

Select Board

July 28, 2026

Present:

- Select Board: Ms. Liz Klein, Chair, Mr. Bill Ramsey, and Ms. Julie Strehle
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Ms. Katie Dugan, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance
- Mr. Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations

Call to order:

5:03PM: Chair Klein 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.”

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

Discussion and potential vote regarding scheduling of 2026 Special Town Meeting for October 29, 2026

Ms. Katie Dugan, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance spoke and advised that the recommendation for the date of the Special town meeting is Thursday, October 29th. This will allow the School Building Committee and HMPL to complete their processes internally with Advisory Committee and with the Select Board. This will allow the school building committee to get a response back from the MSBA on the two likely votes that need approval for South and PRS roofs. Holding the Special Town Meeting on the 29th will allow us to use the November 3rd state election date as a opportunity to do both a local and state ballot option on the potential debt exclusion questions.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to call a Special Town Meeting to be held on Thursday October 29, 2026, at 7:00pm at Hingham High School Pursuant to Town of Hingham General Bylaws, Article Two, Mass General Law, Chapter 39, section nine. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Discussion and potential vote regarding opening warrant and insertion of Select Board Warrant Articles for Plymouth River Elementary School Roof, South Elementary School Roof, High School Roof and HVAC Design, and HMLP Capital Improvements into the Warrant and to close the Warrant for the 2026 Special Town Meeting.

Ms. Katie Dugan led the discussion. She stated that the School Building Committee is proposing three warrant articles: two seeking full authorization for the Plymouth River and South Elementary School roof replacement projects, and a third expanding the existing schematic design authorization for the high school project to include pre-construction services and potentially early bid packages.

Ms. Katie Roberts spoke about the age of the roofs at South School and PRS.

Ms. Angela Thedinga spoke about their timeline with the MSBA.

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Ms. Laura Burns and Mr. Tom Morahan provided an update on the HMLP article and the potential impact of the project on electric rates. Ms. Burns reported that the cost-of-service study had been completed and that HMLP was continuing to meet with its consultants regarding the study's recommendations, with final decisions anticipated by August 11.

Ms. Burns stated that the estimated project cost had decreased from approximately \$110 million in April to approximately \$97 million. The project consists of the underground transmission line, the substation at the Hingham Transfer Station, and the Weymouth tap station. The transmission line and substation are estimated at approximately \$47.2 million and would be funded through a combination of bonding and HMLP's depreciation fund. HMLP currently has approximately \$30 million in its depreciation fund and anticipates that approximately \$20 million could be used toward the project, reducing the amount that would need to be bonded. The Weymouth tap station, which will be owned by Eversource, would be paid for by HMLP over four years beginning when the station becomes operational, anticipated in 2029. The associated costs would be recovered through electric rates. HMLP also has a rate stabilization fund available to help mitigate potential rate increases. Ms. Burns noted that HMLP was still working with its consultants to determine whether the tap station costs were included in the previously projected January 2027 and January 2028 rate increases or would require additional increases.

Ms. Burns further reported that HMLP was reviewing the current \$70 million bonding authorization included in the warrant article. Given the reduced project estimate and available depreciation funds, HMLP anticipates requesting a lower authorization, potentially in the range of \$40–\$50 million. The HMLP Board is expected to discuss and vote on the revised amount.

Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to open the warrant for the special town meeting and insert the following articles. Article B to see if the town of Hingham will vote to raise an appropriate borrow or transfer from available funds. The sufficient sum of money to be expended under the direction of the 2025 School Building Committee for the roof system replacement, including the payment of all costs, incidental or related thereto. The project at the South Elementary School, located at 831 Main Street, Hingham, Massachusetts, which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the town may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority MSBA. The town acknowledges that the town's MSBA grant program is a non entitlement discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA and any project costs the town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSB shall be the sole responsibility of the town. Any grant that the town may receive from the MSBA for the project shall not exceed the lesser one, 36 and 8,900%, so 36.89% of eligible approved project costs as determined by the MSB, or to the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA or act on anything related there to insert it At the request of the 2025 School Building Committee and Article C, will the town vote to amend the appropriation of \$3,310,000 previously approved under article 34 of the Town of Hingham 2025 Annual Town Meeting to expand the purpose for which said appropriation and any funds borrowed thereunder may be expended as follows. Said appropriation may be expended for a feasibility study. Schematic design, detailed design, architectural engineering owners, project management, and other pre-construction services. Related thereto, and up to and including preparation of construction documents and early bid packages for a potential roof replacement. Heat pump conversion project or other HVAC system repairs or replacements, including the payment of all costs, incidental or related, there to at Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, Hingham, Massachusetts or act on anything relating thereto inserted at the request of the 2025 School Building Committee, and to close the warrant for the Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, July 28th, 2026, and to direct the Town administrator to forward copies of the articles to the advisory Committee and to post them on the town's website within ten days of this vote. Under Town of Hingham General Bylaws article two and all other applicable laws.

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Chair Klein stated that she wanted to amend that vote language, to close the warrant for the Special Town Meeting on October 29th of all costs, incidental or related, there to at Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, Hingham, Massachusetts or act on anything relating thereto inserted at the request of the 2025 School Building Committee, and to close the warrant for the Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, July 28th, 2026, and to direct the Town administrator to forward copies of the articles to the advisory Committee and to post them on the town's website within ten days of this vote. Under Town of Hingham General Bylaws article two and all other applicable laws.

Mr. Ramsey seconded the amended motion. All were in favor.

Discussion and potential vote to include ballot questions on the upcoming election on November 3, 2026

Ms. Katie Dugan provided an update on the Town's plans to potentially include two debt exclusion questions on the local ballot—one for the Hingham Middle School project and one for South Elementary School—assuming both projects move forward with the MSBA at the end of October. Ms. Dugan stated that no action is required at this time because the Town will utilize a separate local ballot rather than a combined local and state ballot, there is additional time to finalize and vote on the proposed ballot questions. The Board expects to have until mid-September to make a final determination.

Ms. Carol Falvey, Town Clerk, discussed the August 5 deadline and determined that the original plan presented a significant logistical challenge. Following further research, the Town determined that it could conduct a dual election on November 3, 2026, with separate state and local ballots.

The state ballot is expected to be at least two pages, while the local election will utilize a separate ballot. The Town is reviewing procedures to streamline the process, including color-coding the ballots and utilizing separate check-in procedures. Not all voters will participate in both elections, so the Town is evaluating options to ensure the voting process remains organized and efficient. Ms. Falvey noted that while the Town has conducted a dual election only once in the past 20 years, other municipalities have utilized this process and they have consulted with election vendors and received recommendations regarding procedures and logistics.

Vote: No vote at this time. The Select Board will vote on this topic at a future meeting.

Sign the Warrant for the 2026 State Primary to be held on Tuesday, September 1, 2026

Ms. Carol Falvey explained that for each election, the Select Board is required to sign an election warrant. The warrant serves as the official notice calling the election and includes the election date, voting hours, and polling locations, as required by state law. For the September state primary, there is no Town Meeting associated with the election; therefore, the warrant will serve solely as the call for the election. Once signed by the Select Board, the warrant will be provided to the Town Clerk for posting and public notification.

Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to sign the Hingham Warrant for the 2026 State Primary election, to be held on Tuesday, September 1st, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.

Public Comment

No members of the public came forward.

Select Board/Town Administrator Reports

Mr. Ramsey recognized the Hingham Police Department for their great work dealing with a volatile situation at the library.

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

The Select Board meeting adjourned at 5:59pm.

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Documents:

1. Special Town Meeting Timeline
2. Special Fall 2026 Town Meeting Draft Warrant Articles
3. September Primary Warrant
4. HMLP Presentation