

TOWN OF HINGHAM



WARRANT for the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**Monday, April 28, 2025
at 7:00 P.M.**

**Hingham High School
17 Union Street, Hingham, MA**

and

**REPORTS
of the**

**Advisory Committee
Capital Outlay Committee
Planning Board**

**Select Board
Personnel Board
School Committee**

Please bring this report to the meeting for use in the proceedings

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

3	Town Meeting Procedures
97	Municipal Finance Terms
98	Talent Bank Application

Reports

5	Advisory Committee
15	Select Board
73	Capital Outlay Committee
90	Personnel Board
92	Planning Board
95	School Committee

Annual Town Election

17	Call of Town Meeting and Town Election
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Page

Article

Annual Town Meeting Articles

18	1	Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund
18	2	Assume Liability for DCR on Rivers, Harbors, Etc.
18	3	Reports of Various Town Committees
19	4	Report of the Personnel Board
20	5	Salaries of Town Officers
20	6	Budgets
29	7	Transfer from the Stabilization Fund
29	8	Disbursement of Electric Lighting Department Receipts
30	9	Building Department Revolving Fund
30	10	Transfer Funds to the Reserve Fund
30	11	DPW Vehicles & Equipment
31	12	Transfer of Tax Title Sale proceeds into the Capital Stabilization Fund
32	13	Transfer from the Capital Project Cost & Debt Service Stabilization Fund
33	14	Center for Active Living Revolving Fund
33	15	Center for Active Living: Design, Bid Documents, and OPM Funds
35	16	Center for Active Living: Article 97 Legislation
36	17	Acceptance of M.G.L. c. 59, § 5, clause 22I: Veterans' Tax Exemptions
37	18	South Shore Country Club: Authorization to Borrow for Equipment and Renovations
38	19	Recreation Department Revolving Fund
40	20	Recreation Commission New Pickleball Courts
41	21	Community Preservation Committee Recommendations
45	22	School: School Bus Leases
45	23	School: School Bus Lease Terms
46	24	School: Acceptance of M.G.L. c. 40, § 71: School Bus Cameras
46	25	Transfer Harbor Revenues to Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund
47	26	Repair/Reconstruction of Town Pier Wharf and Inner Harbor Structures
49	27	Town Election Voting Hours

49	28	Home Rule Petition: Alternative methods for Publication of Legal Notices
51	29	Water: Transfer of HMLP Parcel to WRWS
51	30	Water: Authorization to Borrow for Water Capital Projects
52	31	Water: Cell Tower Lease at Water Treatment Plant
52	32	School: High School Turf Field Replacement
53	33	School: 2025 School Building Committee
54	34	School: High School Roof Replacement
56	35	School: Plymouth River School Roof Schematic Design
58	36	School: South School Roof Schematic Design
59	37	School: School Extraordinary Capital Repairs Fund
60	38	Digitization of Town of Hingham Municipal Government Records
60	39	Specialized Energy Code
63	40	Citizen Petition: Home Rule Petition: Liquor License to Hingham Gas
64	41	Amend Zoning By-law: Update to Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations
69	42	Amend Zoning By-law: Exemption for Lots or Structures Affected by Taking
70	43	Amend Zoning By-law: Signage Reference Correction
70	44	Amend Zoning By-law: Extension or Alteration of Nonconforming Uses and Structures
71	45	Amend Zoning By-law: Expiration of Cell Tower Special Permits
72	46	Acceptance and Granting of Easements

**MODERATOR'S MESSAGE
ON
TOWN MEETING PROCEDURES**

Welcome to the 2025 Hingham Town Meeting. In our commitment to open town meeting, Hingham remains true to a wonderful tradition – of vesting in each citizen both voice and vote, enabling all of us to play a pivotal part in the work of our town and in shaping its future. Town meeting is not only a gathering of citizens to consider matters of common concern; it is the legislative body of the town. As such, the meeting must be conducted in a fair and open manner and in accordance with the Town By-laws, as well as traditions that we have followed in Hingham town meetings for many years. Several matters of procedure are summarized below.

- An **article** in the warrant states a question for the town meeting to answer. A **motion** is a proposed answer to the question and must be within the scope of the article. An article (once published in the warrant) may not be amended, but a motion may be amended by vote of the meeting. All motions must be seconded.
- If the Advisory Committee is recommending an **affirmative motion** under an article, its motion will be received as the main motion under the article. A voter may propose to amend this motion, either to change it in part or to substitute a whole new motion (sometimes called a "substitute motion"). In any such case, the proposed amendment will be taken up and voted on first and then the main motion, as it may have been amended, will be acted upon.
- If the Advisory Committee is recommending **no action** under an article and a voter offers an affirmative motion, the voter's motion will be received as the main motion under the article. Such a motion is likewise subject to amendment.
- All **motions and proposed amendments** involving the expenditure of money must be **in writing**. So must all other motions and proposed amendments unless they are so brief and simple as to be easily understood when stated orally (*e.g.*, motion for the previous question, motion to adjourn). Voters are welcome to seek the assistance of counsel for the Town in preparing motions or proposed amendments.
- **Limits on speaking:** No one may speak on any subject for more than six (6) minutes for the first time or for more than three (3) minutes for the second time. No one may speak more than twice on any question unless all others who have not spoken on the question shall have spoken if they desire to do so and unless leave of the meeting is first obtained. A person may speak more than twice, but only to make a brief correction of an error in or misunderstanding of his or her previous statement, including brief answers to questions from the floor (addressed through the Moderator).
- In addressing the meeting, a speaker shall confine his or her remarks to the matter before the meeting.
- Persons who are not registered voters of the Town may be admitted to the meeting as **guests** by the Moderator. A guest of the meeting may be granted permission to address the meeting by majority vote.
- The purpose of the **motion for the previous question** is to end discussion and have an immediate vote on the pending question. The motion is not debatable and requires a majority vote for adoption. The Moderator will decline to accept a motion for the previous question if

other voters are seeking recognition and if both sides have not had a fair opportunity to be heard. The Moderator will accept the motion for the previous question if it appears that both sides have been heard and the discussion is becoming repetitious.

- **Voting procedures:** All votes are taken in the first instance by voice vote. If the Moderator is in doubt as to the results or if seven (7) voters rise and express doubt as to the result declared by the Moderator, a standing vote is taken, **except** that a ballot vote is taken (instead of a standing vote) if either the Advisory Committee or fifty (50) voters promptly call for a ballot vote. As a ballot vote takes considerable time, our practice has been not to request a ballot vote in the absence of compelling reasons.
- At a **Special Town Meeting**, no money may be appropriated for any purpose if the Advisory Committee recommends against the appropriation, except by a **two-thirds vote** of the meeting.
- No vote may be **reconsidered** except after a **two-thirds vote** on a motion to reconsider such vote. A vote may not be reconsidered a second time or after a motion to reconsider it has failed to pass.
- A vote adopted at one session of the town meeting may not be **reconsidered at a later (adjourned) session** of the meeting unless the mover has given notice of the mover's intention to make such a motion either at the session of the meeting at which the vote was passed or by written notice to the Town Clerk not less than 12 hours before the hour to which adjournment has been voted and not more than 48 hours after the hour of adjournment of such session. Any motion for reconsideration pursuant to such notice of intention will be taken up at the beginning of the adjourned session.
- **Articles** in the warrant are to be acted upon **in their order** unless the meeting otherwise determines by majority vote.
- A **motion to adjourn** the meeting to a later time is a privileged motion and is decided by majority vote without debate. When the warrant is completed, a **motion to dissolve** the meeting is in order.
- The number of voters constituting a **quorum** in order to convene the first session of a Regular or Special Town Meeting is 300. The number of voters necessary to convene the second or any subsequent session of a Regular or Special Town Meeting is 200. Once convened, the quorum to transact business at any Regular or Special Town Meeting is 200; provided, however, that a number of less than 200 may from time to time adjourn the same. Once a quorum is determined at the start of the meeting (or adjourned session), the presence of a quorum is presumed to continue unless a point of no quorum is raised and a count of the meeting shows that a quorum is not present. In that event, the meeting may be adjourned to a later date.
- **If you wish to speak**, please rise and seek the attention of the Moderator or the Assistant Moderator. When recognized by the Moderator, you should come to a microphone. Please state your name and address at the outset each time you speak.

April 2025

Michael J. Puzo
Moderator

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

I am pleased to submit this report on behalf of the Advisory Committee (the Committee or AdCom). The Committee, which is established by Article 14 of the Town of Hingham By-laws, is charged with reviewing and making a recommendation on all articles that come before Town Meeting. Advisory Committee recommendations, and any accompanying commentary, are included in this Warrant book. While the financial position of the Town remains solid, balancing the budget was challenging this year and there are several large capital projects on the horizon.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FY26 BUDGET

The FY26 budget is based on the FY24 Override Framework and FY24-28 Financial Management Plan (the "Financial Plan" or "Plan"). This Plan was developed as part of the FY24 budget development process and was signed by the Select Board, School Committee, Advisory Committee, School Superintendent, and Town Administrator. The FY24 budget presented and passed at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting included a \$7.9M operational override, resulting in a 7.8% tax increase for the median assessed house in the Town. The Financial Plan was created as a public commitment to the taxpayers to hold budget increases for the municipal and school departments to 3.5%, year-over-year, through FY27 (excluding out-of-district special education costs incurred by the schools, as defined in the document). The 3.5% target for budget increases was recommended by the 2022 Sustainable Budget Task Force.

Throughout the budget process, the Advisory Committee was also guided by key considerations outlined in the Town's Financial Policy:

- Ensure the continuous delivery of Town services at a level that is consistent with the reasonable needs and expectations of its citizens;
- Ensure that people of varied economic means remain a part of our community;
- Provide for the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate infrastructure;
- Provide guidance for the use of Town financial resources in emergency circumstances;
- Ensure the Town's commitment to Climate Action Planning is reflected in budget and capital expenditure planning whenever reasonable and possible;
- Maintain stable tax rates; and,
- Preserve the Town's credit rating (currently Aaa from Moody's, AAA from Fitch, and AAA from Standard & Poor's).

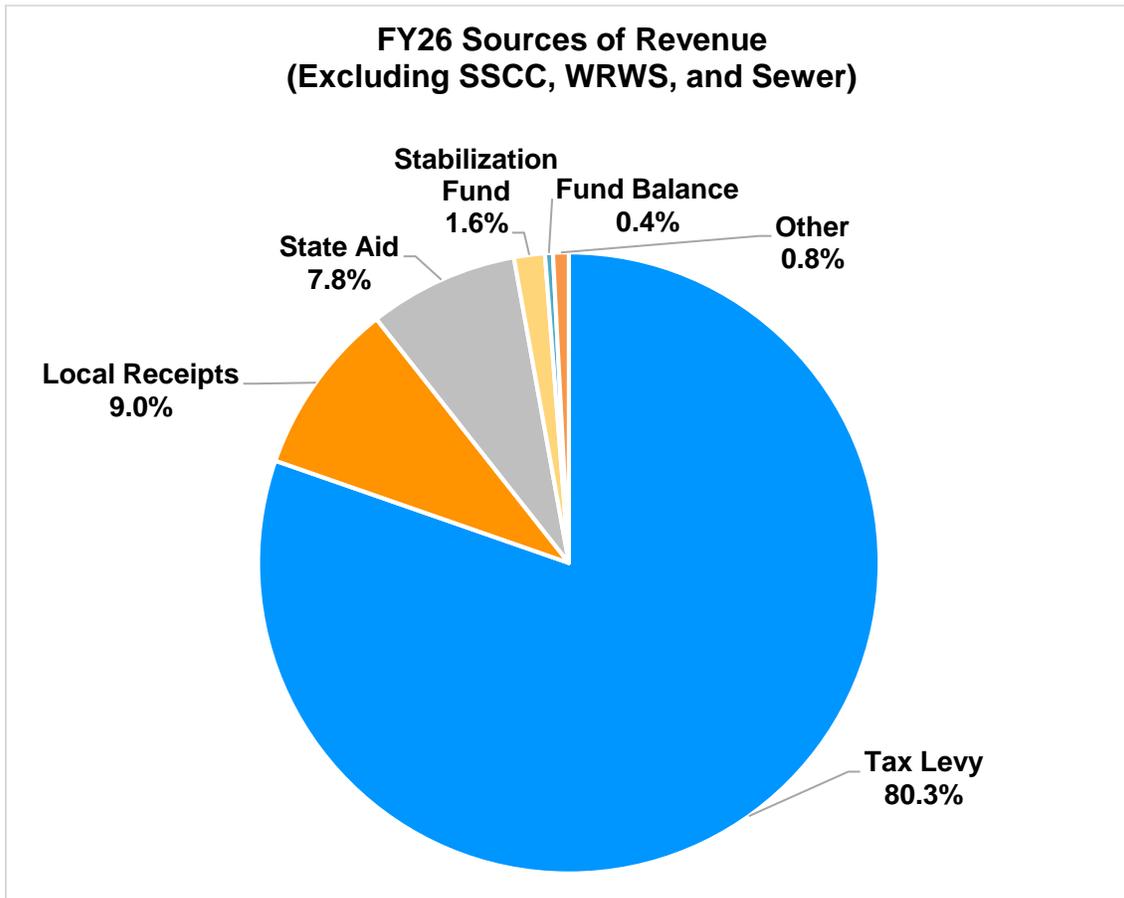
With respect to the Town's credit rating, the Advisory Committee also continues to monitor the ratio of the Town's Unassigned Fund Balance to the Town's Total Annual Expenditures – a key metric of fiscal health and effective management in evaluations by credit rating agencies. The Town's Aaa bond rating allows the Town to secure the lowest possible interest rates for its bond offerings, resulting in lower debt service costs funded by property taxes. The availability of debt at reasonable rates is a key component of the Town's financial assumptions. The resulting debt service costs at lower-than-projected levels also reduces the tax burden for Hingham taxpayers. The Aaa rating saved the Town an estimated \$1.2M on the \$70M bond issued in February 2025 for the Foster Elementary School and Public Safety Facility projects compared to a rating of AA. Maintaining the Town's Aaa credit rating will become increasingly important as we look ahead to the additional large capital projects before the Town.

The Advisory Committee believes that the proposed budgets reflect the commitments made to the Town as part of the Financial Plan, are consistent with the Town Financial Policy, and are fair and equitable.

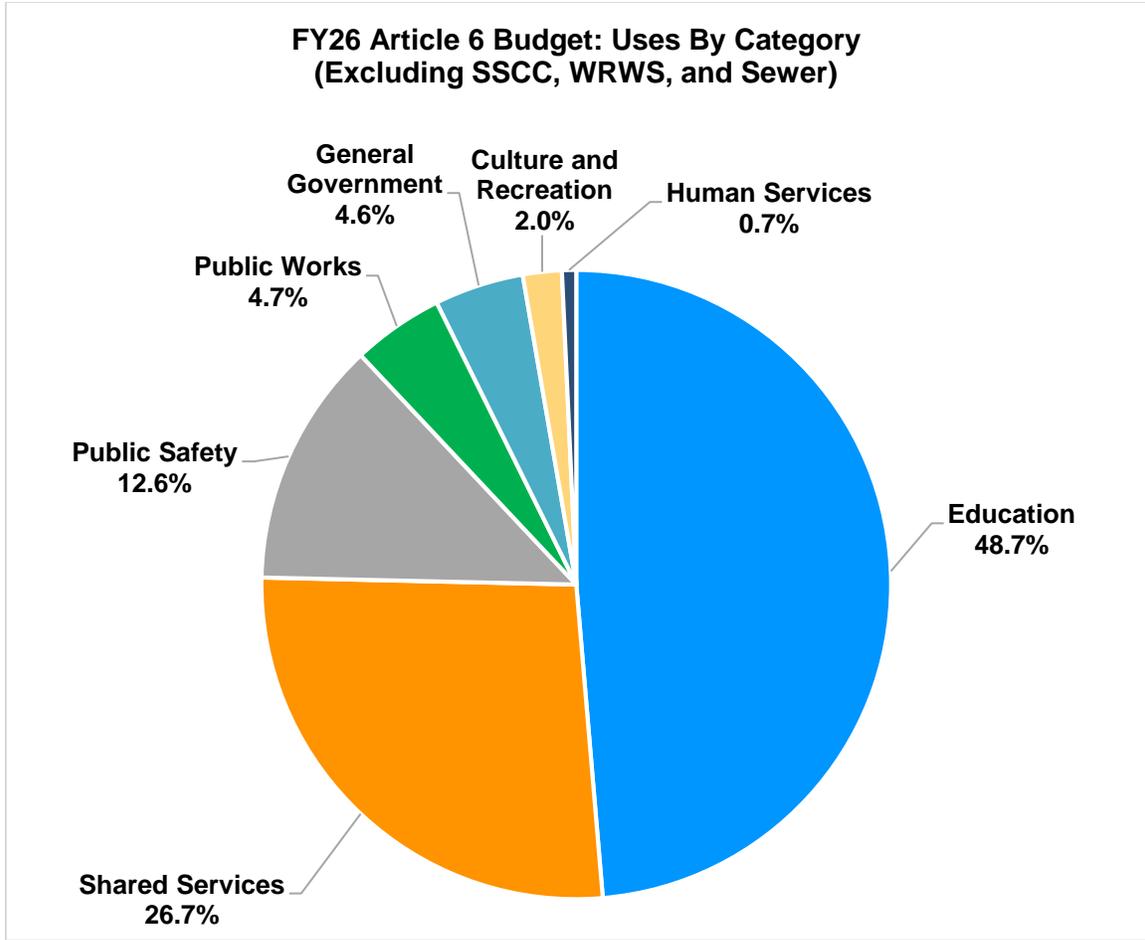
PROPOSED FY26 BUDGET

The Town's revenue sources for FY26 include a 2.5% increase in the Tax Levy, New Growth of \$780,000, modest increases in State aid and local receipts, use of Excess Overlay, the Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund, as well as \$2,200,000 from the Capital Project Cost and Debt Service (CPCDS) Stabilization Fund. The CPCDS Stabilization Fund was created in 2022 by Special Town Meeting specifically to help mitigate the tax impact of the new elementary school and public safety facility projects.

