and School Committee members
- Media opportunities
- *Central Times* (Senior Center newsletter)
- Cable TC Public Service Announcements with infographics through Harbor Media

All of the outreach efforts are intended to direct people back to the Town website's override information page, where information is constantly being updated. Residents can visit the page at <https://www.hingham-ma.gov/1025/Town-of-Hingham-FY24-Override>.

Ms. Lynn Barclay, 11 Cottage Street, asked about the 5-year tax impact percent increase. Ms. Monsegur directed her to the Town's website where she could find that information.

Vote to confirm the FY24 Final Budget

Ms. Monsegur explained that their balanced budget is the same as their recommended budget since they are an Enterprise Fund and are unaffected by the override. She noted that there was one addition to the budget that was previously presented to the Select Board and that is their Capital budget. The South Shore Country Club (SSCC) plans to use some of their retained earnings to fund two capital projects this year. The purpose of a vote by the Select Board is to align with the vote already taken by the Advisory Committee.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend a South Shore Country Club balanced budget of \$2,754,998. Mr. Fisher seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Klein: yes

Mr. Fisher: yes

Mr. Ramsey: yes

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to recommend a South Shore Country Club recommended budget of \$2,754,998. 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 balanced budget, including capital outlay, is \$143,926,374.

He also noted that the total FY24 recommended budget, including capital outlay, is \$151,816,841.

Discussion of Article FF: Potential purchase of 30 Summer Street

Mr. Mayo explained the location of the property and showed some photographs of the location at the harbor and outlines the process the Town has engaged in thus far. The Town was approached by the Seller to gauge potential interest in purchasing the property at the Seller's asking price of \$1,550,000. Town staff met with the Seller to discuss potential pricing, terms and timing. Following this, a property appraisal was commissioned. Results suggested that data available through February 2023, set the "as is" market value of the property at \$1,250,000. The Town is actively involved in negotiations with the Seller. Findings from a phase 1 environmental site assessment suggested that a phase 2 environmental site assessment is warranted to include soil sampling and GPR (ground penetrating radar) analysis. Uses of 30 Summer Street could include a number of possible scenarios including, but not limited to:

- Harbormaster office
- Harbormaster boat maintenance facility
- Public restrooms

- Parking (public water access at 30 Summer and potential use by Hingham Maritime Center and the Public at Barnes Wharf)
- Possible use by Recreation Department for programming (i.e. paddle boarding, yoga, spinning...etc.)
- Public access point from mooring field to Downtown shopping and dining
- Private rental / lease

If the Board decides to leave this article on the warrant tonight, it will be included in the printed warrant with the caveat that the SB and AdCom will determine their recommendations at a later date, prior to Town Meeting, which will be made available to Town Meeting in supplemental form.

Due to the amount of time needed to complete a phase 2 environmental site assessment, that work would be completed at the request of the SB if Town Meeting approves an appropriation and a Purchase and Sale agreement is successfully negotiated with the Seller, which would potentially include consideration of the cost of any remediation required as a result of the phase 2 assessment.

Mr. Mayo considered this a unique opportunity to purchase one of the few remaining privately owned properties on the harbor. There was much discussion between the Select Board members. Mr. Ramsey felt that it is very important to give the public as much information as possible. He agreed that this is a unique opportunity that may never happen again and he also noted that the location could afford many opportunities for the Town to advance their plan for the harbor. He was happy to note that the Town would be able to purchase the property through debt service so that it would not result in any additional tax increases. Mr. Ramsey also encouraged more due diligence so that the members of the Select Board and the Advisory Committee could have as much information as possible before they make a recommendation at Town Meeting. He also felt that it is necessary to get more feedback from residents. Mr. Fisher agreed with Mr. Ramsey and suggested that they get a clearer picture of price before they conduct the phase 2 assessment. If they could agree on a price with the seller then he would be in favor of moving forward to additional due diligence. Mr. Fisher felt that this is a unique opportunity that would add value to the Town but he was also mindful that the Town has a lot of upcoming expenses. He felt that the purchase of this property could have both short and long-term benefits to the Town. Ms. Klein felt that acquiring the property could generate economic development, revenue generation, recreation opportunities, and advancement of the Town's climate resiliency plan. She felt that the biggest con is timing and the opportunity for due diligence prior to Town Meeting. She suggested that the Town perform the phase 2 assessment prior to Town Meeting. Ms. Klein suggested that, even if a final report may not be complete before Town Meeting, they could identify key findings that could possibly indicate important issues. Ms. Susan Murphy added that something like ground penetrating radar could immediately confirm whether or not there are any underground storage tanks that were left over from when a gas station was on the property. Lab tests for possible soil contaminants would take longer.

Mr. J.R. Frey, Town Engineer, commented that the Harbor Development Committee has had considerable discussion regarding expansion opportunities at Barnes Wharf. The purchase of 30

Summer Street could alleviate some of these issues at Barnes Wharf. In addition, he noted that the property in question is not a major flood pathway and is a bit elevated, compared to Barnes Wharf.

Mr. Ramsey was in favor of keeping the potential purchase on the Town Meeting Warrant. He suggested that the Select Board consider and discuss any information provided by the phase 2 assessment at a meeting the week prior to Town Meeting. At that time, the Select Board and Advisory Committee could vote to take no action on the article. Mr. Fisher suggested that the Select Board may need to meet in Executive Session as well. Ms. Klein agreed. Mr. Ramsey encouraged residents to contact the Select Board with any feedback on the potential purchase.

To adopt and sign the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Mayo confirmed that a vote to adopt and sign the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant would be in keeping with the Town's legal obligations.

Mr. Glen Mangurian, 4 Huckleberry Hill Road, asked for clarification regarding the budget votes at the upcoming Town election. Mr. Mayo noted that he expects there will be two votes: one vote for a balanced budget, which is required by state law, and a second vote for the override. A resident's "yes" vote for the override would be preceded by the resident's vote on the balanced budget.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to adopt and sign the 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. 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. Fisher announced that there is a Public Information Session tonight at 7:00 pm at Linden Ponds, where residents can learn more about the proposed override.

Mr. Ramsey reported that he recently attended a performance of the musical Shrek at the Hingham Middle School. He complimented the cast and crew for a wonderful performance.

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 6:01 PM.

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