



Hingham Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC)

I. Background

A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a means to combat changes in the environment threatened by the continued release of carbon and other climate changing gases. Many cities and towns throughout Massachusetts and indeed much of the world have completed, are currently undertaking, or are beginning the process of planning how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to lessen the effects of climate change. Throughout 2020 and 2021, Town Administration, the Selectmen, the Energy Action Committee, and concerned citizens groups have deliberated on the need for Hingham to engage in a climate action planning process. In recognition of this effort and in acknowledging the need, the Town voted at Town Meeting April 2021 to create a Climate Action Planning Committee (CAPC).

II. Mission of the Climate Action Planning Committee

At Town Meeting April 2021, the Town voted to establish the CAPC to fulfill two charges:

- 1) Evaluate a wide range of carbon emission reduction strategies, and
- 2) Propose measures to achieve a zero sum of carbon emissions produced and taken out of the atmosphere (i.e., "net zero" carbon emissions) by the year 2040 or another target date deemed feasible.

It is anticipated that the end result of the CAPC's work is the development of a CAP for all of Hingham. To assist the CAPC in its mission, the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plan (HMLP) agreed to commit up to \$80,000 to fund the development of a CAP. With the assistance of Town Administration, the CAPC will direct and oversee the expenditure of these funds. It is anticipated that the CAPC, with the assistance of Town Administration, will select a third-party consultant to develop a CAP for Hingham.

III. CAPC Membership

As per the direction of the Town at Town Meeting April 2021, the CAPC shall consist of the following eleven members:

1. one member of the Energy Action Committee as selected by its committee, who shall serve as Chair of the CAPC
2. one member of Cleaner Greener Hingham as selected by its committee
3. one member of the School Committee or its designee
4. one member representing the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant as designated by the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant Board
5. one member of the Planning Board or its designee
6. one member of the Conservation Commission as selected by its committee
7. one member of the Development & Industrial Commission as selected by its committee
8. two residents selected by the Board of Selectmen, and
9. two residents selected by the Moderator

While the designee of the Energy Action Committee shall serve as the initial chair of the CAPC, in the event (a) the Chair at any time resigns (i) as Chair but remains a member of the CAPC or (ii) from the CAPC in its entirety; or (b) two members of the CAPC move for a vote of no confidence in the Chair and a majority of the

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members of the CAPC approve of the motion (from which vote the Chair must abstain), the members of the CAPC thereafter shall elect a new Chair. In the case of either (a) or (b), any member of the CAPC may nominate him or herself or any other member to serve as Chair, and any nominated member may be elected as Chair on a majority vote.

In the event any member of the CAPC resigns, that member shall be replaced as soon as is possible in the same manner as which the resigning member was designated. For example, if the School Committee designee resigns, that member's replacement shall be as designated by the School Committee; if a resident designated by the Moderator resigns, the Moderator shall designate a replacement; and so on.

IV. Meetings and Attendance

Open Meeting Law

At all times the CAPC shall be conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Meeting Schedule

The frequency, length, and manner of the CAPC's meetings shall be as designated by the Chair. In making these determinations, the Chair shall take into consideration the effort required to accomplish its mission as set forth in Section II, with a goal of (a) identifying by the fall of 2022 actions resulting from the CAP that require warrant article approval at Town Meeting 2023; and (b) finalizing the CAP by March 2023.

Meeting Format

Meetings may take place in person or electronically (e.g., through the Town's Zoom account). It is anticipated that meetings will take place electronically unless the Chair determines otherwise.

Quorum

A majority of the members of the CAPC in attendance at any meeting shall comprise quorum. In the event at any point in time the membership of the CAPC consists of an even number of individuals due to a resignation that has not yet been filled, one half of the membership in attendance at a meeting shall comprise quorum.

Actions Taken at a Meeting

Any resolution taken at a meeting shall require a majority vote of members comprising quorum. Not all actions constitute resolutions requiring a vote. For example, fact-finding or investigative actions, meetings with Town officials or residents, or canvassing opinion of interested parties (such as Town committees, residents, citizen groups, etc.) do not require a CAPC resolution. Any member may undertake such actions at any time. However, no member of the CAPC can or may claim to represent the views of the CAPC or act on behalf of the CAPC absent a resolution by the CAPC granting such authority.

Any action authorizing the expenditure of funds or authorizing activities that will result in the expenditure of funds (such as the hiring of a third-party consultant or directing the third-party consultant to act) requires a resolution of the CAPC. Additionally, any recommendation of warrant articles to put before Town Meeting or adoption of a CAP requires a resolution.

Resolutions may be proposed at any meeting by any member at any time upon motion made by that member and recognition by the Chair. The Chair may postpone recognition of a motion during a meeting, but must take up the motion before the meeting's conclusion. Upon recognition by the Chair, any resolution must be seconded by another member. Once seconded, the Chair will put the motion to a vote and call the result for recording in the minutes.

V. Working Groups



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The CAPC may choose to form Working Groups, where a subset of the members will conduct specific activities and report back to the CAPC. At no time shall any Working Group consist of a number of members that would constitute a quorum of the CAPC. (As such, Working Groups should typically consist of three or four members.) Working Group members may communicate freely among each other in person or electronically with regard to the work of the Working Group. In the event the work of a Working Group requires input from, or the views of, other members who are not members of that Working Group, such input or views may only be obtained at a meeting of the CAPC; otherwise, such communications could be deemed “deliberations” in violation of the Open Meeting Law.

Possible Working Groups of the CAPC may include, but are not limited to:

- Hingham Community Engagement
- Regional Engagement
- Grant Research & Opportunities
- Green Technologies
- Planning and Zoning
- CAP Drafting

Any Working Group shall be formed by resolution of the CAPC. Working Groups will report its findings to the CAPC.

VI. Record Keeping

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, minutes of all CAPC meetings shall be kept. Responsibility for drafting minutes shall be shared among the members in the order of their designation in Section III. So, for example, the Energy Action Committee designee shall author minutes for the first meeting, the Cleaner Greener Hingham designee for the second, and so forth. In the event the member whose responsibility it is to draft minutes is not present, the member next designated in the order will be responsible, and the absent member will draft minutes at the next available meeting.

It is neither expected nor required that the minutes represent a verbatim recitation of each member's deliberations at a meeting. The minutes are expected to be a summary of all items brought before the CAPC, the CAPC's deliberations, any motions made and resolutions taken, members present, start and end times, and the next scheduled meeting, if known.

It is anticipated that drafts of the last meeting's minutes will be provided in advance of the next scheduled meeting, and that minutes will be reviewed and approved at the next scheduled meeting. The Chair will provide approved minutes to the Town to be made publicly available on the Town's website.

When meetings are held electronically (such as through the Town's Zoom account), it is neither anticipated nor required that meetings be recorded. However, any member may request that any electronic meeting be recorded.

Subcommittees are neither required nor expected to keep minutes.

VI. Charter Approval & Amendments

The Charter and its approval are solely within the purview of the members of the CAPC. The Charter and any amendments thereto must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the total members of the CAPC, not a two-thirds majority of the quorum of the CAPC at a meeting. Any member may propose at any meeting an amendment to the Charter in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section IV. However, such amendments must be proposed in writing.

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Adopted by the Hingham Climate Action Planning Committee: October 13, 2021