Below is a breakdown of revenue by category, excluding self-supporting operations (South Shore Country Club, Weir River Water System, and Sewer).



All budgets have been closely scrutinized by each department head, Town Administration, the Select Board, and the Advisory Committee. Below is a breakdown of spending by category, excluding self-supporting operations (South Shore Country Club, Weir River Water System, and Sewer).



Overall, budgets have grown from FY25 to FY26 by a total of 5.5%. This includes Articles 4 and 6, excluding self-supporting operations. Note that the FY26 School Department budget does not include out-of-district costs that exceed the 2% as defined in the Financial Management Plan. Costs in excess of 2% (estimated to be \$1.2M in FY26) that cannot be covered by grants and/or applicable school revolving funds will be paid for out of Unassigned Fund Balance through the Reserve Fund process at the end of the fiscal year.

	FY25	FY26	% CHANGE
Municipal Departments:	\$35,947,182	\$37,205,334	3.5%
School Department:	\$68,003,625	\$70,383,752	3.5%
Capital Outlay (tax levy):	\$3,400,000	\$3,500,000	2.9%
Employee Benefits:	\$17,489,526	\$18,769,315	7.3%
Debt Service:	\$11,357,273	\$13,695,055	20.6%
Insurance and Incidentals:	<u>\$1,700,527</u>	<u>\$1,870,580</u>	10.0%
OPERATING BUDGET TOTAL	\$137,898,133	\$145,424,036	5.5%
One-Time 2024 Town Meeting Appropriation to School	\$2,000,000		
Proposed Reserve Fund Transfer for OOD Services		\$1,236,799	

Personnel expenses represent 75% of the Town's Operating Budget. The Select Board, School Committee, and Personnel Board continue to work diligently to ensure that Town employees are compensated fairly and in line with benchmark communities. The Town continues to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits ("OPEB") liability and has budgeted an additional \$1,498,660 for this item in FY26 in accordance with the latest actuarial schedule. Budgeted debt service has increased by \$1,279,789 as a result of the new Foster School and Public Safety Facility projects.

Expense growth continues to outpace revenue growth. While the Town was able to meet the 3.5% expense growth cap, offsets and reductions were required in both municipal and school budgets to do so. The initial municipal level services budget request was \$38,016,166, with proposed offsets and required reductions of \$810,822. Without these offsets and reductions, the municipal budget would see year-over-year growth of 5.8% over the FY25 Plan budget amount.

At the 2024 Town Meeting, a motion from the floor was made and approved to increase the School budget by \$2,000,000 funded from Unassigned Fund Balance. This addition to the School budget was outside the prescribed budget in the Financial Management Plan. In accordance with the Plan, \$1,400,000 of the \$2,000,000 was used to fund out-of-district services that would have previously been funded from Unassigned Fund Balance.

The initial FY26 School level services budget request was \$78,584,533. To meet the 3.5% expense growth cap, the School budget projected offsets of \$6,698,109 in grants and revolving funds, and \$1,236,799 in estimated Special Education costs to be paid by the Town in accordance with the Financial Plan. Next, to stay within the 3.5% cap of the spending Plan, the School budget was reduced by an additional \$1,502,672. Without these offsets, the School budget would see year-over-year growth of 5.7% over the FY25 Plan budget amount.

The Committee is concerned that increasing service demands and continued unfunded mandates will require the Town to allocate additional dollars to meet the most pressing needs. The Committee is also concerned about the continued availability of federal funds and the overall economic environment. The potential loss of federal funds could impact the Town's budget both directly and indirectly. The Committee recognizes that as projects take longer to start and/or complete, costs are likely to rise.

FY26 PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

- As in previous years, the FY26 budget includes tax relief for the benefit of all taxpayers. This year, one source of relief will be from the CPCDS Stabilization Fund. If adopted, the proposed FY26 budget will result in a tax increase for the median assessed valuation home (\$1,011,500) of approximately \$234 or 2.1%. This includes the 2.5% levy increase, the Community Preservation Act Tax surcharge, excluded debt and the application of \$2,200,000 in tax mitigation from the CPCDS. Absent the use of the CPCDS, the FY26 tax increase would have been \$445 or 4.1%.
- In addition, the Town offers over 12 tax relief programs to eligible citizens and Town Meeting took action in 2023 to double the benefit of many of the exemptions offered. Information regarding these programs can be found on the Assessment Data page of the Town's website.

FINANCIAL POLICY CONFORMANCE

Expenditures in the proposed FY26 budget conform to the Town's Financial Policy guidelines as follows:

	Target	Actual
Unassigned Fund Balance	16-20% Total Annual Expenditures	31.3% (6/30/24) 27.9% (6/30/23) 31.71% (6/30/22)
Capital Outlay	3.0-6.0% of Operating Budget	3.07% (FY26) 3.05% (FY25) 3.14% (FY24)
Debt Service	5.0-10% Total Annual Expenditures	9.35% (FY26) 8.08% (FY25) 6.74% (FY24)

Unassigned Fund Balance between 16% and 20% of Total Annual Expenditures (“TAE”)

- Fund Balance is the accumulation of each year's actual surpluses and deficits. In accordance with the implementation of Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 54, Fund Balance is classified into five categories: Non-spendable, Restricted, Committed, Assigned, and Unassigned.
- Total General Fund Balance was 46.9% of TAE at the end of FY24 (the most recently completed Fiscal Year), equaling \$59,714,434. The amount reserved for particular future uses (per GASB 54) is \$19,910,977 (15.6%).
- As of the end of FY24, Unassigned Fund Balance equaled \$39,803,457 or 31.3% of TAE. Excess Unassigned Fund Balance (unassigned fund balance above 20% of TAE as specified in the Financial Policy) was \$14,325,954.
- The Advisory Committee recommends favorable action on spending articles that propose using approximately \$7.5M of the Excess Unassigned Fund Balance. These proposed uses are consistent with the Town Financial Policy.
- Additionally, \$3.2M of Excess Unassigned Fund Balance is anticipated to be needed to fund FY25 Reserve Fund transfers for items including snow and ice removal and to fund FY26 Special Education out-of-district expenses in accordance with the Financial Plan.

Capital Expenditures between 3% and 6% of the Operating Budget

- Per the Town Financial Policy, the Capital Plan for any Fiscal Year should budget between 3% and 6% of the Town’s Operating Budget for that Fiscal Year.
- For FY26, the Capital Outlay tax levy budget is \$3,500,000, or 3.07% of the FY26 Operating Budget. If the \$1,611,404 is included, from Unassigned Fund Balance that the Capital Outlay Committee recommended for DPW vehicles and equipment this year (see Article 11 in this Warrant), that percentage increases to 4.49%, the midpoint of the 3-6% range recommended in the Financial Policy.
- The COC recommended a FY26 total capital budget of \$20,999,196, of which \$3,500,000 will be funded from the tax levy. The total capital budget includes \$3,000,000 for Weir River Water

System capital improvements to be repaid by WRWS ratepayers; \$1,032,887 for South Shore Country Club equipment and renovations to be repaid by the SSCC user fees; and \$577,250 for sewer-related projects to be repaid by sewer ratepayers. Additional funding sources include borrowing up to \$3,310,000 for preliminary design costs for the High School roof replacement and related work (see Article 35); using up to \$7,468,612 from Unassigned Fund Balance for Center for Active Living design costs, other School roof and turf field costs, DPW vehicles and equipment, new pickleball courts, and demolition of the old Town pool (see various Articles within this Warrant for those projects); and excess ambulance receipts of \$611,124 to fund a new ambulance and automated CPR devices for the Fire Department. Please see the Capital Outlay Committee Report at the back of this Warrant for more details on recommended capital projects and funding sources.

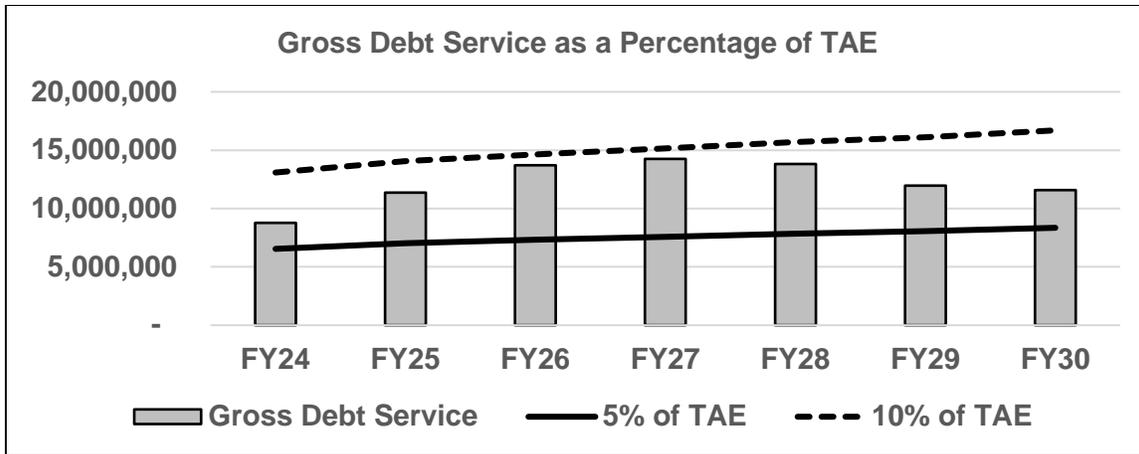
- The Advisory Committee recommends continued monitoring of the Capital Outlay Budget and maintaining funding levels as prescribed by the Town's Financial Policy. The Town should continue to be mindful of major upcoming capital projects needed in the Town and the impact on the Capital Outlay Plan, taxpayer rates, debt service, and Fund Balance
- All of this spending and borrowing is subject to approval at Annual Town Meeting.

Reserve Fund of Approximately 0.75% of the Operating Budget

- Massachusetts General Laws provide for annual appropriations to a Reserve Fund from which transfers for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures may be made from time to time, with the advice of the Select Board and the approval of the Advisory Committee. The Reserve Fund is used to save the time and expense of a Special Town Meeting for relatively low-cost items.
- Per the Town's Financial Policy, the annual appropriation amount for the Reserve Fund should be approximately 0.75% of the Operating Budget.
- In FY24, a total of \$726,217.21 in Reserve Fund transfers were made.
- Unexpended funds (if any) in the Reserve Fund for a Fiscal Year are returned to Fund Balance effective at the end of that Fiscal Year.
- The proposed amount for the FY26 Reserve Fund is \$800,000. This is 0.72% of the FY26 Operating Budget.

Average Annual Debt Service between 5% and 10% of Total Annual Expenditures ("TAE")

- Per the Town's Financial Policy, the Town should maintain average annual debt service (repayment of principal and current interest for borrowings) between 5% and 10% of TAE.
- FY26 debt service of \$13,695,055 represents 9.35% of FY26 TAE – up from \$11,357,273 in FY25, which represented 8.08% of FY25 TAE.
- The graph below shows currently issued debt only.



The Advisory Committee notes that the Town is considering several projects that could be financed through the issuance of additional debt. Projects seeking design funding at this Annual Town Meeting, which if approved may result in a request for financing the total constructions costs, include:

Project	2025 Annual Town Meeting Request	Estimated Construction Costs as of 3/29/25 (Future Town Meeting)
Center for Active Living	\$2,500,000	\$32,500,000
High School Roof, HVAC, Solar	\$3,310,000	\$40,994,000
Plymouth River School Roof	\$370,000	\$6,100,000
South School Roof	\$320,000	\$5,400,000

There are several factors that could significantly affect the estimated construction costs listed above including cost inflation and overall economic uncertainty, project scope, project staging and timing, and other learnings resulting from detailed schematic design, analysis, and public input. The Town has also submitted Statements of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for its Accelerated Repair Program for each of the school roof projects. Accepted projects are reimbursed at a rate of 30-40% for eligible expenses.

Additional projects under consideration include the Harbor Wharf Walls (~\$40-50M), the Harbor Dredging (~\$10M), and the South Fire Station project. Additional details about these projects and others can be found in the Report of the Capital Outlay Committee contained in this Warrant.

Given the number and cost of these projects and the Town’s limited non-excluded debt capacity, it is likely that many of these projects will require the issuance of excluded debt, which is a temporary tax increase with a duration equal to the term of financing (for large projects, typically 20-30 years).

Based on interest-rate projections from the Town’s financial advisors and using the Town’s Financial Planning Model, it is estimated that for the median assessed valuation home (\$1,011,500), every \$10M in additional 30-year level principal excluded debt would equate to an approximate \$75 property tax increase in the first year of long-term borrowing.

The Advisory Committee is mindful of the cumulative impact of future borrowings on taxpayers and recommends that the Town and School Department take steps to defray the cost to the taxpayer by pursuing grant-funding opportunities and potentially applying Excess Unassigned Fund Balance to the CPCDS Stabilization Fund.

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION AND LIABILITY FUNDING

- The FY26 budget recommends funding Contributory Retirement and Other Post-Employment Benefits (“OPEB”) (retiree health care benefits) so as not to burden future generations with unsustainable or disproportionate financial obligations. The FY26 budget includes a Contributory Retirement funding amount of \$7,190,072 and an OPEB contribution of \$1,498,660.
- Frequent analysis of the OPEB funding level is necessary due to the continual changes in the actuarial assumptions that determine the contribution amount. These include the impact of future health insurance premiums, the updating of actuarial assumptions related to lifespans, and the assumed future rate of return on the set-aside funds. The Town does a full actuarial valuation of OPEB every two years. As of June 30, 2024, Hingham had funded its OPEB trust with \$29,974,355. Assets are projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments for current plan members. The valuation will be updated next in fall 2025.

REVENUE SOURCES AND USES (FIVE-YEAR FORECAST)

- For FY26, total budgeted uses of funds include Article 4 and 6 appropriations of \$163,221,519 and amounts reserved for State Assessments, Overlay, Capital Outlay and Other Expenses totaling \$6,083,779. The aggregate budget uses for FY26 of \$169,305,298 balances to the forecasted revenue sources of \$169,305,298.
- New Growth is the amount by which the property tax base increases due to new development and improvement to existing properties. The projection of New Growth revenue for FY26 and beyond is based on the extrapolation of building permit activity and other indicators of the local economic outlook. The Town is currently forecasting New Growth to decrease modestly from FY26 to FY27. This trend is expected to continue for the next few years as there are no large development projects before the Town in the near term.
- With regard to particular FY26 Other Revenue line items:
 - South Shore Country Club (“SSCC”) and Weir River Water System (“WRWS”) are enterprise funds and as such their revenues are fully offset by their operating expenses, capital expenses, and employee benefit costs, as detailed in Article 6 Uses total.
 - Likewise, Sewer revenues are fully offset by sewer operating expenses, debt, capital expenses, and employee benefit costs, all of which are included in the Article 6 Uses total.
 - Estimated Light Plant revenue of \$500,000 is a payment in lieu of taxes (“PILOT”).

