

# Select Board

---

January 18, 2021

Present:

- Select Board: Mr. Joseph Fisher (Chair) and Ms. Liz Klein, and Mr. Bill Ramsey
- Mr. Tom Mayo, Town Administrator
- Ms. Michelle Monsegur, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance
- Mr. Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations

## **6:30PM: Call to order**

Mr. Fisher 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. “

Mr. Fisher asked if any participants were recording the meeting. No one indicated they were recording.

He said that the Select Board members participating in the meeting were himself, Mr. Bill Ramey and Ms. Liz Klein.

## **Foster Elementary School Project Update**

Linda Hill and Ray Estes presented. Mr. Estes told the Board that Chris Carroll of PMA Consultants, the Owner’s Project Manager (OPM) for the project, was in attendance, in case they needed his assistance. Mr. Estes said that the Committee has been hard at work over the past several months compiling documents to submit to the MSBA. He presented the Project Overview, noting that the project required funding up front with reimbursements from the MSBA at a later date. The project timeline includes the following:

- 2019 – MSBA invitation
- 2020 – Eligibility Certifications
- 2021 feasibility; OPM & Architect, Raymond Design, on board
- Studied 10 options which included several different locations for placement of the new school
- Conducted detailed site investigations
- FAS review February 2 to approve preferred option
- 33.95% Reimbursement
- Bid in two packages (Fall 2022 & Spring 2023)
- Bid and open by September 2024
- Complete work by spring 2025

Mr. Estes stated that the SBC has discussed net zero opportunities for the building and said that they have decided to move forward with an all-electric building. He said that they have done extensive outreach in the community and with various boards and committees to socialize the plan. Project highlights include:

- Accommodating enrollment growth
- Addressing the school in the system with the greatest needs
- No redistricting
- Net zero ready school
- Expanded pre-K offerings
- Expanded Kids-in-Action offerings
- Incorporating new SPED Programs

He also gave an overview of the proposed layout. The new school would be set into the hillside to avoid floodplain issues, while also allowing for views of the tidal marsh. An outdoor classroom would be located on the edge of the marsh. Large play / learning areas would be located to the south of the building and would maximize the recess area allowing it to be used during the construction phase. A softball field and tennis courts would also be located at the site.

Because the MSBA would not be approving the cost estimate until August, Mr. Estes felt that it would be appropriate to move forward requesting Town Meeting approval at a Special Fall Town Meeting in 2022. He felt confident that timeframe would work with their funding. He said that the MSBA had some reservations about the floodplain, but the Town has addressed these concerns by increasing the elevation of the site. He noted that moving forward at a spring 2022 Town Meeting could be risky because the Town would not have final approval for MSBA funding until August 2022.

Ms. Julia Strehle, Chair of the Advisory Committee, commented that she was aware that the Foster School project has been following a slightly different timeframe than most MSBA projects. Mr. Estes said that the School Building Committee's proposed Fall Town Meeting timeframe would keep the project on the traditional MSBA sequence and would allow for some comfort, knowing that Town Meeting would not have to vote on the project prior to the MSBA's confirmation of funding.

David Anderson of the Advisory Committee asked what sort of approval would be necessary besides the MSBA. Mr. Estes anticipated a lengthy permitting process through the Town. Mr. Evan Sheehan of the Advisory Committee asked what percentage of the entire cost would be contributed by the MSBA. Mr. Estes said that the MSBA currently contributes up to \$360 per square foot of construction costs. He said that the construction costs are currently being quoted at \$500-\$600 per square foot, so there is a likelihood that some of the cost would not be reimbursable by the MSBA, which is standard for this type of project. He said that there would possibly be a few other non-reimbursable costs as well. He reported a base reimbursement rate of 33.95% at this time. There was some additional discussion regarding the location of the proposed school. Mr. Estes said that an unavailability of alternative sites and the adjacent flood plain were deciding factors in the location of the building. Ms. Hill noted that the MSBA seems to be satisfied with the modifications that have been made to the project.

