

Select Board

March 24, 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:

6:30 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. Klein made a motion to approve the minutes dated March 10, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to approve the minutes dated March 12, 2026. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the minutes dated March 17, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Open the Warrant for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting pursuant to Town of Hingham General Bylaws Article 2, Section 7 to revise Article FF

Mr. Mayo explained that Article FF would provide a one-time payment to offset about 10% of employees' healthcare costs, temporarily shifting the cost share from 50/50 to 60/40 for one year. He noted the intent was to withdraw the original article and replace it with similar language that also includes a study to guide funding this year and inform future healthcare cost-sharing decisions.

Jack Manning, Chair of the Personnel Board, noted that the Personnel Board is in favor of the article, noting that while the one-year solution is helpful, the addition of a study provides important momentum toward a longer-term solution. He emphasized that the study would be critical in identifying a sustainable plan for the Town and would support ongoing collective bargaining efforts for both the Town and the schools.

Jen Benham, Chair of the School Committee, expressed support for the article and echoed Jack's comments, and requested that the Personnel Board consider including a School Committee member in the study process

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to open the Warrant for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting pursuant to Town of Hingham General Bylaws Article 2, Section 7 to insert revised Article FF: Transfer for Employee Health Care Subsidy and to close the Warrant. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

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

Consider the Agreement with Boston Light & Sound for Audio Visual Services for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting

David Sequeira, Procurement Manager, explained that services will cover multiple rooms, all fully operational for two nights, with no logistical concerns identified by Harbor Media. Of four vendors solicited, Boston Light & Sound was the only qualified, responsive bidder. The contract, funded through the Town Meeting operating budget, totals \$69,745 and will be invoiced after the event.

There was brief discussion regarding room setup and potential opportunities to reduce costs in the future.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Agreement with Boston Light & Sound for Audio Visual Services for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting in an amount not to exceed \$69,745.00. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Lincoln School Apartments CY26 Budget presentation

Jennifer Oram, Zoning Administrator, explained that for the third year in a row the Board is being asked to consider a request to have the cash flow rent put back into the replacement reserve account noting the building still needs a lot of work.

Elizabeth Cullen, Chair of Hingham Affordable Housing Trust, explained that the building requires extensive exterior and interior work, including repointing the 1912 section, a new roof, and updated HVAC and interior spaces. Projects will be phased and prioritized based on condition assessments. With the additional funds requested, annual capital needs would total about \$500,000, with repointing alone estimated at \$1.9 million. Current bids address ADA updates to the KC meeting room, laundry, and kitchen, and progress continues despite state-related challenges.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to approve the waiver of the Cash Flow Rent payment of \$196,361 due for 2025 on the condition that such amount be transferred into the Replacement Reserves Account. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the 2026 operating budget of the Lincoln School Apartments, LLC as voted on by the Board of Managers and submitted for consideration to the Select Board, with the following changes: (a) increase the Replacement Reserve Deposit by \$196,361 from \$372,000 to \$568,361; and (b) reduce the Cash Flow Rent Payment from \$196,361 to \$0; and to approve the 2025 Replacement Reserve Budget with the following change: increase the Contributions from \$372,000 to \$545,058. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Discussion and potential vote to sign a grant support letter for the Hingham Harbor Resiliency Project

Jr Frey, Town Engineer, requested a letter of support for a Harbor Coastal Resiliency grant application. The grant would fund engineering design and specifications for resiliency efforts for Barnes Wharf and support phased construction that aligns with the ongoing 3A project, potentially using excess soil from 3A for fill needs.

Mr. Frey noted past success with similar grants, and stated that permitting for the projects is expected to conclude by May–June 2027, at which point construction could begin under the initial authorization.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to authorize the Select Board Chair to sign the grant support letter for the Hingham Harbor Coastal Resiliency Project in the form attached hereto. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.

Discussion on the 2026 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

- **Article AAA: Zoning Amendment: Height, Building Definition Reference Correction**
Emily Wentworth, Director of Community Planning, explained is a cleanup article initiated by the Planning Board. Its purpose is to correct a section reference in the building height definition—from Section 4C8 to 4C9—ensuring it properly aligns with height exemptions under Section 6. This adjustment follows a 2016 zoning amendment that altered lot definitions and sequencing within the bylaw. The article was unanimously recommended for adoption by both the Planning Board and the Advisory Committee.
- **Article CCC: Zoning Amendment: Site Plan Review Updates**
Ms. Wentworth explained Article CCC, Site Plan Review Updates, initiated by the Planning Board. She reviewed the history of site plan review and noted recent amendments. The article refines triggers to focus on more impactful projects, corrects bylaw references, and establishes an administrative review process to allow minor approvals and modifications to be delegated, improving efficiency while maintaining oversight.
- **Article DDD: Zoning Amendment: Fire Station Zoning District**
Ms. Wentworth explained the article proposed rezoning 230 North Street from Official and Open Space to Business A to align with adjacent properties, allow adaptive reuse, and make the building fully conforming to current zoning standards.

Open the Warrant for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting pursuant to Town of Hingham General Bylaws Article 2, Section 7 to remove Warrant Article X: Real Estate Transfer Fee

Mr. Mayo noted that Adcom had reservations due to additional questions that need to be resolved before presenting the request at Town Meeting, as well as potential challenges it may face at the state level.

Ms. Klein commented that the Sustainable Budget Task Force recommended exploring a real estate transfer fee as a significant revenue source. She encouraged continued discussion and analysis and expressed disappointment if the proposal is withdrawn.

Mr. Ramsey emphasized the board's commitment to alternative revenue sources, acknowledged concerns about taxes and legislative issues, and supported continuing the discussion on the real estate transfer fee.

Ms. Strehle noted that exploring additional revenue sources is worthwhile. While not supporting the article, she supports studying and reconsidering the idea in the future.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to open the Warrant for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting pursuant to Town of Hingham General Bylaws Article 2, Section 7 to remove Article X: Real Estate Transfer Fee and to close the Warrant. Ms. Strehle seconded. Ms. Klein was not in favor. The motion passed 2-1.

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. Ramsey congratulated Heather Hermida on her promotion to Sergeant, and Brian Fernandes on his promotion to Lieutenant.

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

The Select Board meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Documents:

1. Minutes – 3.10.26, 3.12.26, 3.17.26
2. Article FF
3. Boston Light & Sound Agreement Packet
4. LSA Budget Presentation
5. CZM FY27 Grant Letter of Support
6. Zoning Article Packet
7. Article X