The Advisory Committee notes that the impact of reduced growth in the future will make it increasingly difficult to fund new services or initiatives from the tax levy. Additionally, Debt Service will be higher than forecasted if new debt is issued to fund new projects. The Advisory Committee believes the Town would benefit from reconvening a Sustainable Budget Task Force to focus on a renewed long-term Financial Management Plan.

FY26 FORECAST V5 3.27.25 FOR TOWN MEETING

FIVE-YEAR FORECAST

	ACTUALS FY2024	ESTIMATE FY2025	FORECAST FY2026	FORECAST FY2027	FORECAST FY2028	FORECAST FY2029	FORECAST FY2030
SOURCES							
Tax Levy	92,360,198	103,368,500	106,913,744	110,366,587	113,775,752	117,270,146	120,851,900
Prior Year Levy (before excluded debt)	2,309,005	2,584,213	2,672,844	2,759,165	2,844,394	2,931,754	3,021,297
2.5% Increase	808,830	961,031	780,000	650,000	650,000	650,000	650,000
New growth	7,890,467	0	0	0	0	0	0
Override	5,910,437	7,514,265	8,696,646	9,446,443	10,159,978	10,273,568	10,203,968
Debt exclusions (net of Stab + CPCDS)	109,278,937	114,428,009	119,063,233	123,222,195	127,430,124	131,125,467	134,727,165
Total Tax Levy							
Other Revenue	10,699,143	11,162,931	11,543,617	11,543,617	11,543,617	11,543,617	11,543,617
State Aid (flat FY27-30)	19,205,388	12,690,332	13,396,435	13,731,346	14,074,629	14,426,495	14,787,157
Local Receipts (2.5% FY27-30)	404,000	2,000,000	611,124	0	0	0	0
Fund Balance	2,331,662	2,775,026	2,377,493	2,377,493	2,377,493	2,377,493	2,377,493
SSCC	14,621,941	14,027,558	14,436,530	14,436,530	14,436,530	14,436,530	14,436,530
Weir River Water System	3,962,227	4,339,400	4,286,508	4,500,833	4,725,875	4,962,169	5,210,277
Sewer	505,445	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Light Plant (\$450K Min.)	178,836	178,836	178,836	178,836	178,836	178,836	213,693
Stabilization Fund - 8409	0	1,000,000	2,200,000	2,300,000	1,500,000	0	0
CPCDS Stabilization Fund (Foster/PSF) - 8412	0	28,000	30,000	0	0	0	0
Capital Stabilization Fund - 8499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tax Mitigation Stabilization Fund - 8414	150,000	0	334,570	0	0	0	0
Excess Overlay	144,000	571,143	346,952	203,845	210,980	218,364	226,007
Municipal Waterways Fund	0	25,010	0	0	0	0	0
Per-ride Assessment Funds	52,202,641	49,298,236	50,242,065	49,772,500	49,547,960	48,943,504	49,294,775
Total Other Revenue							
Total Sources	161,481,578	163,726,245	169,305,298	172,994,696	176,978,084	180,068,971	184,021,940
USES							
State Assessments (5% FY27-30)	1,170,095	1,173,673	1,192,655	1,252,288	1,314,902	1,380,647	1,449,680
Overlay	322,354	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Other expenses / deficits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,492,449	1,773,673	1,792,655	1,852,288	1,914,902	1,980,647	2,049,680
Appropriations							
Capital Outlay (+\$100k FY27-30)	3,096,567	4,488,000	4,291,124	3,600,000	3,700,000	3,800,000	3,900,000
Article 6 (w/o capital)	139,819,851	156,394,599	161,466,657	167,516,561	172,879,654	177,103,869	183,100,731
Article 4	0	781,671	1,754,862	1,816,282	1,879,852	1,945,647	2,013,745
Total appropriation	142,916,418	161,664,270	167,512,643	172,932,843	178,459,506	182,849,516	189,014,476
Total Uses	144,408,867	163,437,943	169,305,298	174,785,131	180,374,408	184,830,163	191,064,155
EXCESS (Shortfall)	17,072,711	288,302	0	(1,790,435)	(3,396,324)	(4,761,192)	(7,042,215)

POTENTIAL OVERRIDE

The Financial Plan stipulates that there would not be another operating override proposed before FY28. Deficit projections contained in the Five-Year forecast are based on an assumption that no additional revenue sources will be available, 3.5% growth in municipal and education expenses, 2% growth in out-of-district services, and no significant changes to shared costs including employee benefits. Adjusting for any of these expense items would likely result in higher deficits.

Using the Town's Financial Planning Model, it is estimated that for the median assessed valuation home (\$1,011,500), every \$1M in an operating override would equate to a property tax increase of approximately \$100 in the first year.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Advisory Committee has voted unanimously to recommend the budget amounts presented in Articles 4 and 6 for approval by Town Meeting. In addition, the Advisory Committee has reviewed each of the other Articles in the Warrant and, after public discussion with sponsors, petitioners, proponents, and other interested citizens, has provided comments and recommended motions that reflect the relevant points made during the Committee's deliberations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Advisory Committee is most grateful for the assistance and support of Town Administrator Tom Mayo, Assistant Town Administrators Michelle Monsegur and Arthur Robert, Town Accountant Ann MacNaughton, Office Manager Sharon Perfetti, and Executive Assistant Samantha Downton. Their diligence and timely support have enabled the Advisory Committee to better represent and serve the Town.

As in past years, the Advisory Committee benefited from strong working relationships with the Select Board, the School Committee and Administration, Town Department heads, the Capital Outlay Committee, the Community Preservation Committee, the Planning Board, and the numerous other Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees with which the Advisory Committee and its liaisons routinely interface. Developing a budget is always challenging and the Advisory Committee could not have completed its work without the support of so many of our Town leaders. Continued collaboration, mutual respect, and teamwork benefit everyone.

Hingham continues to be well served by the extraordinary efforts of its many capable and responsible employees and volunteers. The Advisory Committee thanks them all for their contributions.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tina Sherwood, Chair	Joe Griffin
Carol Tully, Vice-Chair	Ben Lee
Kevin Freytag, Secretary	Dave Leiphart
Brenda Black	Alan Macdonald
Ted Ciolkosz	Steve Pohl
Kathy Curley	Jerry Seelen
Elaine Cusker	Brian Stack
John Germain	

REPORT OF THE SELECT BOARD

I am pleased to submit this report for Fiscal Year 2025 on behalf of the Select Board.

Highlights of 2024 – 2025

The Town moved forward with vital projects and successfully accomplished key goals thanks to the hard work, devotion, and commitment of our municipal leaders, committees, employees, volunteers, local businesses, and residents.

The Public Safety Facility on Route 3A is on track to open in late Spring 2025, ushering in a new era for public safety in our community. This state-of-the-art facility will be the new home of the Police Department and the new Station 2 for the Fire Department. It will better meet the needs of both departments and will be an asset for the community and for the men and women who proudly serve the Town as first responders. The Board thanks the Public Safety Facility Building Committee for its diligence and hard work in bringing this important project to fruition.

The new Foster Elementary School welcomed students and staff in January 2025. This innovative facility replaced the outdated William L. Foster Elementary School that was originally built in 1951. With financial assistance from the Massachusetts School Building Authority's Core Building Program, the School was completed on budget. The Board thanks the School Building Committee, the School Committee, and the School Department staff for their dedication and professionalism. We are thrilled that the new school will inspire and serve Hingham students for generations to come.

The Town honored its commitment to senior residents with improved programming at the Hingham Center for Active Living (HCAL, formerly the Senior Center) and with plans to locate a proposed new Center at Bare Cove Park Drive. The proposed HCAL will be an easy-to-navigate one-story building with large windows for natural light, sufficient parking spaces (including ADA-designated spaces), and a design that best supports programs that will enhance the independence and ongoing personal development of the Town's senior population. The Board thanks the Center for Active Living Building Committee, the Council on Aging, and the HCAL staff for their tireless work and commitment to this project. We look forward to engaging in the design and permitting phase for the new Center after Town Meeting.

The Board honored its fiscal pledge to control budget growth to 3.5% as established in the FY24-28 Financial Management Plan that was adopted by the Select Board, School Committee, and Advisory Committee in March 2023. The Board's proposed budget assures ongoing services for Town residents, including our most vulnerable residents, while respecting the constraints of fiscal responsibility.

Hingham again secured a coveted AAA rating from the leading credit rating agencies - Moody's and Standard & Poor's. This is the highest rating possible, which helps assure that Hingham has access to capital markets at the lowest possible rates, resulting in lower debt costs paid by taxpayers.

The Town aggressively pursued opportunities to obtain American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through Plymouth County, securing over \$4.4 million in total. These funds are being used to support several key projects—including the Route 3A sewer system improvements, the new Public Safety Facility, an economic development plan, a stormwater master plan, and other community initiatives—while mitigating impacts on taxpayers and ratepayers.

The Board has continued its efforts to find efficiencies, promote economic growth, and enhance the Town's infrastructure. Water and sewer operations have been reorganized, work is progressing for the Harbor wharf wall and Route 3A sewer improvements, and traffic calming measures have been put in

place downtown. The Town remains committed to climate action planning, ADA accessibility improvements, developing a plan to grow south Hingham, enhancing our downtown business district, and preserving the historical beauty of Hingham.

The Town has begun preparations for Rev250 as we look forward to celebrating the 250th anniversary of the events that led to the American Revolution. The spirit of America runs through Hingham. We are making plans to attract and host Rev250 visitors so they can experience Hingham's contributions to the founding of our country.

A Year of Transitions

This past year we have seen valued employees and department heads, with decades of experience serving our Town, retire from their positions.

- Randy Sylvester retired as Superintendent of the Department of Public Works in March 2025. A son of Hingham, Randy served at DPW's helm for more than 15 years, overseeing the core services that maintain the town's infrastructure and beauty. Assistant DPW Superintendent Ashley Sanford was promoted to be the new Superintendent on a unanimous vote by the Select Board.
- SCPO Keith Jermyn, USN (Ret.), a lifelong resident of Hingham, retired as Director of Veterans' Services in February 2025 after many years of supporting Hingham's veterans and their family members. Shannon Burke, a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, is Hingham's new Director of Veterans' Services.
- Andrea Young retired as Hingham's Historic Preservation Administrator in July 2024 after two decades of service helping to preserve the history and character of our community. Heidi Gaul is now the Town's Historic Preservation Administrator.

We wish the retirees well and we welcome their successors with great expectations for future accomplishments. This year the Board also welcomed Kathryn (Katie) Roberts as the new Superintendent of Schools. Katie has proved to be a skilled leader, partner, and advocate for the Town.

Tom Mayo continues in his role as Town Administrator to lead the Select Board's supporting team. Michelle Monsecur, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance, and Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations, provide essential support for the Town's ongoing activities. Sharon Perfetti ably serves as the Office Manager for the Select Board and Town Administrator. We welcome Samantha Downton as our new Executive Assistant, David Sequeira as our new Procurement and Contracts Manager, and Patricia Burke as the Town's first full-time Sustainability Coordinator.

Conclusion

The Select Board thanks all Town employees, committee members, and residents who assist us in making Hingham an exceptional place to live and work. As Chair of the Select Board, it has been an honor and privilege to work alongside a group of highly-motivated and dedicated individuals who seek nothing more, and will settle for nothing less, than to assure that Hingham remains a welcoming and vibrant community for all its residents.

HINGHAM SELECT BOARD

Joseph M. Fisher, Chair
William C. Ramsey
Elizabeth F. Klein

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Plymouth, ss.

To the Constables of the Town of Hingham in the County of Plymouth, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Hingham qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet at the Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, in said Hingham, on Monday, April 28, 2025 at 7:00 pm, then and there to act on the Warrant Articles listed below.

You are hereby also directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Hingham qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet at three designated polling places in said Town of Hingham according to their precinct, to wit: Precinct 1, 2, 3, and 4: High School, 17 Union Street; Precincts 5, 6, and 7: Middle School, 1103 Main Street; and Precinct 7A: Willard Square at Linden Ponds on Saturday, May 3, 2025 from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm, then and there to give their votes on the official ballot for:

- A Moderator to serve one year;
- One member of the Select Board to serve three years;
- One member of the Board of Assessors to serve three years;
- One member of the Board of Health to serve three years;
- One member of the Municipal Light Board to serve three years;
- One member of the Housing Authority to serve five years;
- Three members of the School Committee to serve three years;
- One member of the Planning Board to serve five years;
- One member of the Sewer Commission to serve three years;
- One member of the Recreation Commission to serve five years

Hereof fail not and make due return of this warrant with your doings thereon to the Town Clerk on or before April 14, 2025.

Given under our hands at Hingham this first day of April 2025.

Joseph M. Fisher, Chair
 William C. Ramsey
 Elizabeth F. Klein
 SELECT BOARD

A true copy
Attest:

By virtue of the within warrant I hereby certify that I have noticed and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Hingham, qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet at the time and place indicated in the above warrant by causing a notice thereof to be published in The Hingham Journal seven days at least before the day appointed for said meeting. An attested copy was presented and posted by the Town Clerk in the Town Hall as of this date.

Kathleen A. Peloquin
Constable of Hingham
April 2, 2025

**ARTICLE 1
HANNAH LINCOLN WHITING FUND**

Will the Town choose all necessary Town Officers, other than those to be elected by ballot, including the following:

- One member of the Committee to have charge of the income of the Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund for a term of three years

or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund was established in 1915 pursuant to the will of Ada B.W. Bacon in memory of her mother, "...to be expended in relieving the necessities of the deserving poor or unfortunate of South Hingham..." Grants from the income of the fund are made at the discretion of a committee of three members, one of whom is elected each year by the Town. The principal of \$15,000 is held in trust and is not available for distribution. The expected disbursement in fiscal year 2025 is \$1,617.69.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That Katherine Glenzel, 13 Colonial Road, be elected a member of the Committee to have charge of the income of the Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund for a term of three years.

**ARTICLE 2
ASSUME LIABILITY FOR DCR**

Will the Town, in accordance with, and only to the extent permitted by, Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Chapter 91, Section 29, as amended, assume liability for all damages that may be incurred by work to be performed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the improvement, development, maintenance, and protection of tidal and non-tidal rivers and streams, harbors, tide waters, foreshores, and shores along a public beach within the Town, in accordance with Section 11 of said Chapter 91, and authorize the Select Board to execute and deliver a bond of indemnity to the Commonwealth assuming such liability, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR"), as a matter of policy, requires the Town to assume liability if the DCR is to perform any of this type of work within the Town. In accordance with the statute, the Town would assume liability for all damages sustained by any person as a result of such work performed by the DCR.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town, in accordance with, and only to the extent permitted by, M.G.L. c. 91, § 29, as amended, assume liability for all damages that may be incurred by work to be performed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the improvement, development, maintenance, and protection of tidal and non-tidal rivers and streams, harbors, tide waters, foreshores, and shores along a public beach within the Town, in accordance with Section 11 of said Chapter 91, and authorize the Select Board to execute and deliver a bond of such indemnity to the Commonwealth assuming such liability.

**ARTICLE 3
REPORTS OF VARIOUS TOWN COMMITTEES**

To receive the reports, if any, of the following: Affordable Housing Trust; Audit Committee; Capital Outlay Committee; Climate Action Commission; Commission on Disabilities; Community Preservation Committee; Conservation Commission; Country Club Management Committee; Council on Aging; Energy Action Committee; GAR Hall Trustees; Harbor Development Committee; Historic Districts Commission; Historical Commission; Board

of Managers of Lincoln Apartments LLC; Long Range Waste and Recycling Committee; Master Plan Implementation Committee; Memorial Bell Tower Committee; Open Space Acquisition Committee; Public Safety Facility Building Committee; Scholarship Fund Committee; 2017 School Building Committee; Center for Active Living Building Committee; Town Historian; Wastewater Master Planning Committee; Weir River Water System Citizens Advisory Board; and Weir River Water System Transition and Evaluation Committee; or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Town is indeed 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 continued.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the reports, if any, of the existing Town Committees and Commissions and the Town Historian be received; and that all said bodies and posts of government be continued.

ARTICLE 4 REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL BOARD

Will the Town accept the report of the Personnel Board appointed under the Classification and Salary Plan, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Personnel Board is established pursuant to the Town of Hingham Personnel By-law and is comprised of five members appointed by the Moderator. 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.