Mr. Ramsey asked if waiting until a Special Town Meeting in the fall would have any impact on State reimbursement. Mr. Estes said that it would not. Mr. Ramsey said that he was supportive of the plan as put forth by the School Building Committee. Ms. Klein asked if there was any risk of the MSBA pulling out of the project and losing funding. Mr. Estes felt that, if the MSBA were to approve their submission in February, there would be no reason to believe that they would not approve the plan in August. In addition, it was noted that, while the MSBA has no plans to adjust their reimbursement dollars in accordance with escalating construction costs. There was some additional discussion regarding the

elevation of the proposed building and the associated permitting process. Mr. Fisher said that the Select Board is committed to moving forward with the project. Ms. Kerry Ni, Chair of the School Committee, thanked the School Building Committee for being creative and for coming up with a solution to the floodplain issue.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

**Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to approve the minutes dated December 21, 2021. Ms. Klein seconded.**

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

#### **CB Hingham: Change of Corporate Name and DBA**

The Select Board considered approval of the request of CB Hingham, LLC, 613 Main Street, for a Change of Corporate Name from CB Hingham, LLC to The Barrel, LLC and a Change of DBA from The Cracker Barrel to The Barrel. Mr. and Mrs. McLaughlin, Owners, said that they would like to change the name to avoid brand confusion.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the request of CB Hingham, LLC d/b/a The Cracker Barrel, 613 Main Street, Hingham, MA for a Change of Corporate Name to The Barrel, LLC and a Change of DBA to The Barrel in accordance with the Application for Multiple Amendments filed with the Town of Hingham on November 9, 2021; subject to the approval of the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. Mr. Ramsey seconded.**

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

#### **Select Board sponsored Warrant Articles for 2022 Annual Town Meeting**

Mr. Mayo explained that the Board's vote tonight would be to allow submission of the following Warrant Articles, without any indication of support.

#### **Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund/Trustees of the Bathing Beach**

The Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund identifies a person who is responsible for sitting on the 3-person Board that governs the distribution of money that was set aside in a trust by Hannah Lincoln Whiting. Town Meeting would also vote on a person to fill a vacancy on the Trustees of the Bathing Beach. Mr. Ramsey noted that he would abstain from the discussion and vote on this first item.

#### **Assume Liability for DCR on Rivers, Harbors, Etc.**

The DCR, as a matter of policy, requires the Town to assume liability if it is to perform any type of work within the Town. In accordance with statute, the Town would assume liability for all damages to property sustained by any person as a result of such work performed by the DCR.

**Reports of Various Town Committees**

The Town is fortunate to have many public-spirited citizens willing to work in these capacities. We thank them for their excellent service and recommend that all these posts and committees be continues.

**Report of the Personnel Board**

This article provides funds to pay for financial obligations of the Town relating to salary increases, fringe benefit changes, and job reclassifications for non-School Department employees, and makes certain amendments to the Personnel By-Law, including the Classification and Salary Plan.

**Salaries of Town Officers**

This article would fix the salaries of the Select Board, the Board of Assessors, the Town Clerk, and the Municipal Light Board.

**Budgets**

This article contains the Town Budget.

**Transfer from the Stabilization Fund, Pursuant to the Town Meeting vote**

Pursuant to the Town Meeting vote, the proceeds from the sale of the former school administration building, the former Municipal Light Plant building, and the former Police Station were deposited in the Stabilization Fund for future tax reduction. This article would transfer a portion of the Stabilization Fund for the purpose of reducing the FY23 tax rate.

**Disbursement of Electric Light Department Receipts**

This is a PILOT Agreement, a payment in lieu of taxes that HMLP pays to the Town every year.

**Building Department Revolving Fund**

The Building Department Revolving Fund is credited with all fees from plumbing, gas, and electrical inspections performed by inspectors. This fund is used to pay wages, salaries, and fringe benefits (as applicable) to these Building Department staff members.

**Transfer Funds to the Reserve Fund**

This Article is included each year in the event that the existing Reserve Fund is not adequate to cover unanticipated expenses for the balance of the current fiscal year (FY22). The specific amount will be reported at Town Meeting.

**Acceptance of Easements**

This Article would allow the Select Board to accept all easements during the coming year and thus to avoid potentially expensive delays and inconvenience to projects that benefit the Town.

**Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund**

The 2019 Annual Town Meeting authorized establishment of a Municipal Waterways improvement and Maintenance Fund. The Town must have a Waterways Fund in order to be eligible for any available State or Federal harbor/coastal grants. Under State law, the Waterways Fund received revenue of 50% of municipal boat and excise taxes, all mooring permit fees, and any additional sums that the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Federal Government may provide. The Town may also deposit any additional amounts into the fund.

**Public Safety Facility Funding for Construction Bid Documents**

This Article asks the Town to vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to be expended by the Select Board to be used to pay the expenses for design, architectural, engineering, owner’s project manager and other professional services to complete the pre-construction bid documents in order to obtain construction bids for a new Public Safety Facility to be located at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA.

**Public Safety Facility Funding for Construction**

This Article asks the Town to vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to be expended by the Select Board to be used to pay for the construction of a new Public Safety Facility to be located at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA.

