



## Hingham Climate Action Commission (HCAC)

### 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. On July 19, 2023 the Hingham Climate Action Planning Committee completed its charge given it by Town Meeting April 2021 by approving Hingham's first Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP was designed to be a living document with the goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

### II. Mission of the HCAC

At Town Meeting April 2023, the Town voted to establish the HCAC and charged it with supporting, overseeing, and reporting on:

- 1) the Town's implementation of the Climate Action Plan, developed and adopted pursuant to Article 14 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting, by updating the Town's carbon footprint as a measure of progress on the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and progress towards our Net Zero goal, and
- 2) any updates and amendments to the plan in accordance with the recommendations and processes set forth therein.

### III. HCAC Membership

As per the direction of the Town at Town Meeting April 2023, the HCAC shall consist of the following twelve members:

#### Voting Members

1. one member of the Energy Action Committee or its designee
2. one member of Cleaner Greener Hingham or its designee
3. one member of the Planning Board or its designee
4. one member of the Conservation Commission or its designee
5. one member of the Development & Industrial Commission or its designee
6. two residents selected by the Board of Selectmen (each to serve for a two-year term), and
7. two residents selected by the Moderator (each to serve for a two-year term)

#### Non-Voting Members

1. one member representing the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant as designated by the Hingham Municipal Light Board
2. one member of the School Committee or its designee

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3. the Sustainability Coordinator or any successor role thereto who would be responsible for updating the Town's carbon footprint

The HCAC shall be led by a Chair and a Vice Chair, with the Vice Chair performing the duties of the Chair when the Chair is not available. Each of the Chair and Vice Chair is to be elected by majority vote of all nine voting members present at the first duly called meeting of the HCAC and subsequently thereafter upon any successful motion for a new election to be held for one or both positions. Each of the Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected to a two-year term with that term concluding as of the first meeting to take place after that year's Town Meeting. At the first HCAC meeting after Town Meeting upon expiration of the term, elections shall be held for each position in accordance with the provisions of this Charter.

In the event (a) the Chair or Vice Chair at any time resigns (i) as Chair or Vice Chair but remains a member of the HCAC or (ii) from the HCAC in its entirety; or (b) two voting members of the HCAC move for a vote of no confidence in the Chair or Vice Chair and a majority of the voting members of the HCAC approve the motion (from which vote the Chair or Vice Chair must abstain, whichever is the subject of the no confidence motion), the members of the HCAC thereafter shall elect a new Chair or Vice Chair. In the case of either (a) or (b), any voting member of the HCAC may nominate him or herself or any other voting member to serve as Chair or Vice Chair, and any nominated member may be elected as Chair or Vice Chair on a majority vote.

In the event any member of the HCAC 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.

In accordance with the "Committee Attendance Policy" as provided in the Hingham Select Board Policies and Procedures Manual dated September 2015, in the event any committee member misses three consecutive meetings or a total of four meetings in one year without the permission of the Chair, the Chair may deem that member to have vacated the position, and the Chair may consult the appointing authority in order to replace the member.

## IV. Meetings and Attendance

### Open Meeting Law

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

### Meeting Schedule

The frequency, length, and manner of the HCAC'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.

### Meeting Format

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

### Quorum

A majority of the voting members of the HCAC in attendance at any meeting shall comprise quorum. In the event at any point in time the membership of the HCAC consists of an even number of individuals due to a



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resignation that has not yet been filled, one half of the voting 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 voting 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 HCAC resolution. Any member may undertake such actions at any time. However, no member of the HCAC can or may claim to represent the views of the HCAC or act on behalf of the HCAC absent a resolution by the HCAC 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 HCAC. Additionally, any recommendation of warrant articles to put before Town Meeting or adoption of an amended CAP requires a resolution.

Resolutions may be proposed at any meeting by any member, including non-voting members, 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 a voting member. Once seconded, the Chair will put the motion to a vote and call the result for recording in the minutes.

## V. Working Groups

The HCAC may choose to form Working Groups, where a subset of the members will conduct specific activities and report back to the HCAC. At no time shall any Working Group consist of a number of members that would constitute a quorum of the HCAC. (As such, Working Groups should typically consist of no more than four voting 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 voting members who are not members of that Working Group, such input or views may only be obtained at a meeting of the HCAC; otherwise, such communications could be deemed "deliberations" in violation of the Open Meeting Law.

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

- Community Engagement
- Grant Research & Opportunities
- Green Technologies
- Planning and Zoning
- CAP Amendments

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

## VI. Record Keeping

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, minutes of all HCAC 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.



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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 HCAC, the HCAC'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.

Working Groups are neither required nor expected to keep minutes.

### **VII. Charter Approval & Amendments**

The Charter and its approval are solely within the purview of the voting members of the HCAC. The Charter and any amendments thereto must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the total voting members of the HCAC, not a two-thirds majority of the quorum of the HCAC 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.

Adopted by the Hingham Climate Action Planning Committee: January 10, 2024