This Article seeks funds to pay for as yet undetermined financial obligations of the Town relating to salary increases, fringe benefit changes, and job reclassifications for non-School Department employees who either are not in a collective bargaining unit or who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement not yet concluded. The Personnel Board voted unanimously in support of this Article.

The major actions in this year's report include the collective bargaining contract with the Hingham Library Staff Association. This agreement provides for an equity adjustment retroactive to July 1, 2024 for one position and, for its term, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027, a general wage increase of 3% annually. It also includes: a modification to the payout for vacation time entitlement; an increase to the annual longevity entitlement; an increase in the sick leave buyback; the creation of a new stipend for an Art Exhibit Coordinator; and an increase in other stipends.

This Article recommends that employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements receive a general wage increase of 3%, effective July 1, 2025.

This Article also seeks to make an amendment to the Town's Personnel By-law, which is described in the report of the Personnel Board. The amendment modifies the manner in which accumulated unused sick leave will be credited to non-union employees at retirement. The changes include an increase starting at \$12 per day for 1-149 sick days, \$1,788 plus \$14 per day for 150-199 days, and \$2,488 plus \$16 per day for each day over 199.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the report and recommendations of the Personnel Board, a copy of which is on file in the Town Clerk's Office, be accepted; that the amendments of the Personnel By-law, including the Classification and Salary Plan, and any cost item agreements reached by the Personnel Board in collective bargaining, which may be embodied or referred to in said report, be approved and adopted in their entirety, such approval and adoption to become effective July 1, 2025 or as otherwise specified in said report or agreements; that the Town raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,754,862 for the purpose of this vote; and

that the Town Accountant is hereby authorized and instructed to allocate said sum to and among the several Personnel Services and Expense Accounts in such amounts, respectively, as are proper and required to meet such amendments and to comply with such collective bargaining agreements as may be entered into by the Select Board on behalf of the Town.

**ARTICLE 5
SALARIES OF CERTAIN TOWN OFFICERS**

Will the Town fix the salaries of the following Town Officers:

1. Select Board
2. Board of Assessors
3. Town Clerk
4. Municipal Light Board;

or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article fixes the salaries of the elected Town Officers listed above.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the salary from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, for each of the following officers shall be at the rates below stated or provided after the name of the office.

Select Board: at the annual rate of \$2,000 each, except that the Chair shall receive an annual rate of \$2,500 for the period of incumbency.

Board of Assessors: at the annual rate of \$1,800 each, except that the Chair shall receive an annual rate of \$2,000 for the period of incumbency.

Town Clerk¹: in accordance with the compensation rates established in Grade 10 of the Town of Hingham Classification and Salary Plan of the Personnel By-law.

Municipal Light Board: at the annual rate of \$214 each (to be paid from the receipts of the Hingham Municipal Light Department).

¹ The Town Clerk, when serving as a member of the Board of Registrars of Voters, shall be paid for such duties in accordance with M.G.L. c. 41, § 19G.

**ARTICLE 6
BUDGETS**

Will the Town raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, sums of money to defray the expenses of the Town for the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2025, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Town's FY26 budget has been prepared in accordance with the FY24-28 Financial Management Plan, also known as the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was presented at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting in conjunction with the override. At that meeting, Hingham's citizens voted affirmative action on a \$7.9 million override to support the Town's FY24 operating budget. The MOU serves as a pledge by Town leaders to taxpayers to limit the future growth of operating budgets to 3.5% and not to propose another override before FY28. The MOU was signed by the Select Board, School Committee, School Superintendent, Advisory Committee, and Town Administrator.

The Municipal departments—categorized under General Government, Public Safety, Public Works, Human Services, and Culture and Recreation—and the School Department have been held to the 3.5% operating budget growth rate as stipulated by the MOU. Within the School budget, while the MOU is in place, out-of-district (OOD) special education tuitions and special education contracts (transportation, specialized services) are considered

separately for growth calculation due to the unknown/uncontrollable nature of these expenditures. As the projected annual increase for OOD tuition and special education contracts is above 2%, the referenced special education items have been budgeted at 2% within the School budget and any variance in costs above that amount will be paid through the Reserve Fund process at the end of the fiscal year if other School department funds are insufficient to cover these expenses. Projected OOD costs for FY26 are \$1,200,000, which represents approximately an additional 1.7% increase in the School budget. Separately, self-supporting departments (water, sewer, South Shore Country Club) and Shared Services (employee benefits, debt service, capital outlay, property/liability insurance) are not subject to the 3.5% cap.

The MOU outlines the maximum operating budgets for the Municipal and School Departments assuming the full amount is budgeted each year. Given the limitations in adhering to a 3.5% growth rate, certain programs and services have been funded at lower levels than desired or not funded at all in FY26.

Maximum Operating Budgets	2024	2025	2026	2027
Municipal	\$ 34,731,577	\$ 35,947,182	\$ 37,205,334	\$ 38,507,520
School	\$ 65,703,985	\$ 68,003,624	\$ 70,383,751	\$ 72,847,183

The FY26 budget season began with both Municipal and School departments submitting level-service budget requests. Revenue sources of note include transferring \$2,034,858 from Ambulance Receipts for Fire Department payroll to support provision of ambulance services; \$611,124 from Excess Ambulance Receipts held in Fund Balance for Fire Department capital outlay; transferring \$346,952 from the Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund for Harbormaster payroll and capital outlay; transferring \$30,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for capital outlay of various departments noted below; using \$4,286,508 in sewer rates to support the Sewer budget; using \$2,377,493 in South Shore Country Club (SSCC) revenue to support the SSCC budget; and using \$14,260,000 in water rates and \$176,530 from Weir River Water System retained earnings to support the Weir River Water System budget.

The Municipal level-services budget request was \$38,016,166, which resulted in a requirement to reduce \$810,822 in expenses, as outlined by the commitment in the MOU. Actions taken to meet that commitment happened through reductions and reallocations to the Municipal budgets by the Town Administrator.

Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 34, Town Meeting establishes the total School Department budget but may not limit the authority of the School Committee to determine expenditures within that total appropriation. The School level-services budget request was \$78,584,533. This figure was offset by \$5,461,310 in Grants and Revolving funds, and \$1,236,799 in estimated Special Education costs to be paid by the Town in accordance with the MOU. Notwithstanding these items, as of the Warrant publication date, the level services request resulted in a requirement to reduce \$1,502,672 in expenses, as outlined by the commitment in the MOU.

The Select Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town raise, appropriate and/or transfer for each of the following purposes, for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025 (FY26), the sum of money stated therefor, including any appropriations or transfers from specified funds as detailed below, provided that, a one-time appropriation and transfer of Overlay Surplus in the amount of up to \$400,000 is hereby made to balance the FY26 budget; also that authority is hereby given to turn in vehicles and equipment in partial payment for vehicles and equipment purchased in those cases where a turn-in is stated; and provided that any amount or portion thereof appropriated to a sub-account and included in a numbered account as set forth below may be transferred to another sub-account under the same numbered account with the approval of the Select Board and the Advisory Committee.

	Fiscal 2024 <u>Expended</u>	Fiscal 2025 <u>Appropriated</u>	Advisory Fiscal 2026 <u>Recommended</u>
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
122 SELECT BOARD			
Payroll	737,103	814,386	859,906
Expenses	75,389	112,475	72,649
Capital Outlay	<u>0</u>	<u>50,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	812,492	976,861	932,555
131 HUMAN RESOURCES			
Payroll	181,698	201,496	211,816
Expenses	<u>3,473</u>	<u>8,925</u>	<u>9,100</u>
Total	185,172	210,421	220,916
132 RESERVE FUND			
	0	791,302	800,000
135 ACCOUNTING			
Payroll	340,274	324,547	326,588
Expenses	28,120	12,100	12,700
Audit	<u>74,150</u>	<u>93,450</u>	<u>96,150</u>
Total	442,544	430,097	435,438
137 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY			
Payroll	294,649	319,248	266,946
Expenses	521,526	640,207	724,468
Capital Outlay	<u>107,331</u>	<u>375,000</u>	<u>135,000</u>
Total	923,506	1,334,455	1,126,414
141 ASSESSING			
Payroll	328,876	348,469	372,916
Expenses	6,239	11,358	11,358
Consulting	51,130	45,000	45,000
Map Maintenance	<u>60</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Total	386,306	405,127	429,574
145 TREASURER/COLLECTOR			
Payroll	364,773	392,848	426,331
Expenses	57,750	59,032	64,336
Tax Titles	0	10,000	10,000
Capital Outlay (transfer \$9,595 from Capital Stabilization Fund)	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>9,595</u>
Total	422,523	461,880	510,262

	Fiscal 2024	Fiscal 2025	Advisory
	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Appropriated</u>	Fiscal 2026
			<u>Recommended</u>
151 LEGAL SERVICES	613,857	395,372	395,372
159 TOWN MEETING			
Payroll	4,418	2,800	2,800
Expenses	<u>97,369</u>	<u>77,700</u>	<u>95,000</u>
Total	101,787	80,500	97,800
161 TOWN CLERK			
Payroll	209,270	225,525	240,226
Expenses	<u>16,930</u>	<u>19,950</u>	<u>20,130</u>
Total	226,200	245,475	260,356
162 ELECTIONS			
Payroll	27,360	34,930	15,480
Expenses	20,301	27,200	21,100
Capital Outlay	<u>0</u>	<u>16,800</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	47,661	78,930	36,580
171 CONSERVATION			
Payroll	135,251	235,908	241,781
Expenses	<u>52,783</u>	<u>38,947</u>	<u>49,250</u>
Total	188,034	274,855	291,031
175 COMMUNITY PLANNING			
Payroll	230,248	240,670	258,245
Expenses	<u>13,614</u>	<u>22,705</u>	<u>17,650</u>
Total	243,862	263,375	275,895
176 LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT			
Payroll	162,311	166,683	176,038
Expenses	<u>2,634</u>	<u>7,375</u>	<u>7,170</u>
Total	164,945	174,058	183,208
177 BARE COVE PARK			
Payroll	25,500	25,597	26,366
Expenses	9,303	15,100	15,300
Capital Outlay	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>23,231</u>
Total	34,802	40,697	64,897

	Fiscal 2024 <u>Expended</u>	Fiscal 2025 <u>Appropriated</u>	Advisory Fiscal 2026 <u>Recommended</u>
192 TOWN HALL			
Payroll (including overtime of \$15,000)	343,495	330,064	339,030
Expenses	325,209	377,739	379,600
Capital Outlay	<u>96,162</u>	<u>80,000</u>	<u>305,052</u>
Total	764,866	787,803	1,023,682
193 GAR HALL			
Expenses	25,952	18,584	20,332
Capital Outlay	<u>54,234</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	80,186	18,584	20,332
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	<u>5,638,743</u>	<u>6,969,792</u>	<u>7,104,312</u>
PUBLIC SAFETY			
210 POLICE			
Payroll (including overtime of \$552,329)	6,963,095	6,891,568	7,048,364
Expenses	378,359	505,950	466,600
Capital Outlay (transfer \$11,420 from Capital Stabilization Fund)	<u>144,223</u>	<u>418,155</u>	<u>621,670</u>
Total	7,485,677	7,815,673	8,136,634
220 FIRE			
Payroll (including overtime of \$828,920) (appropriate \$2,034,858 from Ambulance Receipts)	6,981,408	7,416,927	7,361,651
Expenses	600,688	735,937	744,537
Capital Outlay (transfer \$611,124 from Excess Ambulance Receipts held in Fund Balance)	<u>588,643</u>	<u>410,000</u>	<u>831,124</u>
Total	8,170,738	8,562,864	8,937,312
240 DISPATCH SERVICES	1,085,126	1,114,465	1,089,389
241 BUILDING			
Payroll	276,954	329,883	399,672
Expenses	14,868	14,910	13,582
Capital Outlay	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>46,000</u>
Total	291,822	344,793	459,254
292 ANIMAL CONTROL			
Payroll (including overtime of \$2,059)	72,760	94,720	97,451
Expenses	<u>1,264</u>	<u>6,200</u>	<u>6,200</u>
Total	74,024	100,920	103,651

	Fiscal 2024	Fiscal 2025	Advisory
	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Appropriated</u>	Fiscal 2026
			<u>Recommended</u>
295 HARBORMASTER			
Payroll (including overtime of \$15,480) (transfer \$196,952 from Municipal Waterways Improvement & Maintenance Fund)	252,730	297,608	321,321
Expenses	90,087	90,235	90,235
Capital Outlay (transfer \$150,000 from Municipal Waterways Improvement & Maintenance Fund)	<u>141,937</u>	<u>435,000</u>	<u>150,000</u>
Total	484,754	822,843	561,556
299 PUBLIC SAFETY UTILITIES			
Emergency Water	443,251	443,250	400,000
Street Lighting	108,938	117,109	128,624
Public Safety Facility	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>120,000</u>
Total	552,188	560,359	648,624
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	<u>18,144,329</u>	<u>19,321,917</u>	<u>19,936,420</u>
EDUCATION			
300 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT			
Payroll	55,155,380	58,516,912	60,266,942
Expenses	10,545,830	11,486,713	10,116,810
Capital Outlay (transfer \$8,985 from Capital Stabilization Fund)	<u>1,268,362</u>	<u>921,714</u>	<u>1,623,452</u>
Total	66,969,572	70,925,339	72,007,204
TOTAL EDUCATION	<u>66,969,572</u>	<u>70,925,339</u>	<u>72,007,204</u>
PUBLIC WORKS			
420 DPW/HIGHWAY/TREE & PARK			
Payroll (including overtime of \$110,035)	2,389,749	2,989,030	2,908,597
Expenses	672,628	856,870	894,190
Snow Removal (including overtime of \$126,407)	450,241	630,286	633,968
Road Maintenance	344,711	420,510	430,500
Capital Outlay	<u>233,285</u>	<u>826,090</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	4,090,615	5,722,786	4,867,255
430 TRANSFER STATION			
Payroll (including overtime of \$44,630)	566,753	633,940	591,406
Expenses	1,154,408	1,304,641	1,327,462
Capital Outlay	<u>36,781</u>	<u>210,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
Total	1,757,943	2,148,581	1,943,868

	Fiscal 2024 <u>Expended</u>	Fiscal 2025 <u>Appropriated</u>	Advisory Fiscal 2026 <u>Recommended</u>
440 SEWER			
Payroll	369,822	462,590	204,750
Expenses	266,598	381,781	669,912
Engineering	10,109	13,500	13,500
Debt Service	65,769	44,095	42,617
MWRA Charges	2,172,503	2,366,565	2,319,234
Hull Intermunicipal Agreement	405,327	445,869	459,245
Capital Outlay	<u>347,521</u>	<u>625,000</u>	<u>577,250</u>
Total (appropriate \$4,286,508 from Sewer revenue)	3,637,648	4,339,400	4,286,508
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	<u>9,486,206</u>	<u>12,210,767</u>	<u>11,097,631</u>
HUMAN SERVICES			
510 HEALTH			
Payroll	350,040	393,544	312,342
Expenses	<u>16,284</u>	<u>13,962</u>	<u>40,962</u>
Total	366,324	407,506	353,304
541 CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING			
Payroll	309,072	385,651	408,052
Expenses	<u>14,928</u>	<u>22,310</u>	<u>22,310</u>
Total	324,000	407,961	430,362
543 VETERANS' SERVICES			
Payroll	117,191	155,744	114,448
Expenses	7,029	7,902	7,956
Benefits	<u>86,534</u>	<u>145,316</u>	<u>148,529</u>
Total	210,754	308,962	270,933
545 HEALTH IMPERATIVES			
	0	2,700	0
546 SOUTH SHORE RESOURCE & ADVOCACY CTR.			
	3,700	3,700	0
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES	<u>904,777</u>	<u>1,130,829</u>	<u>1,054,599</u>
CULTURE AND RECREATION			
610 LIBRARY			
Payroll (including overtime of \$80,027)	1,707,462	1,824,690	1,967,159
Expenses	389,714	473,993	498,827
Capital Outlay	<u>41,738</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>156,000</u>
Total	2,138,914	2,338,683	2,621,986

