Hingham Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 14th, 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, Steven Pohl, Alan Macdonald

Absent: John Germain

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. Warrant Articles – Article 30 (formerly referred to as Article GG), Route 3A Project with Town Engineer J.R. Frey presenting, Kevin Freytag AdCom liaison. Portions of the Route 3A Project, totaling roughly two acres, necessitate an Article 97 land swap to allow MA DOT to proceed with construction. An approximately 7.8-acre parcel associated with Hingham Transfer Station and landfill has been identified for the swap. That parcel, accessible via trails in the Cranberry Pond area, is contiguous with existing conservation land, including wetlands and vernal pools, making it desirable to protect. The Hingham Select Board unanimously voted to transfer the parcel in question to the Conservation Commission, which was amenable to accept the land for the Article 97 land swap, with a separate, approximately three-acre area within same parcel to be kept under Select Board purview for landfill access and maintenance purposes. MA DOT has agreed to pay the Town for the mitigation (likely around $50,000) because the Town is providing the land. A voice vote was taken with Michael Herde recusing himself; unanimously approved by those voting.

   Article 10 (Article K), Transfer Funds to the Reserve Fund, presented by AdCom member Jerry Seelen. Snow and Ice related expenses totaled about $1.1mm which was higher than budgeted, in addition to Out of District Expenses, Police Overtime, etc. will require an estimated $1,939,005 to be transferred from unassigned fund balance. Mary Power was a recorded no vote with all others voting to approve.

   Article 3 (Article C), Reports of Various Town Committees presented by David Leiphart. Unanimously approved.

3. AdCom Review of the Year– Discussion was had about embedding liaisons earlier in the year for more input on department budgets; Perspective being, since the Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) agreement, the dept. heads and Town Administrator first work to get their budgets to the 3.5% target before any AdCom input.

   Suggested an AdCom subcommittee review the debt section of the financial policy and have Janet Morley of Capital Advisors present again next year.

Some frustration was expressed with fund balance uses being proposed for review late in the process and noted “end runs” being made around the Capital Outlay Committee (via proposed warrant articles requesting funding from unassigned cash balance) instead of working through the Capital Outlay Committee (C.O.C.) process. It was also observed there may be some recurring expenses that should arguably be in the operating budget, rather than funded annually through C.O.C. or Unassigned Fund Balance which would not be considered a sustainable practice.

Overall, AdCom members were happy with the amount of robust discussion this year, including having more in-depth “big picture” financial discussions about the future and reviewing the five-year forecast earlier and more often this year.

4. Town Meeting Preparation – Moderator’s meeting is scheduled for 12:00 p.m. on April 26th at Town Hall or via zoom. Confirmed which AdCom members were expected to talk for certain articles, review ballot vote procedure if voice vote is unclear, etc.

5. FY28 Advisory Committee Officers discussion. Election of officers will be held at the May meeting.

6. Liaison Updates – Brenda Black updated AdCom that the HCAL price has come down to about $25.8mm. GNR was winning general contractor bid. Ben Burnham updated on School Building Committee Roofs and HVAC projects.

7. Approval of minutes – 03/03, 03/05, 03/10, 03/12, 03/18, 03/19, 03/24, 03/25; Approved (not including Steven Pohl who had to drop off zoom).

8. Housekeeping – AdCom End of Year party will be 06/07, 4:00-6:00 p.m. at Hingham Historical Society. Michael Herde to send out invites shortly. Thursday, 04/16 is next meeting via zoom at 7:00 p.m. Reminder to meet one hour prior to ATM in room 138. We’ll have a May meeting on the 26th or 27th, and another on June 30th for the end of FY reserve fund transfer.

9. Comments from Public on items not on agenda – N/A

10. Motion to Adjourn – Unanimously approved

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