

Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 28, 2026

Hingham Town Hall, Third Floor, South Hearing Room/Hybrid Meeting

In Attendance: Kevin Freytag, Ted Ciolkosz, Brian Stack, Carol Tully, Michael Herde, Ben Burnham, David Leiphart, Nes Correnti, Michelle Ayer, Jerry Seelen, Elaine McCusker, Cathe Shetzline, Katherine Parks, Mary Power, Stephen Pohl,

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Freytag called the meeting to order at 7:00PM 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 law 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 MGL.c, 30A Section 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording”.
- 2. Comments from the Public: None.**
- 3. Discussion:** The Advisory Committee reviewed three major upcoming warrant articles that will come before the Town at

a Special Town Meeting (STM) scheduled for October 29, 2027:

- Hingham Municipal Light Plant (HMLP) Borrowing Authorization: The total project cost has been revised downward to \$97.4 million from an original \$110 million. After expected reimbursements, the net cost (and borrowings) may come in lower than the originally expected \$70 million. Final numbers will be disclosed at HMLP's August 18 meeting. The borrowing costs of the project will be paid via increased electric rates. No estimate of future rate increases is currently available, but HMLP is working towards providing an estimate of the rate impacts in advance of Special Town Meeting.
- High School Roof/Heating/Cooling Project: Voters at the October Special Town Meeting will be asked to approve a change in the project's scope and in the use of the design funds appropriated by our 2025 Town Meeting. The School Building Committee (SBC) has completed its analysis of the three heat-pump based alternatives which were approved for study at our April 2025 Town meeting. Among these options, the SBC initially favored a ground-sourced/geothermal heating and cooling option estimated to cost about \$27 million after MSBA grants and other incentives. The SBC also studied two conventional, natural gas-based solutions for the HHS project. The SBC now wishes to utilize unspent funds from the 2025 appropriation to study the options still further. To enable the SBC to proceed, voters at the upcoming STM will be asked to approve this change. Notably, MSBA funding (typically 30-40%

of total project cost) will remain available for the roofing component of the HHS project. However, MSBA funding would not be available if either if the two new gas fired option is selected for cooling and heating HHS. The SBC continues to evaluate the suitability and cost of each of the alternatives. Cost data for the two gas-fired options is expected to be available on or about August 11th.

- Additionally, the Select Board has placed in the Special Town Meeting warrant an article to replace the roof at South School. An expected article to fund roof replacement at Plymouth River School remains pending results of a structural assessment of the school's roof (due August 10th).
- Several members of the Advisory Committee expressed concern about the compressed timeline between now and the upcoming STM, emphasizing the need to provide voters a timely understanding of the costs and other issues involved in each project. Regarding the HMLP project, several members sought a clearer understanding of whether the project's primary purpose was to boost HMLPs electric supply capability or rather to provide redundancy given the Town's long-time reliance on a single electric transmission line. Further discussion with the sponsors is expected.

4. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:53pm by unanimous voice vote.