	Fiscal 2024 <u>Expended</u>	Fiscal 2025 <u>Appropriated</u>	Advisory Fiscal 2026 <u>Recommended</u>
630 RECREATION			
Payroll	190,948	201,431	0
Expenses	202,445	198,218	0
Capital Outlay	<u>0</u>	<u>52,241</u>	<u>365,000</u>
Total	393,393	451,890	365,000
631 ATHLETIC FIELD MAINTENANCE			
Payroll	0	0	76,928
Expenses	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>204,165</u>
Total	0	0	281,093
650 BATHING BEACH			
Payroll	26,066	30,293	31,202
Expenses	<u>3,469</u>	<u>8,800</u>	<u>8,800</u>
Total	29,534	39,093	40,002
691 HISTORIC PRESERVATION			
Payroll	88,552	88,890	75,782
Expenses	<u>7,748</u>	<u>9,363</u>	<u>9,538</u>
Total	96,300	98,253	85,320
692 CELEBRATIONS			
	14,088	18,126	15,241
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION	<u>2,672,229</u>	<u>2,946,045</u>	<u>3,408,642</u>
ENTERPRISE FUNDS			
720 SOUTH SHORE COUNTRY CLUB			
Payroll	1,076,158	1,124,316	1,161,978
Expenses	702,093	680,184	896,234
Debt Service	196,029	336,526	244,281
Capital Outlay	<u>149,342</u>	<u>634,000</u>	<u>75,000</u>
Total (appropriate \$2,377,493 from South Shore Country Club revenue)	2,123,622	2,775,026	2,377,493
730 WEIR RIVER WATER SYSTEM			
Payroll	220,243	296,051	334,451
Expenses	7,249,309	7,802,712	7,874,746
Debt Service	<u>5,885,509</u>	<u>5,928,795</u>	<u>6,227,333</u>
Total (appropriate \$14,260,000 from Weir River Water System revenue and transfer \$176,530 from Retained Earnings)	13,355,061	14,027,558	14,436,530

	Fiscal 2024 Expended	Fiscal 2025 Appropriated	Advisory Fiscal 2026 Recommended
TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS	15,478,683	16,802,584	16,814,023
DEBT SERVICE			
DEBT SERVICE	8,599,791	11,357,273	13,695,055
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE	8,599,791	11,357,273	13,695,055
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS			
900 GROUP INSURANCE	6,913,371	7,727,318	8,406,867
903 OPEB	1,313,773	1,412,523	1,498,660
910 CONTRIBUTORY RETIREMENT	6,303,180	6,759,093	7,190,072
912 WORKER'S COMPENSATION	460,000	330,000	330,000
913 UNEMPLOYMENT	88,557	40,000	50,000
914 MANDATORY MEDICARE	1,108,641	1,220,592	1,293,716
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	16,187,522	17,489,526	18,769,315
UNCLASSIFIED			
915 PROPERTY & LIABILITY INSURANCE	1,310,910	1,700,527	1,870,580
TOTAL UNCLASSIFIED	1,310,910	1,700,527	1,870,580
GRAND TOTAL	145,392,762	160,854,599	165,757,781

**ARTICLE 7
TRANSFER FROM THE STABILIZATION FUND**

Will the Town transfer a sum of money from the Stabilization Fund and/or from available reserves for the purpose of paying debt service for excluded debt in order to reduce the need to raise said funds through the FY26 tax rate, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Stabilization Fund, with a balance of approximately \$1.9 million as of December 31, 2024, contains premiums related to the issuance of excluded debt bonds for multiple school capital projects approved in prior fiscal years. These bond premiums were transferred into the Stabilization Fund per Article 12 of the 2011 Annual Town Meeting, and Article 7 of the 2016 Annual Town Meeting, to be used to offset the bonds' future debt service costs. Annually, an amortized portion is withdrawn from the Stabilization Fund to offset the Fiscal Year interest payments due on the bonds, which results in a reduction in the annual cost to the taxpayers.

Under the version of M.G.L. c. 44, § 20 in effect at the time these bond premiums were deposited into the Stabilization Fund, the funds were considered general revenue of the Town that could have been used for any lawful purpose under M.G.L. c. 40, § 5B. However, that statute has since been amended and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) Division of Local Services has issued a new guideline in February of 2022 limiting the future use of such bond premiums (IGR No. 22-01). Under that new DOR guideline, the bond premiums presently in the Stabilization Fund must be used to offset interest paid in future years on the original excluded debt. The below recommended motion would follow the DOR guideline to transfer a portion of the Stabilization Fund to offset the interest on said excluded debt in order to reduce the need to raise these funds through the FY26 tax rate.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town transfer \$178,836 from the Stabilization Fund for the purpose of paying interest on outstanding excluded debt notes/bonds in order to reduce the need to raise said funds through the FY26 tax rate.

**ARTICLE 8
DISBURSEMENT OF ELECTRIC LIGHTING DEPARTMENT RECEIPTS**

Will the Town appropriate, from the receipts of the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant, money for the maintenance and operation of the Plant for the 12-month period commencing July 1, 2025, pursuant to Sections 57 and 57A of Chapter 164 of the Massachusetts General Laws, and provide for the disposition of any surplus receipts, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant ("HMLP") is self-funding; funds collected from billing customers are used to pay all expenses incurred by the Plant. The HMLP Board has a written policy in place whereby it makes a voluntary earned surplus payment in the form of a Payment In Lieu of Taxes ("PILOT") to the Town. The PILOT amount is calculated by multiplying the number of kilowatt hours sold by HMLP in the prior year by \$0.0025. The minimum payment that HMLP is expected to make to the Town is \$450,000. However, based on sales for the last several years, it is estimated that the total final payment will be approximately \$500,000 during FY26. The Plant's PILOT to the Town has the effect of reducing the Town's tax rate.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That, with the exception of the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant's ("HMLP") PILOT, to which no less than \$450,000 in received funds is hereby transferred to the Town's General Fund to reduce the FY26 tax rate, all funds received by the HMLP during the 12-month period commencing July 1, 2025, be appropriated to said HMLP, the same to be expended by the Manager of said HMLP under the control and direction of the Municipal Light Board, for the expenses of the Plant during said period, pursuant to and as defined in Sections 57 and 57A of Chapter 164 of the Massachusetts General Laws, and, if there should be

any surplus receipts at the end of said period, such amount as is deemed necessary shall be transferred to the Plant's net investment in capital assets and appropriated and used for such additions to the Plant as may be authorized by the Municipal Light Board during said period.

**ARTICLE 9
BUILDING DEPARTMENT REVOLVING FUND**

Will the Town limit the total amount that may be spent from the Building Department Revolving Fund, established under Article 18 of the General By-laws, to \$255,000.00 during FY26, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: 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. This revolving fund was previously created by Town Meeting under Article 18 of the Hingham General By-laws and is compliant with M.G.L. c. 44 § 53E1 ½. Each year, Town Meeting must vote to limit the total amount that may be spent from this revolving fund. In recent years, the total spending cap was \$280,000. However, a determination has since been made to lower the spending cap to \$255,000 for FY26 in order to bring the revolving fund more in line with its revenue and to maintain a positive balance in the revolving fund.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town limit the total amount that may be spent from the Building Department Revolving Fund established under Article 18 of Town of Hingham General By-laws, to \$255,000 during FY26.

**ARTICLE 10
TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO THE RESERVE FUND**

Will the Town raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to the Town's Reserve Fund for use during FY25 or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article is included each year in case the existing Reserve Fund is not adequate to cover unbudgeted and unanticipated expenses for the balance of the current Fiscal Year (FY25). The specific amount will be reported at Town Meeting.

RECOMMENDED: The Advisory Committee will make its recommendation at Town Meeting.

**ARTICLE 11
DPW VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT**

Will the Town 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 purchase vehicles and/or equipment for the Department of Public Works, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article requests the Town utilize \$1,611,404 from Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) to replace critical Department of Public Works (DPW) and Transfer Station vehicles and equipment required to maintain fundamental Town services and operations.

The Capital Outlay Committee (COC) proposed this solution to the Select Board as the COC current levy-funded budget, which as presented in the Warrant and Forecast, is insufficient to cover current requests identified as high

priorities by Department Managers. This approach is supported by the Town Financial Policy and responsibilities of the COC as outlined in Town By-laws.

Unfunded capital requests are often rolled over to the following year. Many items are deferred multiple times, often requiring costly repairs, significant time out of service, and potential outside contractor expense. The request is for the funding of the vehicles and equipment listed below that are either beyond end of life, core to the DPW and Transfer Station mission (the department cannot function without it), and/or require repairs which would cost at least 25% of a new replacement cost. A few of these items have been deferred since 2017. Furthermore, the lead time to replace several of the requested vehicles could be six to nine months; while two specialty vehicles, IH Dump 7400DP Plow & Sander and the Elgin Street Sweeper, could be more than a year to procure from the date of order.

Continued failure to adequately maintain and replace our capital assets only leads to bigger and more expensive investment in the future. It could also present a risk to public safety in the form of slower emergency response times, accidents due to unplowed or inadequately treated roads, as well as the safety of our valued town employees. Lastly, travel delays to work and school or closure of the Transfer Station can occur when such vehicles and equipment fail.

DPW and Transfer Station Vehicle/Equipment Requests from UFB totaling \$1,611,404:

1. 2018 IH Dump 7400DP Plow & Sander: \$365,301
2. 2011 Elgin Street Sweeper: \$326,104
3. 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump (1-Ton) w/plow & spreader: \$133,233
4. 2017 Chevy 2500HD Quad Cab Pickup w/plow: \$75,332
5. 2014 Chevy 2500 HD pickup w/plow: \$75,332
6. 2015 Chevy 2500 Silverado Pickup Truck w/plow: \$73,970
7. 2014 Chevy Tahoe: \$75,332
8. 2013 Trackless Sidewalk Tractor: \$201,800
9. Transfer Station 2011 T9 Open Top Trash Trailer: \$110,000
10. Transfer Station Trash Compactor #3/4: \$100,000
11. Transfer Station Chevy 2500 HD pick up w/plow: \$75,000

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate and transfer \$1,611,404 from Unassigned Fund Balance to be expended by the Select Board to be used to purchase vehicles and/or equipment for the Department of Public Works.

ARTICLE 12 TRANSFER OF TAX TITLE SALE PROCEEDS INTO THE CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND

Will the Town appropriate and/or transfer the net sale proceeds received during FY25 from the sale of any tax title real property into the "Capital Stabilization Fund", or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article will facilitate the transfer of funds received by the Town from tax title sales completed during FY25 into the Capital Stabilization Fund previously established by the Town Meeting vote in 2023. This Stabilization Fund was established to hold non-recurring revenue sources, in particular revenues from the sale of used Town assets, to build up a reserve that can be used to support capital spending above and beyond what can be formally budgeted in a given year.

This Article would specifically authorize the transfer of funds generated through the tax title sale of properties on Andrew Isle Road. The properties at 1,3, and 9 Andrew Isle Road were acquired by the Town for unpaid real estate taxes through a title foreclosure Judgment from the Land Court. An auction was held during FY25 for the sale of these properties. To date, the sale of 9 Andrew Isle Road reached closing and generated \$45,000 for the Town and it is anticipated that the other properties will close during this Fiscal Year. This Article will authorize the transfer of

these funds from the General Fund into the Capital Stabilization Fund for use under the purposes of that Stabilization Fund.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town transfer the net sale proceeds from the sale of any tax title property received during FY25 into the "Capital Stabilization Fund".

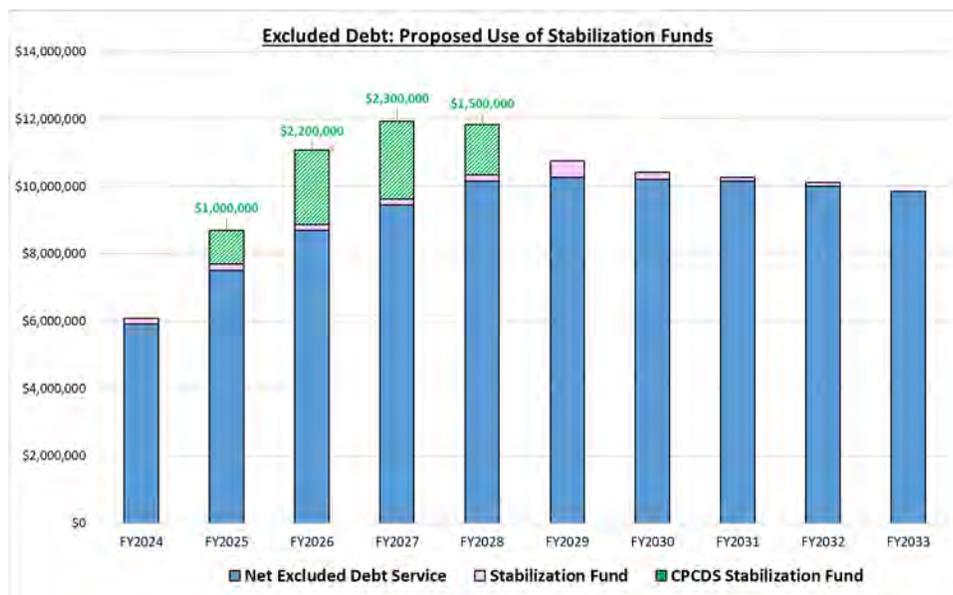
**ARTICLE 13
TRANSFER FROM THE CAPITAL PROJECT COST AND DEBT SERVICE STABILIZATION FUND**

Will the Town transfer a sum of money from the "Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund" established under Article 3 of the 2022 Town of Hingham Special Town Meeting to be expended by the Select Board for the purpose of the payment of debt service on outstanding excluded debt bond anticipation notes and/or bonds related to the new elementary school at 55 Downer Avenue, Hingham, MA and the new Public Safety Facility at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA, in order to reduce the need to raise these funds through the FY26 tax rate, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Capital Project Cost and Debt Service ("CPCDS") Stabilization Fund's primary stated purpose is to pay capital costs of and/or to offset a portion of the annual debt service related to the construction of the Public Safety Facility ("PSF") and/or the Foster School project. In addition to its establishment at the Special Town Meeting in 2022, the CPCDS Stabilization Fund was also funded with \$7,000,000 from Unassigned Fund Balance. Annual appropriations made from the CPCDS Stabilization Fund are intended to help mitigate tax increases to pay the debt service on these projects or to be used for any other lawful purpose as determined by a future Town Meeting.

The 2024 Annual Town Meeting approved the transfer of \$1,000,000 from the CPCDS Fund in order to lessen the tax increase needed to support the new debt service payments for the PSF and Foster School projects. This Article would enable another transfer of \$2,200,000 from the Fund to reduce the tax burden needed to support the debt service costs due in FY26.

The table below illustrates the annual debt service payments due in the initial years of the full borrowing for the PSF and Foster School projects. The shaded portion shows the impact of utilizing funds from the CPCDS account offsets a portion of the costs, thereby reducing the spike in tax increases that would be necessary to support the early years of the payment schedule.



The chart shows the reduction in tax burden through this proposed transfer of \$2,200,000 in FY26 as well as projected amounts to be transferred in subsequent years to support a flattened dependence on tax revenue.

This use of funds is within the scope of the purpose of the CPCDS Stabilization Fund. The level and timing of future appropriations for FY27 and beyond will be reassessed annually in conjunction with the available information at that time and may be materially different than what is indicated in the table.

The Select Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town transfer the sum of \$2,200,000 from the “Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund” established under Article 3 of the 2022 Town of Hingham Special Town Meeting for the purpose of making debt service payments on the excluded debt notes/bonds issued by the Town for the Public Safety Facility and Foster School projects in order to reduce the need to raise these funds through the FY26 tax rate.

ARTICLE 14 CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING REVOLVING FUND

Will the Town limit the total amount that may be spent from the Center for Active Living Revolving Fund, established under Article 16 of the General By-laws, to \$80,000.00 during FY26, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the Council on Aging)

COMMENT: The Hingham Center for Active Living’s Revolving Fund is credited with all fees and charges received from Center for Active Living’s programs and pays expenses associated with providing these services and activities for the Town’s senior residents. This Article would limit the total amount that may be spent from this revolving fund to \$80,000 in FY26.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to limit the amount that may be spent from the Center for Active Living Revolving Fund, established under Article 16 of the General By-laws, to \$80,000 during FY26.

ARTICLE 15 DESIGN, BID DOCUMENTS, AND OPM FUNDS FOR CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING

Will the Town raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the Select Board for expenses associated with design, architectural, engineering, owner’s project manager, and other professional services to complete the design and to complete the pre-construction bid documents in order to obtain construction bids for a new Center for Active Living to be located at Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, Massachusetts, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: Projections estimate that by 2035, residents aged 60 and older will comprise 39% of Hingham’s population, and a significant proportion of older residents live alone. The Town has been discussing the need for a new Hingham Center for Active Living (HCAL) since 2013. Recognizing the current HCAL is severely constrained in serving the needs of the growing senior citizen population in Hingham, at the 2020 Town Meeting two articles were approved to further the long-needed upgrades to the Senior Center. The Town voted to establish a Senior Center Building Committee (Committee) to oversee all phases of renovation and expansion of the HCAL at Town Hall from design and engineering plans through construction. The Town also voted to appropriate up to \$525,000 to be used for design and engineering services for renovations to the Center at Town Hall.