**Funding for Town Capital Projects (Fire Engine and Fire Station Repairs, and/or other Town Capital Projects)**

This Article asks the Town to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to be expended by the Select Board to be used to pay for certain capital equipment and projects, including, but not limited to, a fire engine, fire station repairs and/or other Town of Hingham capital equipment or projects. Anticipated projects include the roof at Central Fire Station, the HVAC at Central Fire Station, the roof at South Fire Station and the purchase of a new fire engine.

**Rescinding Authorized but Unissued Debt**

This Article asks the Town to vote to rescind the net amount of authorized but unissued debt for certain Town capital projects, which are no longer needed for the purposes for which they were initially approved.

Mr. Ramsey clarified that the Select Board has the ability to withdraw, modify or change any of the proposed Warrant Articles.

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to propose the articles, other than Articles A and S, as presented for inclusion in the 2022 Warrant for Hingham Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Ramsey seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes  
Ms. Klein: yes  
Mr. Fisher: yes**

**Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to propose Article A as presented for inclusion in the 2022 Warrant for Hingham Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Ramsey: abstain  
Ms. Klein: yes  
Mr. Fisher: yes**

Ms. Laura Burns, 479 Main Street, asked when the Select Board plans to vote to recommend a budget to the Advisory Committee. Mr. Mayo noted that the Sustainable Budget Task Force would be presenting a report to the Select Board in the next few weeks.

### **COVID-19 Update**

Mr. Mayo gave the following update on the Covid-19 crisis:

“Massachusetts DPH has not updated its data since our report to you last week. Key data, available through January 8, reflect a rising COVID-19 presence in Hingham:

- Our average 14-day case count is 589, up from 415 reported on January 1.
- Our total case count was 3,430, up from 3,093 reported on January 1.

A regional COVID-19 drive through testing site, supported by Hingham, Cohasset, Hull, and Scituate, continues operation at 335 Lincoln Street in Hingham. Test site operations have improved substantially with reduced wait times amid more volume. Thanks are due to the many teams supporting the site, including the Hingham Building, DPW, Health, IT, Police, and Public Health Departments, for their work in preparing the site. We are working with the vendor to improve the turnaround for PCR test results. The vendor recognizes there is a problem and is working to reduce this turn-around time. The vendor is adding capacity; we expect the time between testing and notification to decrease. Due to harsh weather conditions, the Testing Center was closed yesterday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. The testing center will be open on Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays, and Saturdays, from 7am to 4pm. PCR and rapid antibody tests are available. Rapid antigen tests are not available at this time. Residents and employees of the four communities will continue to have priority appointment access from 7am – 11am daily. Online preregistration is required; no tests will be administered without an appointment. All participants will be notified of test results by email.

Please continue to take precautions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. As we all know, vaccination, wearing face coverings, practicing social distancing, and frequently washing hands, among other measures, help protect us all from COVID-19. On January 7, 2022, the Hingham Board of Health issued a Health Advisory strongly recommending the use of face coverings by all patrons, visitors, and employees within any indoor space open to the public in Hingham. The Health Advisory is directed to all visitors and employees within any indoor space in all public places, public housing, assisted living facilities, membership associations, and workplaces in Hingham. The [CDC](#) and the [Massachusetts DPH](#) guidance on face coverings can be found on their respective websites. The Board of Health recommends the use of an N-95, KN-95, or a (non-woven, multi-ply) surgical mask. Woven cloth masks, gators, and bandanas provide significantly less protection against this airborne respiratory virus. Also remember that any face covering should be fitted closely to one’s skin to prevent unwanted gaps and leaks.”

Mr. Fisher added that the delay in testing results is a nation-wide issue, with many communities having significant delays. He also said that, starting today, the Federal Government has launched its own website where residents can order free Covid-19 tests. Residents can request tests at [covidtests.gov](https://covidtests.gov).

**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.”

Ms. Laura Burns reminded the Board that the Cable Advisory Committee is looking to negotiate with the Board regarding their contract with the Town. Mr. Mayo said that he would be happy to meet with Ms. Burns regarding this.

**Town Administrator/Select Board Reports**

Ms. Klein reported that the Sustainable Budget Task Force is working on their final report, which would include the process they have followed, the data they have used, their analysis, budget scenarios, and their recommendations. The Task Force hopes to finalize their report by the end of January. They plan to hold office hours after the report is present, in case residents have any questions.

Mr. Ramsey said that he had the pleasure of attending the meeting of the Council on Aging this morning. He enjoyed hearing their concerns and appreciated all the work they do for the Town.

**Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Klein seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Mr. Ramsey: yes**

**Ms. Klein: yes**

**Mr. Fisher: yes**

**The meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.**

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