

# Select Board

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January 20, 2026

Present:

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

## **Call to order:**

6:00 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 January 6, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to approve the minutes dated January 8, 2026. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to approve the minutes dated January 13, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

## **FY27 Departmental Budget Requests**

- **Bare Cove Park**  
Ray O’Neill and Claudia Eaton, Bare Cove Park Committee, presented the FY27 budget request noting there were no increases were requested this year.
- **Bathing Beach Trustees**  
Ed Johnson, Bathing Beach Trustees, presented the FY27 budget request noting a slight increase to wages to allow for additional lifeguards during the summer.  
Diane DiNapoli, 16 Gardner St, asked about picnic tables.
- **Athletic Field Maintenance**  
Mark Thorell, Hingham Recreation Director, and Vicki Donlan, Chair of the Recreation Commission, presented the FY27 budget noting, that prior to FY26, the turf maintenance budget was included within the Recreation Commission budget and is now stand alone budget since the fields have shared oversight by the School Department, Select Board and Recreation Commission.
- **Recreation**

Mr. Thorell and Ms. Donlan presented the FY27 budget request noting the operating budget is fully funded by the programs that are offered.

- **Building**

Mike Clancy, Building Commissioner, presented the FY27 budget request noting there is a 9.2% decrease.

- **Center for Active Living**

Jennifer Young, HCAL Director, presented the FY27 budget request noting no increases were requested for the operating budget. Ms. Young presented an additional request for a part-time Nutrition Coordinator, working 25 hours per week, explaining this is the fourth year the position has been requested.

- **Veterans' Services**

Shannon Burke, Veterans Services Director, presented the FY27 budget request noting there were not any increases this year other than salaries step increases and COLA.

- **GAR Hall**

Ms. Burke presented the FY27 budget request, noting that no increases were requested this year.

- **Celebrations**

Ms. Burke presented the FY27 budget request, noting that no increases were requested this year.

- **Health**

Susan Sarni, Executive Health Office, presented the FY27 budget request noting an increase in water testing services, but an overall operational decrease.

- **Library**

Linda Harper Stone, Library Director, presented the FY27 budget request noting some slight increases.

- **Community Planning**

Emily Wentworth, Community Planning Director, presented the FY27 budget request.

- **Land Use & Development**

Jennifer Oram, Zoning Administrator, presented the FY27 budget request.

### **Submit Select Board-sponsored Warrant Articles for 2026 Annual Town Meeting**

Mr. Mayo highlighted some of the anticipated use of excess fund balance for ATM 2026 reflected in upcoming Warrant Articles.

- **Article I: Building Department Revolving Fund**

It was noted that the Building Department revolving fund amount included in the warrant article was revised to \$265,000.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the revised Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article I: Building Department Revolving Fund for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article R: Transfer of Funds to Balance Certain Capital, Grant and other Town Accounts**

Mr. Mayo explained this article is for the purpose of an accounting deficit clean up.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article R: Transfer of Funds to Balance Certain Capital, Grant and other Town Accounts for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article V: Sale Lease or Conveyance of 86 Central Street**

Jack Falvey, Chair of the Affordable Housing Trust, explained the warrant article would authorize, but not require, the Select Board to issue a request for proposals and to dispose of the property by sale or lease if deemed in the Town's best interest. He noted the property requires significant capital improvements and that private ownership could provide access to financing and efficiencies not available to the Town. Mr. Falvey stated that the Affordable Housing Trust voted to support the warrant article.

Mr. Ramsey noted that this action would represent an initial step to study and socialize the matter.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article V: Sale, Lease or Conveyance of 86 Central Street for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article X: Real Estate Transfer Fee**

Mr. Mayo explained that the article would permit the Town to collect a fee on real estate transfers, with funds first used to support affordable housing if the Town falls below the 10% Subsidized Housing Inventory threshold. Once met, the funds could be used for general government purposes as needed.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article X: Real Estate Transfer Fee for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article Y: Sale of 8 Short Street**

Mr. Mayo explained that the article would allow the Town to dispose of the property at 8 Short Street, the former DPW barn, which is now unoccupied. The property is believed to have real estate value and could generate capital to support future capital expenditures.