In October 2022, Hingham’s Department of Elder Services and the Council on Aging (COA) commissioned a study, “Aging in Hingham: A Community Needs Assessment” by the University of Massachusetts Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging (UMass) to identify the needs and preferences of Hingham’s residents as they

age. In September 2024, the COA adopted a 2024-2029 strategic plan for the HCAL which details actions and outcomes that align with the UMass study and the Committee's findings. It also provides plans for improvements to community outreach to increase participation at the HCAL.

Working since 2020, the Committee identified that inadequate parking at Town Hall posed a significant issue. In the intervening years, some seniors have expressed an interest in considering an alternative site for the HCAL, and others have expressed an interest in a multi-generational facility. At the 2023 Town Meeting, voters approved an expansion of the uses of the previously appropriated funds to consider a range of alternatives, including other Town-owned locations and possible models for the HCAL, and the feasibility and costs of these alternatives.

The Committee met 50 times in public meetings from 2021 through 2025, and numerous times before 2021, to undertake the charge of documenting: challenges at the existing Center, needs and interests of residents, programing and design concepts in other newly designed Centers, an overview of proposed services, programming, space features and square footage for a new HCAL. The UMass study indicated that the driving forces to increase the use of the HCAL include an increase in the number and diversity of programs and resolving the challenges of the site's parking, which is a significant deterrence to participation. Thirty-two percent of respondents indicated they currently attend programs at other town's senior centers, which are not available at HCAL. This was validated through conversations with representatives of neighboring towns. The study further provided guidance into the types of spaces a new center should prioritize to accommodate the desired programs and services.

The Committee engaged EDM Studio (architectural firm with expertise in municipal buildings, including senior centers), SLR Consulting (site planning, civil engineering and environmental analysis), and Lifespan Design Studio (senior center design specialist) to assist in the mission and use the results to inform the site evaluation and design process. In addition to utilizing the UMass study, EDM conducted surveys, focus groups and one-on-one meetings and determined the nature of services and programs of interest to the senior community. Educational opportunities and fitness activities were at the top of a long list. In addition to input from residents, there were conversations with and visits to several senior centers in neighboring and peer towns.

With the information gathered, EDM evaluated eight options at Town Hall and four sites on Bare Cove Park Drive. After significant analysis by the architects, consultants and the Committee, it was determined that no option at Town Hall was feasible for a new, revitalized HCAL. The major deterrents to the Town Hall option are insufficient space to meet program needs, a multi-level facility resulting in unfavorable access for seniors, very limited options for future expansion, and minimal outdoor activity space. Furthermore, most of the Town Hall options do not have acceptable parking. Such parking would be outside of the preferred distance from the entry, including remote lots, and a reworking the circle in front of the Town Hall. The Veterans' Memorial would not be disturbed. The options with adequate parking are a new building on Haley or Cronin Fields, requiring relocation of the fields in either case. However, the Town Hall options would allow the reuse of some of the existing amenities and utilities, which would reduce the cost of the project.

EDM recommended and the Committee selected a site on Bare Cove Park Drive. This location allows for a one-story building for enhanced accessibility and ADA compliance, natural daylight, outdoor amenity space including areas for activities such as gardening and games, appropriate parking, and room for expansion. Following the trend of modern senior centers, demonstrated by those built by our neighboring and peer towns in recent years, the HCAL will strive to offer programs including health education seminars, health screenings, fitness and nutrition classes, retirement seminars, volunteer opportunities, art and cultural programs, card and game playing, as well as spaces to gather for socializing and some meals. Programing will inform the size and design of the new HCAL. EDM has presented a **conceptual** design which illustrates how the expanded programing might fit into a building. Some concern has been expressed over the size of the conceptual design, and it should be noted that this is not a final design. The design will continue to evolve to create an efficient building that will allow for the essential programs offered by the HCAL. The conceptual design for a single story 28,000 square foot building that has an estimated cost of \$35,000,000 for the building, site and campus improvements. This figure *includes* the \$2,500,000 requested in this Article. The \$2,500,000 of design funds will also cover the owners project manager for this phase, a traffic study, local permitting, sustainability consulting, solar design; furniture, fixture and equipment design; and geotechnical, wetland and environmental work as needed. The final design, size and cost will be vetted through the design and permitting process under the direction of the Select Board including the approval of contracts and periodic meetings with the Committee to review the design as it develops.

The Bare Cove Park Drive site will require the demolition of an existing building, site clearing, potential environmental clean-up and extra coordination with regulatory bodies. Initial environmental analysis indicates that normal soil management should not be cost prohibitive. The proposed location of the HCAL is on land acquired from the federal government and its use is subject to oversight by the National Park Service (NPS). The Town was required to submit information about the project to the NPS to determine whether it would be subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NPS determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion, which means that it will have little to no adverse impacts on natural resources. Therefore, no further federal review or approval is required.

This Article will be funded by a transfer from available funds. The expectation is that this work will allow for the completion of the final design and all pre-construction documents in order to obtain construction bids and to be able to come to the 2026 Town Meeting to request a Town appropriation, through excluded debt, for the funds to construct the new HCAL. At that time, the Town may choose to reimburse the funds appropriated by this vote with the proceeds of bonds or notes authorized by the Town to pay costs of completing the project.

The Advisory Committee voted 13-1 in favor and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to transfer from Unassigned Fund Balance an amount not to exceed \$2,500,000 to be expended under the direction of the Select Board for expenses associated with design, architectural, engineering, owner's project manager and other professional services to complete the design and pre-construction bid documents in order to obtain construction bids for a new Center for Active Living to be located at Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, Massachusetts. At a later date, the Town may authorize a borrowing to finance construction of the project. In that event, the Town may elect to reimburse the funds appropriated by this vote to pay preliminary expenses of the project with proceeds of bonds or notes that may be authorized by the Town to pay costs of completing the project.

ARTICLE 16 CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING: ARTICLE 97 LEGISLATION

Will the Town authorize the Select Board to file a petition with the General Court of Massachusetts in accordance with Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A, M.G.L. c. 45, § 7 and all other applicable laws, to allow the Town of Hingham to change the use of approximately six acres of land located on a portion of Assessor Map 77, Lot 1, off Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, MA, for use as a Center for Active Living and uses associated therewith, and to authorize the Select Board to acquire and/or dedicate any replacement land, all on such terms and conditions and in such form as determined by the Select Board, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution (Art. 97) establishes the right to a clean environment including its natural, scenic, historical, and aesthetic qualities for the citizens of the Commonwealth. Art. 97 also declares the conservation of natural resources a public purpose and provides that land or easements subject to Art. 97 shall not be used for other purposes or disposed of without a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Town Meeting and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the State Legislature. An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth, also known as the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA), establishes requirements and a process for submission to the State Legislature of petitions to authorize a change in use or disposition of land subject to Art. 97.

This Article proposes to swap approximately seven (7) acres of Town-owned land on High Street, which is presently not subject to Art. 97, for approximately five (5) acres of Town-owned land on Bare Cove Park Drive, which is presently subject to Art. 97 and is also the proposed location for the new Hingham Center for Active Living (HCAL). The shape of the seven (7) acres of Town-owned land on High Street was determined through discussions with the Town Engineer and Conservation Officer to incorporate sensitive lands including those near Plymouth River, a potential vernal pool, and other wetland areas. It was also configured in a manner to avoid any interference with Margett's Field No. 1.

The new HCAL cannot be built at the proposed location on Bare Cove Park Drive unless the land swap described in this Article is approved by Town Meeting and the State Legislature.

This Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to:

(1) authorize the Select Board of the Town of Hingham to petition the General Court in accordance with Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth (“Article 97”), M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A, M.G.L. c. 45, § 7, and all other applicable laws, to allow the Town to change the use of approximately 5.387 acres of land located on a portion of the parcel shown as Assessor’s Map 77, Lot 1, off Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, MA, as more particularly shown on that certain plan entitled “Plan Showing the Delineated Limit of Development, Center for Active Living, Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, MA”, dated 3/14/2025, prepared by CHA Consulting, Inc., a copy of which is on file with the Town Clerk, from passive and active recreation to use as a Center for Active Living and uses associated therewith, and to authorize the House and Senate Counsel and the General Court to make amendments to said petition consistent with the scope of the general public objectives of said petition; and

(2) further in accordance with said Article 97, M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A, M.G.L. c. 40, § 15A , and all other applicable laws, transfer to the care, custody, management and control of the Town of Hingham Conservation Commission, subject to the provisions of said Article 97, approximately seven (7) acres more or less of the approximately 49 acre parcel shown as Assessor’s Map 124, Lot 32 and known as 200 High Street, which is held by the School Committee for school purposes, as replacement land, as shown on a conceptual plan on file with the Town Clerk provided that the definitive boundaries of said replacement land shall be determined by a Massachusetts land surveyor; and

(3) to authorize the Select Board to obtain all governmental approvals necessary to accomplish the purpose of this Article on terms and conditions as approved by the Select Board.

ARTICLE 17

ACCEPTANCE OF M.G.L. C. 59, § 5, CLAUSE TWENTY-SECOND I: VETERANS’ TAX EXEMPTIONS

Will the Town accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 59, § 5, clause Twenty-second I (HERO ACT), which allows for certain veterans real estate tax exemptions to be increased annually by an amount equal to the increase in the cost of living in accordance with Consumer Price Index for such year as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article asks if the Town will accept the provisions of a new Commonwealth law passed in August 2024 (HERO Act) that provides for an annual increase in veterans’ real estate tax exemptions by an amount equal to the cost of living increase calculated by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

Hingham currently provides real estate tax exemptions for 90 veterans who qualify under three clauses of the law. Acceptance of the provisions of Clause Twenty-second I would provide those veterans with an increase in their exemption. In the future, veterans who qualify for these or other clauses of the veterans’ real estate tax exemptions will be provided an annual increase calculated per the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The funds for these exemptions will be covered by the Assessors’ Overlay Account and will not result in an increase to the tax levy. Calculated with an estimated 3.4% cost of living increase, the Assessing Department estimates the cost of this program to be \$3,500 for FY26.

If this Article is not approved, veterans who qualify for real estate tax exemptions will continue to receive the current real estate tax exemptions per the clause for which they qualify. See Assessing Department webpage, Exemptions and Relief, Various programs for Disabled Veterans.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor and the Select Board voted 2-0-1 (1 abstention) in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 59 § 5, clause Twenty-second I (HERO ACT), which allows for certain veterans' real estate tax exemptions to be increased annually by an amount equal to the increase in the cost of living in accordance with Consumer Price Index for such year as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

ARTICLE 18

SOUTH SHORE COUNTRY CLUB: AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW FOR EQUIPMENT AND RENOVATIONS

Will the Town vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purchase of equipment and/or for the renovation of the South Shore Country Club facilities, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Country Club Management Committee.)

COMMENT: This Article requests that the Town borrow \$657,887 for the purchase of:

- 3 fairway mowers
- 2 triplex mowers that are used for tee boxes and approaches
- 3 greens mowers
- 1 small mower.

These purchases will replace existing equipment that has reached the end of its useful life. The debt for the old equipment will be paid off in fiscal 2025. The new purchases will be funded through medium term debt that will be paid back from the South Shore Country Club (SSCC) Enterprise Fund over five years. This debt will have no impact on the property tax.

In addition, this Article requests \$750,000 for demolition of the existing pool and related electrical and landscaping work. The current pool was originally built in the 1950's and upgraded in the 1980's. It has not been used for the last four years. In its current condition it is a safety hazard. As the pool is a community resource, it is proposed that \$450,000 of this amount be funded from excess Unassigned Fund Balance. The remainder of the request, \$300,000 for landscaping and electrical work related to the demolition of the pool, would be borrowed and paid back from the SSCC Enterprise Fund as this work is more closely related to the golf operations of the Country Club.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate \$1,407,887 for the purchase of replacement mowers and equipment for the South Shore Country Club (SSCC), the demolition of the existing pool at the SSCC, including the costs of electrical and landscape work associated with the demolition of the SSCC pool, and for the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto. To meet this appropriation, (i) the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow \$957,887 under and pursuant to, M.G.L. c. 44, § 7(1) or any other enabling authority, to pay costs of the replacement mowers and equipment and to pay costs of electrical and landscaping work associated with the demolition of the SSCC pool, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefore, and (ii) that \$450,000 shall be transferred from excess Unassigned Fund Balance to pay costs of demolishing the SSCC pool. While a general obligation of the Town, in accordance with the General Laws, it is expected that any borrowing undertaken pursuant to this vote shall be paid, in the first instance, from the SSCC Enterprise Fund.

**ARTICLE 19
RECREATION DEPARTMENT REVOLVING FUND**

Will the Town vote to amend the General By-laws of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, by adding a new Article to said General By-laws as follows:

Article: _____
RECREATION COMMISSION

SECTION 1. That the Recreation Commission (formerly the Playground Commission) established under Article 27 of the 1947 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting and Articles 42 and 43 of the 1958 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting shall exercise the powers conferred by M.G.L. c. 45, § 14 and shall be subject to all other applicable general or special laws and by-laws of the Town of Hingham.

SECTION 2. That in accordance with M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½, there is hereby established in the Recreation Department a Recreation Department Revolving Fund for the following purposes:

1. For the receipt of all fees, charges, and other receipts from Recreation Department programs or activities.
2. For expenditures to pay the costs and expenses of said Recreation Department programs or activities.
3. For expenditures to pay wages, salaries, and fringe benefits for full-time, part-time and/or seasonal employees (as applicable) of said Recreation Department for performance of their services and for expenditures to pay for equipment and capital improvements, including debt service, associated with said Recreation Department programs or activities.
4. The Recreation Commission shall be authorized to expend from said Revolving Fund for said purposes in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½. The Recreation Commission shall report all receipts and expenditures of said Revolving Fund to the Select Board at the end of each Fiscal Year.

And further, will the Town vote to establish said Recreation Department Revolving Fund for FY26 in accordance with the above provisions and limit the total amount that may be spent from said Recreation Department Revolving Fund during FY26;

And further, will the Town vote that any funds remaining in any previously established Revolving Fund for the Recreation Commission and/or Department shall be appropriated and/or transferred and deposited into the fund established hereunder, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article proposes to amend Town of Hingham General By-laws to add a new article for the purpose of re-establishing the Recreation Revolving Fund under a different mechanism (M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½ instead of M.G.L. c. 44, § 53D).

M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½ was established via the Massachusetts Municipal Modernization Act of 2016, and since then many MA municipal recreation department revolving funds have switched from using the older § 53D to the newer § 53E½. Under the newer § 53E½, municipalities can establish departmental revolving funds through a one-time enactment of a by-law or ordinance, leaving only the total budget amount for annual authorization. Also under § 53E½, annual spending authority may be set by the Select Board and Advisory Committee, and require expenses and related fees to be reported on an annual basis.

Additionally, per § 53E½, interest earned on revolving fund balances would be paid to the General Fund as opposed to remaining in the Department Revolving Fund under § 53D. Although, under § 53E½ surplus fund balance could be kept in the Recreation Department Revolving Fund; under § 53D, surplus fund balance over ten thousand dollars should be moved to the general fund.

Lastly, § 53E½ would also allow for full-time employee salaries to be paid out of the Department Revolving Fund as opposed to only allowing for part-time and seasonal salaries to be paid out of the Department Revolving Fund under § 53D.

The purpose of a revolving fund is to separately account for specific revenues and earmark them for expenditure by a board or officer without appropriation for particular purposes to support the activity, program or service that generated the revenues. Typically, revolving funds are authorized by state law for programs or services with expenses that (1) fluctuate with demand and (2) can be matched with the fees, charges or other revenues collected during the year. Local acceptance, if required by statute, is by vote of the municipality's legislative body, subject to charter. M.G.L. c. 4, § 4. The board or officer with authority to spend from a revolving fund can only incur liabilities and spend from the available, unspent and unencumbered balance of actual collections. The new by-law outlines four purposes for the new Recreation Revolving Fund in the draft by-law, which are in line with the Town of Hingham current practices.

This Article would also transfer all currently existing money in the existing Recreation Revolving Fund to the new one. It should be noted the Town has done this previously. For example, at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting, Article 10 was passed establishing a Building Department Revolving Fund under M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½. If the new by-law is adopted, the new Recreation Revolving Fund would operate similarly as the Building and the Center for Active Living Revolving Funds in requiring an Annual Town Meeting article to set the expenditure cap for the coming fiscal year.

The proposed cap for the Recreation Department Revolving Fund under § 53E½ is \$2,700,000 for FY26, inclusive of all full-time employee salaries, and can be increased if needed during the fiscal year with Select Board and Advisory Committee approval, similar to the two other revolving funds mentioned.

Establishing this form of Revolving Fund to receive and expend funds is appropriate for the Recreation Department because it shares facilities with other Town departments, unlike a stand-alone facility such as the South Shore Country Club, which operates as an Enterprise Fund.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to amend the General By-laws of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, by adding a new Article at the end of said General By-laws as follows:

**Article: _____
RECREATION COMMISSION**

SECTION 1. That the Recreation Commission (formerly the Playground Commission) established under Article 27 of the 1947 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting and Articles 42 and 43 of the 1958 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting shall exercise the powers conferred by M.G.L. c. 45, § 14 and shall be subject to all other applicable general or special laws and by-laws of the Town of Hingham.

SECTION 2. That in accordance with M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½, there is hereby established in the Recreation Department a Recreation Department Revolving Fund for the following purposes:

- 1. For the receipt of all fees, charges, and other receipts from Recreation Department programs or activities.**
- 2. For expenditures to pay the costs and expenses of said Recreation Department programs or activities.**
- 3. For expenditures to pay wages, salaries, and fringe benefits for full-time, part-time and/or seasonal employees (as applicable) of said Recreation Department for performance of their services and for expenditures to pay for equipment and capital improvements, including debt service, associated**

with said Recreation Department programs or activities.

4. The Recreation Commission shall be authorized to expend from said Revolving Fund for said purposes in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44, § 53E½. The Recreation Commission shall report all receipts and expenditures of said Revolving Fund to the Select Board at the end of each Fiscal Year.

And further, that the Town establish said Recreation Department Revolving Fund for FY26 in accordance with the above provisions and limit the total amount that may be spent from said Recreation Department Revolving Fund to \$2,700,000 during FY26.

And further, that the Town transfer and appropriate any funds remaining in any previously established Revolving Fund for the Recreation Commission and/or Department into the fund established hereunder.

ARTICLE 20 RECREATION COMMISSION NEW PICKLEBALL COURTS

Will the Town raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds an amount of money to be expended for the design, bidding, demolition, site preparation, construction, and all other related expenses for new pickleball courts to be located at Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, Massachusetts, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the Recreation Commission)

COMMENT: This Article seeks \$1,278,010 from the Town to partially fund the design through construction phases of 12 pickleball courts. The full cost of the project is estimated to be \$2,036,650. The remaining funds (\$758,640) are proposed to be provided by the CPC under Article 21.

The proposed project will be located across from the Carlson Field complex on Bare Cove Park Drive. There is currently an abandoned building at the site formerly used by the TRACES HHS shop program. The project will include 12 post-tension concrete pickleball courts, two shaded seating areas, space for spectators, a 39-stall parking lot, and 15-foot sound mitigation screens. The proposed courts are durable and should require little annual maintenance beyond repainting every five years (no need for annual resurfacing). The estimated cost includes demolition of the existing building and an estimate for any required remediation of environmental conditions.

The expected timeline is: final design in summer 2025, preparation of bid documents in fall 2025, construction in summer 2026, and project completion by fall 2026.

A 2020 Athletic Field and Court Study by Weston & Sampson identified the need for dedicated pickleball courts in Hingham. In 2023, Town Meeting (Article 19) approved a CPC grant of \$55,000 for a feasibility study, with the CPC recommendation noting that although pickleball can be played on a modified tennis court, the modifications and additional lines are not optimal for either sport. The feasibility study confirmed the demand for courts and recommended the Carlson Field location due to its accessibility, proximity to existing fields, and minimal noise concerns given the nearest residences are 700 feet away with a wooded buffer. The Select Board, which controls the site, authorized the Recreation Commission to submit a final CPC application in September 2024.

Some abutters raised concerns about sound and traffic. In light of the sound concerns, the Recreation Department commissioned a sound study, with results presented in a public meeting in January 2025. Following additional discussions, a supplemental study was completed, leading to a Recreation Commission vote to include the 15-foot fencing for noise mitigation. If this Article is approved, additional local approvals will be required, including by the Planning Board (where traffic concerns are expected to be addressed), and the Conservation Commission, which may lead to modifications in court siting, orientation or number of courts.

Given that the Select Board maintains custody and control of the site, all final project decisions including those regarding court siting, court direction and sound mitigation will be subject to Select Board approval.

The Advisory Committee voted 11-1-1 (1 abstention) in favor of this Article, the Select Board voted 2-0-1 (1

abstention) in favor of this Article, and Recreation Commission voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate and transfer the sum of \$1,278,010 from Unassigned Fund Balance to be expended by the Town of Hingham Recreation Commission, with approval of the Select Board, for the design, permitting, bidding, demolition, site preparation, construction, and all other related expenses for new pickleball courts to be located at Bare Cove Park Drive, Hingham, Massachusetts.

**ARTICLE 21
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Will the Town appropriate, borrow, and/or set aside for future appropriation a sum of money from the available Community Preservation Funds remaining after payment of debt service for bonds and/or notes issued under M.G.L. c. 44B for the following items recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025:

- 1) Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$40,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund to be used by the Community Preservation Committee for its administrative and operating expenses;
- 2) Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$209,179 from the Community Preservation General Fund to be available for expenditure by the Select Board for the payment of bonds or notes borrowed for Community Preservation projects under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44B, § 11;
- 3) Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$700,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund for community housing purposes to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund to be used by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust for community housing purposes and that these funds, including, without limitation, any net proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of any property acquired in whole or in part with said funds or any previous funds appropriated to the Opportunity Fund, shall remain in said Opportunity Fund for future use for said purposes.
- 4) Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$600,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund for historic resources purposes to be used by the Hingham Historical Society, Inc. for the Old Ordinary Campus Improvements Project.
- 5) Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$758,640 from the Community Preservation General Fund for open space/recreational use purposes to be used by the Town of Hingham Recreation Commission for the Pickleball Courts Project.
- 6) Appropriate from the Community Preservation General Fund the net sale proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of 18K Beal's Cove Road and 21B Beal's Cove Road, in Hingham, MA, during Fiscal Year 2025, to the extent that the acquisition of said property was made using Community Preservation Funds, to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund to be used by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust for community housing purposes and that these funds , including, without limitation, any net proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of any property acquired in whole or in part with said funds, shall remain in said Opportunity Fund for future use for said purposes.

or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Community Preservation Committee)

COMMENT: The Community Preservation Act (M.G.L. c. 44B (CPA)) is a local option statute enacted by the State Legislature in 2000 and adopted by the Town in 2001. It enables towns to collect and expend funds (including funds from the Commonwealth) to maintain their character by supporting open space, affordable housing, historic preservation, and recreation initiatives specifically defined by the CPA. The current Hingham CPA surcharge rate is 1.5% of real property taxes. CPA funds are not part of the operating budget and are maintained separately for use only through CPA grants and administrative expenses.

This year, as in years past, the dollar amount of grants sought by applicants to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) exceeded CPC's budget. CPC scrutinized each grant application and applied consistent CPC guidelines and criteria to determine which applications and, for those approved, a grant amount that fits within the year's budget.

The CPC started the deliberation process this year with a budget of \$2,454,815. That includes local tax revenue of \$1,565,288, plus an annual distribution from the Commonwealth's Community Preservation Trust Fund (based on a formula) of \$264,363. Additional funds available are: \$580,970 held over from the CPA budget of FY25 and \$44,194 in funds unspent from the Administration Fund from the 2023 Town Meeting (FY24).

The CPC recommendations total \$2,307,819, leaving a surplus of \$146,996, which will be held in reserve for next year's budget.

The proposed funding of these projects will meet the required ten percent (10%) allocations for historic preservation, open space, and affordable housing.

The comments of the Advisory Committee are set forth below and correspond to the numbered sections of this Article.

- *Section 1: Administrative Fund:* The CPA allows up to 5% of annual CPA budget to be reserved for operational and administrative expenses, including engineering, legal, and consulting costs associated with the review of proposed projects, the administration of projects approved by Town Meeting, and the salaries of staff. In the past, Hingham's administrative appropriations have averaged amounts below the 5% allowed by the CPA. This year's contribution to the CPC Administrative Fund equals \$40,000 and represents less than 2% of the annual CPA budget.

The Advisory Committee, the Select Board, and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

- *Section 2: Debt Payments.* This section requests payment of debt in the amount of \$209,179 for the annual debt payment due for the purchase of the Lehner Property off South Pleasant Street, authorized by ATM 2016. This is the required payment of the town. This payment will exhaust the amount required to be spent from the Community Preservation Open /Space reserve.

The Advisory Committee, the Select Board, and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

- *Section 3: Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund.* CPC recommends a grant of \$700,000 for the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT), established by Article 21 of the 2007 Annual Town Meeting. The purpose of the Trust is summarized in the Article approved by Town Meeting, "... to provide for the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the Town of Hingham for low and moderate-income households."

The Opportunity Fund is used to support developments underway, preserve existing housing, and to provide funds to aid purchases of market rate housing or land acquisitions to create housing that is affordable. Opportunities to create new affordable housing units often arise that require immediate responses, e.g., when a property is listed for sale. Replenishing the Opportunity Fund will allow the Trust to respond quickly to those opportunities. All purchases and other expenditures are subject to detailed financial reporting and Select Board approval.

While Hingham achieved its 10% minimum affordable housing requirement until 2030, the Town continues to have unmet housing needs. HAHT continues its efforts to purchase and develop affordable housing within the Town given the increasing and high cost of housing, the higher-than-average percentage of renters who are cost burdened, and the gap in available housing for older and disabled residents. CPA funding is the primary, recurring revenue source for HAHT. When HAHT purchases such a property, it applies for an affordability restriction from the Commonwealth's Department of Housing and Community Development. Once the

restriction is in effect, HAHT sells or rents the property and places the proceeds back into the Opportunity Fund for future purchases and other expenditures.

The HAHT final Housing Plan was issued in June 2021; the goal of the Housing Plan is to proactively address local housing issues and to sponsor initiatives to meet the most pressing of these needs. Additionally, the Hingham Master Plan sets a goal of HAHT creating 5 units of affordable housing each year over the next decade (50 units by 2031). The Trust's recent work and plans include: (i) six affordable homes delivered to new homeowners; (ii) upcoming development of one owned single-family home and two condominiums; (iii) exploring the development of (a) two homes on land owned by the Trust or the Town; and (iv) a multi-family affordable development.

The original request from HAHT was for \$500,000, but the CPC decided to increase that amount to \$700,000, given the existence of excess funds this year and that the HAHT did not receive any CPA funds last year.

The Advisory Committee, the Select Board and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

- *Section 4: Old Ordinary.* CPC recommends a grant of \$600,000 for the Hingham Historical Society for rehabilitation of the Old Ordinary House (built 1688) and Annex (Built 1906) located at 21 Lincoln Street. The goal of this project is to improve ADA accessibility and is further geared toward improving the visitor experience (safety, function and convenience) in time for Rev250 in 2025 and America's 250th in 2026. The project includes work that will provide accessible restrooms and kitchenette in the House Museum, stabilize and renovate Annex, create accessible entrances to all three buildings (House, Annex and Fort) and accessible paths between the buildings. The Historical Society received a \$200,000 grant from Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism for this project.

This project supports the Town Master Plan goals, to Honor Town Character, Policy 1.4 Heritage Tourism Goal 5: Support a vibrant, resilient local economy, Policy 5.5 Promote Hingham as a destination.

The Recommended Motion includes an authorization to create a new historic preservation restriction on this property to align with current standards used in these types of restrictions. Under the CPA, many towns, including Hingham, require a preservation restriction when CPA funds are awarded for rehabilitation or restoration of historic property. This protects the Town's interests should the property change hands or become subject to additional development pressures.

The Advisory Committee, the Select Board, and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in support of this recommendation.

- *Section 5: Pickleball:* CPC recommends a grant of \$758,640 to be used by the Recreation Commission to partially fund the design through construction phases of 12 pickleball courts. The full cost of the project is estimated to be \$2,036,650. The remaining funds (\$1,278,010) are proposed to be provided by the Town under the Article Recreation Commission New Pickleball Courts.

The proposed project will be located across from the Carlson Field complex on Bare Cove Park Drive. There is currently an abandoned building at the site formerly used by the Traces HHS shop program. The project will include up to 12 post-tension concrete pickleball courts, two shaded seating areas, space for spectators, a 39-stall parking lot, and 15-foot sound mitigation screens. The proposed courts are durable and should require little annual maintenance beyond repainting every five years (no need for annual resurfacing). The estimated cost includes demolition of the existing building and an estimate for any required remediation of environmental conditions.

The expected timeline is: final design in summer 2025, preparation of bid documents in fall 2025, construction in summer 2026, and project completion by fall 2026.

A 2020 Athletic Field and Court Study by Weston & Sampson identified the need for dedicated pickleball courts in Hingham. In 2023, Town Meeting, Article 19, approved a CPC grant of \$55,000 for a feasibility study, with

the CPC recommendation noting that although pickleball can be played on a modified tennis court, the modifications and additional lines are not optimal for either sport.

The feasibility study confirmed the demand for courts and recommended the Carlson Field location due to its accessibility, proximity to existing fields, and minimal noise concerns given the nearest residences are 700 feet away with a wooded buffer. The Select Board, which controls the site, authorized the Recreation Commission to submit a final CPC application in September 2024.

Some abutters raised concerns about sound and traffic. In light of the sound concerns, the Recreation Department commissioned a sound study, with results presented in a public meeting in January 2025. Following additional discussions, a supplemental study was completed, leading to a Recreation Commission vote to include the 15-foot fencing for noise mitigation. If this Article is approved, additional local approvals will be required, including by the Planning Board (where traffic concerns are expected to be addressed) and the Conservation Commission, which may lead to modifications in court siting, orientation or number of courts.

Given that the Select Board maintains custody and control of the site, all final project decisions including those regarding court siting, court direction and sound mitigation will be subject to Select Board approval.

The Advisory Committee voted 11-1-1 (1 abstention) in favor of this recommendation, the Select Board voted 2-0-1 (1 abstention) in favor of this recommendation, and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

- *Section 6: Proceeds from the sales of housing purchased with CPA Funds.* Town Counsel has determined that the Community Preservation Act, as currently written, requires that proceeds from the sale of these specific properties, funded by CPA, be returned to the Community Preservation Fund. This Article asks Town Meeting to vote that funds received from the sale of these properties be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust (“HAHT”) for community housing purposes and that these funds shall remain in the HAHT Opportunity Fund for future use for said purposes.

The Advisory Committee, the Select Board, and the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously in support of this project.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to appropriate, borrow and/or set aside for future appropriation a sum of money from the available Community Preservation Funds remaining after payment of debt service for bonds and/or notes issued under M.G.L. c. 44B for the following items recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025:

- 1) **Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$40,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund to be used by the Community Preservation Committee for its administrative and operating expenses.**
- 2) **Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$209,179 from the Community Preservation General Fund to be available for expenditure by the Select Board for the payment of bonds or notes borrowed for Community Preservation projects under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44B, § 11.**
- 3) **Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$700,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund to be used by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust for community housing purposes and that these funds, including, without limitation, any net proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of any property acquired in whole or in part with said funds or any previous funds appropriated to the Opportunity Fund, shall remain in said Opportunity Fund for future use for said purposes.**
- 4) **Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$600,000 from the Community Preservation General Fund for historic resources preservation use purposes to be used by the Hingham Historical Society, Inc. for the Old Ordinary Campus Improvements Project and to authorize the Town of Hingham Historical Commission, with the approval of the Select Board, to acquire a preservation restriction for said project under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 40, § 8D and M.G.L. c. 184, §§ 31-33 and all other applicable laws.**

- 5) **Appropriate a sum of money in the amount of \$758,640 from the Community Preservation General Fund for open space/recreational use purposes to be used by the Town of Hingham Recreation Commission, with approval of the Select Board, for the Pickleball Courts Project.**
- 6) **Appropriate from the Community Preservation General Fund the net sale proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of 18K Beal’s Cove Road and 21B Beal’s Cove Road, in Hingham, MA, during Fiscal Year 2025, to the extent that the acquisition of said property was made using Community Preservation Funds, to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Opportunity Fund to be used by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust for community housing purposes and that these funds , including, without limitation, any net proceeds received by the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust from the sale of any property acquired in whole or in part with said funds, shall remain in said Opportunity Fund for future use for said purposes.**

**ARTICLE 22
SCHOOL BUS LEASES**

Will the Town authorize the School Department to enter into bus leases through the end of FY26 for the procurement of four (4) school buses for regular transportation for a term of greater than three years but less than 10 years under M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12, including leases for electric school buses and the installation of infrastructure associated therewith, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: Costs associated with school bus leases are included in the School's annual operating budget. Any school bus lease with a term more than three years must be approved at Town Meeting per M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12. The School Department has been leasing buses for “regular” transportation (all student transportation other than for special education) as part of its operations for many years, typically for five-year terms. This was last approved in Article 24 at the 2021 Town Meeting.