Hillary Hosmer, 204 Linden Ponds Way, asked about the size of the building.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article Y: T Sale of 8 Short Street for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article Z: Sale of 230 North Street**

Mr. Mayo explained that this is another property that would be available for sale, the Torrent Fire Station that is no longer in use.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article Z: Sale of 230 North Street for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article AA: Transfer from the Capital Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund**

Mr. Mayo explained that when the article was created two years ago, \$7 million was designated to be used over the first four years to offset tax impacts during the initial debt service spike for the Public Safety and Foster projects. This year's allocation is anticipated to be approximately \$2.1 million.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article AA: Transfer from the Capital Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article CC: Civil Service: Fire**

Mr. Mayo explained that this article is the first of two to withdraw the Fire Department, and subsequently the Police Department, from the state Civil Service program. This would provide greater hiring flexibility, reduce vacancies, and lower overtime costs. The proposal resulted from collective bargaining negotiations.

Jack Manning and Lynn Carroll, Personnel Board, commented that the Personnel Board is reviewing the article.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article CC: Civil Service: Fire for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article DD: Civil Service: Police**

Mr. Mayo explained this would be the same scenario as Article CC.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article DD: Civil Service: Police for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article FF: Transfer of Funds For Employee Health Care Cost Subsidy**

Mr. Mayo explained that the article, developed by a healthcare task force, would appropriate approximately \$1.35 million from fund balance as a one-year subsidy to reduce employee healthcare costs by temporarily increasing the Town's share to 60%. He emphasized this is a one-time measure and that the Town would remain a 50/50 community.

Ms. Carroll added that based on discussions with Personnel Board members, there is general support for the warrant article; however, the Board would like to review it further at its next meeting and continue stakeholder engagement. She also raised a question about whether the article's final language provides sufficient flexibility for the Select Board to address issues that may arise during those discussions.

Kevin Feeley, Labor Council, responded that the article provides flexibility only within its stated parameters, allowing up to a 60% contribution for FY27.

Karen Johnson, Personnel Board, commented that its narrow language may limit the Advisory Committee's ability to consider alternative approaches.

There was brief discussion on the language of the article and limitations.

Sue Eddy, Employee, commented she supported of moving forward with the proposal as healthcare costs are placing significant burdens on employees.

Jen Benham, Chair of School Committee, commented that she supports the article as a one-year step to reduce the burden on employees and viewed it as a collaborative, unified approach.

**Vote: Ms. Klein made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article FF: Transfer for Employee Health Care Cost Subsidy for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

- **Article LL: Electronic Voting Devices**

Mr. Mayo explained that the article would authorize up to \$100,000 to fund electronic voting devices if a task force recommends their use, subject to Select Board approval, allowing the Town to avoid a one-year delay.

**Vote: Ms. Strehle made a motion to submit the Select Board-sponsored Warrant Article LL: Electronic Voting Devices for the 2026 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

**Appointments and/or reappointments (for a list of Talent Bank Applicants and Board and Committee vacancies, please visit [Hingham-ma.gov/SB](http://Hingham-ma.gov/SB))**

**Vote: Mr. Ramsey made a motion to appoint Linda Luke to the Cultural Council for a term ending June 30, 2028. Ms. Klein seconded. All were in favor.**

**Vote: Ms. Ramsey made a motion to appoint Jeffrey Kukesh to the Fourth of July Parade Committee for a term ending December 31, 2026. Ms. Strehle seconded. All were in favor.**

**Public Comment**

No members of the public came forward.

**Select Board/Town Administrator Reports**

Mr. Ramsey reported that the Hingham High School Wrestling Team will be hosting Veteran's Appreciation Night on Wednesday.

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

**The Select Board meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.**

Documents:

1. Minutes – 1/6/26, 1/8/26, 1/13/26
2. FY27 Department Budget Packet
3. SB Sponsored Warrant Article Packet
4. Appointments