The School Administration has demonstrated significant savings in leasing the buses for terms more than three years, rather than purchasing these vehicles.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town authorize the Hingham School Committee to approve School Department bus leases for the procurement of four (4) school buses for regular transportation for a term of greater than three years, but less than 10 years, under M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12, including leases for electric school buses and the installation of infrastructure associated therewith.

**ARTICLE 23
SCHOOL BUS LEASE TERMS**

Will the Town authorize the School Department to enter into bus leases for regular transportation for a term of greater than three years, but less than ten years, under M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12, including leases for electric school buses and the installation of infrastructure associated therewith, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: Costs associated with school bus leases are included in the School's annual operating budget. Any school bus lease with a term in excess of three years must be approved at Annual Town Meeting (ATM) per M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12. The School has been leasing buses for “regular” transportation (all student transportation other than special education) as part of its operations for many years, typically for five year terms. This was last approved in Article 24 at the 2021 ATM.

The purpose of this Article is to shift the authority to approve bus leases more than three years from ATM to the School Committee. Given that the School Committee is capable of making lease, versus buy decisions, as well as for how many years, shifting this authority makes sense. This authority may be revoked at ATM at any time in the future.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town authorize the Hingham School Committee to approve School Department bus leases for regular transportation for a term of greater than three years but less than 10 years under M.G.L. c. 30B, § 12, including leases for electric school buses and the installation of infrastructure associated therewith.

**ARTICLE 24
ACCEPTANCE OF M.G.L. C. 40, § 71: SCHOOL BUS CAMERAS**

Will the Town accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 40, § 71, for the purpose of authorizing, but not requiring, the Town of Hingham to enforce and fine an operator or owner of a motor vehicle who fails to stop for a school bus when required by law, as identified through a school bus violation detection monitoring system, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Traffic Committee)

COMMENT: This Article proposes the Town accept an act of Massachusetts General Law which became effective January 10, 2025, and states that “A city or town that accepts section 71 of chapter 40 may install and operate a school bus violation detection monitoring system on a school bus to enforce violations by an operator of a motor vehicle who overtakes or fails to stop their vehicle for a school bus when required to do so.”

Acceptance of the law initially allows the School Committee, which supports the Traffic Committee in this proposal, to develop in cooperation with the Hingham Police Department a pilot program similar to those recently enacted by other State communities. The School Committee has identified a school bus camera vendor and has earmarked \$8,985 for the installation of cameras in three (3) school buses.

The ensuing pilot program would be used by the School Committee and Hingham Police Department to develop a process of identifying and reviewing vehicle infractions captured by school bus cameras for the purposes of enforcing the law. By accepting the law there is no further obligation of expenditure to the Town, and any further commitment to the pilot program is to be determined jointly by the School Committee and Hingham Police Department.

The Advisory Board voted 12-1 in favor of this Article. The Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town accept the provisions of M.G.L. c. 40, § 71 for the purpose of authorizing, but not requiring, the Town of Hingham to enforce and fine an operator or owner of a motor vehicle who fails to stop for a school bus when required by law as identified through a school bus violation detection monitoring system.

**ARTICLE 25
TRANSFER HARBOR REVENUES TO MUNICIPAL WATERWAYS
IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE FUND**

Will the Town vote to appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money, which sum was generated from fees paid to the Town of Hingham during FY25, from any parking license for the purpose of accessing slips or moorings, and revenues generated by the Harbormaster’s Office and/or boat excise taxes, for deposit to the Town’s Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund, to be used in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40, § 5G, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article asks if the Town will transfer funds generated from fees related to use of Hingham Harbor to the Town's Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund (MWIMF) in addition to those required by state law.

The MWIMF was established at 2019 Annual Town Meeting and by statute must receive all proceeds from mooring fees and 50% of the boat excise taxes collected by the Town each year, approximately \$350,000 per year. This Article asks if the Town will transfer additional monies to the MWIMF, equal to the revenues generated in FY25 by the Harbormaster's Office including mooring/docking permit late fees and boating fines, parking licenses for the purpose of accessing slips or moorings, and the remaining 50% of boat excise taxes. Transferring these waterways related revenues to the MWIMF will provide the Town a partial funding source for future appropriations for harbor related expenses such as dredging and improvement of the harbor, the breakwaters, retaining walls, piers, wharves and moorings, and the associated law enforcement and fire prevention. The current balance in the Fund is \$1,135,155.

The amounts noted below are projected estimates because the total receipts from each of these Harbor related sources will not be known until the end of FY25. Transfer of these funds to MWIMF will not increase the FY26 tax levy.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money, which sum was generated from fees paid to the Town of Hingham during FY25, including all revenue from any parking license for the purpose of accessing slips or moorings (approximately \$40,000), all revenues generated by the Harbormaster's Office, including mooring/docking permit late fees and boating fines (approximately \$10,000), and the remaining 50% of boat excise taxes (approximately \$35,000) from Local Receipts, for deposit into the Town's Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund, to be used in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40, § 5G.

ARTICLE 26 REPAIR/RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN PIER WHARF AND INNER HARBOR STRUCTURES

Will the Town vote to amend the appropriation of \$5,650,000.00 previously approved under Article 20 of the Town of Hingham 2021 Annual Town Meeting to expand the purpose for which said appropriation may be expended as follows: Said appropriation may be expended by the Select Board for the repair/reconstruction of the Town Pier Wharf and/or any other inner harbor structures, to address safety issues and sea level rise, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Harbor Development Committee)

COMMENT: The original Article 20 from 2021 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$5,650,000 to be expended by the Select Board to specifically reconstruct and raise the height of Town Pier Wharf. The proposed Article would broaden the scope of work beyond what the more narrowly worded Article 20 appropriation would allow.

The reconstruction and raising of Town Pier Wharf itself is part of a long-range harbor development plan the Town which began in March of 2015 with the aim of repairing the deteriorating Town-owned wharves, and protecting Hingham's shoreline and Route 3A infrastructure.

The Town started with a risk assessment and adaptation study of climate change vulnerability. Over the following two years, the Town gathered data, including a topographic and bathymetric study, visual structure assessment, and geotechnical investigations of the three harbor wharves in need of repair/reconstruction:

1. Town Pier Wharf (area by the Iron Horse Statue)
2. Whitney Wharf (where Veterans Park is located)
3. Barnes Wharf (where the Hingham Maritime Center is located).

Design criteria for these wharves was established based on sea level rise forecasts for 2030. The selected target elevation was 16.2 feet above the mean low water mark, 11 feet North Atlantic Vertical Datum ("NAVD").

In April 2018, the Harbor Development Committee ("HDC") presented the Select Board with design alternatives, which were approved several months later. Over the next two years, the Town worked with the civil engineering firm Beals + Thomas on resiliency design and permit coordination. Since the permitting process was at a different stage for each of the three wharves in need of repair/reconstruction, Beals + Thomas and the HDC recommended that the Town reconstruct one wharf at a time. Town Pier Wharf was chosen as the original focus, as it is the largest and is the most heavily used. Furthermore, it is the only publicly available boat pier in Hingham and no substantial work had been performed on Town Pier Wharf in living memory. This approach also facilitated staggered grant application opportunities, the award of which would offset total project costs.

Town Engineer J.R. Frey has diligently pursued grant opportunities, including grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs via two programs - the Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program (offering grants of up to \$3,000,000 for coastal protection projects) and the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program (offering grants of up to \$2,000,000), the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council, and the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management's Coastal Resilience Grant Program, among others. However, permitting delays ensued, resulting in the Town's decision to change consultants from the original firm. In addition, inflation since 2021 has resulted in the costs for repairing Town Pier Wharf alone to grow exponentially from the originally estimated \$5,650,000 to in excess of \$22,000,000. Therefore, the updated article asks the Town to expand the purpose for which the prior appropriation may be expended and use the previously approved funds to focus on related smaller value projects, which could be implemented sooner, given that most would not require Federal permitting. These include improvements at the Bathing Beach Parking lot at an estimated cost of \$1,100,000; \$3,744,000 for a Whitney Wharf (Veterans Park) Seawall project; and \$500,000 for the addition of a storm surge gate in the Home Meadow area, generally located off Water Street by the MBTA train tracks. This gate could help prevent storm surge into the Station Street lot and onward into the downtown to North and South Streets. This last project would require Federal permitting, but is a lower cost project. Any surplus funds could be applied to future permitting costs.

In total the work would include:

1. Raising the dunes in front of the bathing beach parking lot several feet, extending down to the bandstand area
2. Adding a modest elevation and expanse of dunes along the waterfront of the boat ramp parking lot, resulting in a potential loss of thirty parking spaces, which could be partially alleviated by providing trailer parking on the bandstand lawn along the boat ramp parking lot and reconstruction and elevation of the boat ramp parking lot between 2-4 feet
3. Replace the vertical seawall with a revetment, or stepped slope, at Veterans Park, which could serve as seating in addition to more robust protection from storms and sea level rise
4. Addition of a storm gate in an existing structure at the Route 3A right-of-way to prevent flooding to residences and the downtown area from the brine marsh (Home Meadow area) Southeast of the intersection of Water Street and the Railroad tracks

Additionally, about \$500,000 in grant money from Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) has already been awarded to support the design and permitting of resiliency projects. It is possible up to \$2,000,000 per fiscal year for the next two years could be awarded to offset construction costs.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee and Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the appropriation of \$5,650,000 previously approved under Article 20 of the Town of Hingham 2021 Annual Town Meeting to expand the purpose for which said appropriation

may be expended as follows: Said appropriation may be expended by the Select Board for the repair/reconstruction of the Town Pier Wharf and/or any other inner harbor structures, to address safety issues and sea level rise. To meet said appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said sum under M.G.L. c. 44, § 7, or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town.

**ARTICLE 27
TOWN ELECTION VOTING HOURS**

Will the Town vote to amend the General By-laws of the Town, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, as follows:

By deleting the title of Article 2 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

“TOWN MEETING AND ELECTIONS AND NOTICE THEREOF”

and by deleting the last sentence of Section 2 of Article 2 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

“At any town election held on a Saturday the polls shall be opened at eight o’clock A.M., and remain open until six o’clock P.M., and at any town election held on a day other than Saturday the polls shall be opened at eight o’clock A.M., and remain open until eight o’clock P.M.”,

or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the Town Clerk)

COMMENT: Since Hingham adopted the State Votes Act of 2022, which allows early voting in person or by mail, Town voters have overwhelmingly chosen to vote early. In the 2024 Town election, 2,205 votes were cast of which 1,510 voters or 68.4% exercised the option to vote early. Of the remaining 695 in person voters, only 110 voted, or 5% of the total voters, voted after 6:00 P.M. Given the option to vote early and the number of Hingham voters utilizing it, closing the polls at 6:00 P.M. still affords to all the opportunity to vote, while saving personnel costs of election workers and police officers, as well as the expense of keeping the Middle School and High School open.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to amend the General By-laws of the Town, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, as follows:

By deleting the title of Article 2 in its entirety and replace it with the following:

“TOWN MEETING AND ELECTIONS AND NOTICE THEREOF”

and by deleting the last sentence of Section 2 of Article 2 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

“At any town election held on a Saturday the polls shall be opened at eight o’clock A.M. and remain open until six o’clock P.M., and at any town election held on a day other than Saturday the polls shall be opened at eight o’clock A.M., and remain open until eight o’clock P.M.”

**ARTICLE 28
ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to file a petition with the General Court in accordance with Article LXXXIX, Article II, Section 8 (M.G.L.A. Const. Amend. Art. 2, Section 8), of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, as follows:

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF HINGHAM TO UTILIZE ALTERNATIVE METHODS
FOR PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other general or special law or town bylaw to the contrary, whenever the Town of Hingham is required by a general or special law or town bylaw to publish a legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation then the Town of Hingham may utilize the alternative means of publishing said legal notice as provided in Section 2 below.

SECTION 2. The Town of Hingham may publish said legal notice on the bulletin board or electronic visual display outside the Town Clerk's office and: (i) in a local newspaper, in either electronic or paper format; or (ii) on the town's website. For the purposes of this section, the term "website" shall mean the official website of the Town of Hingham that is operated and maintained by the town's municipal government.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article asks if the Town will authorize the Select Board to file a petition with the Massachusetts General Court to allow Hingham to use alternative methods to publish legal notices to Town residents. Currently there are numerous general laws, special laws, and/or local by-laws that require the Town to publish legal notices in a local print newspaper of general circulation. In order to comply, Hingham typically publishes such legal notices in the *Patriot Ledger* or the *Hingham Journal* at a cost of approximately \$18,000-\$20,000 per year. Currently, the print version of the *Patriot Ledger* is delivered to approximately 375 residents and businesses, and the print version of the *Hingham Journal* also has few subscribers in Hingham. The Town is seeking alternative methods of publication of legal notices in order to reach a larger number of Town residents. Examples of legal notices which would be published by alternative methods include notice of Town By-law approvals after Annual Town Meeting, certain liquor license notices under M.G.L. c. 138, certain procurement notices under M.G.L. c. 30, § 30B, and 149, certain Board of Health notices under Chapter 111, and certain notices from permitting boards (Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission).

Required notices to abutters of proposed actions by the Town's permitting boards (Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation Commission) will continue to be mailed directly to abutters.

If the Legislature supports this request, the Select Board proposes to post these types of legal notices on an electronic visual display outside the Town Clerk's Office, and either publish in an electronic local newspaper or on the Town's official website.

Several Massachusetts towns have petitioned the General Court and have been granted the right to use alternative means of publishing legal notices.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town authorize the Select Board to file a petition with the General Court in accordance with Article LXXXIX, Article II, Section 8 (M.G.L.A. Const. Amend. Art. 2, Section 8), of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, as follows:

**AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF HINGHAM TO UTILIZE ALTERNATIVE METHODS
FOR PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES**

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other general or special law or town by-law to the contrary, whenever the Town of Hingham is required by a general or special law or town bylaw to publish a legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation then the Town of Hingham may utilize the alternative means of publishing said legal notice as provided in Section 2 below.

SECTION 2. The Town of Hingham may publish said legal notice on the bulletin board or electronic visual

display outside the Town Clerk's office and: (i) in a local newspaper, in either electronic or paper format; or (ii) on the town's website. For the purposes of this section, the term "website" shall mean the official website of the Town of Hingham that is operated and maintained by the town's municipal government.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**ARTICLE 29
WATER: TRANSFER OF HINGHAM MUNICIPAL LIGHTING PLANT PARCEL
TO WEIR RIVER WATER SYSTEM**

Will the Town of Hingham vote to authorize, but not require, pursuant to M. G. L. c. 40, § 15A and all other applicable laws, the transfer of the care, custody, management and control of the property known as Assessor's Map 64-0-2 (as described in Certificate of Title No. 22301 registered with the Plymouth County Registry District of the Land Court) from the Municipal Light Board to the Select Board acting as the Board of Water Commissioners, upon the vote of said Boards approving said transfer, for the purpose of constructing a pump station as part of the Weir River Water System, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board acting as Board of Water Commissioners)

COMMENT: The Water System needs a booster station in order to fill the new water tank on Strawberry Hill in Hull. This will increase fire protection capacity, provide redundancy to the water system, and boost chlorine levels in the water. The Kilby Street parcel provides a good location for the proposed pump station. The booster pump will be housed in a single-story building of approximately 670 square feet, which also will contain an odor control system for the Hingham Sewer Commission. The facility will include an outdoor emergency generator.

A zoning variance is required for the construction of the building on this site, as well as approval by the Hingham Conservation Commission. Should either or both of these approvals not be granted, the transfer would not occur.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Municipal Light Board is in favor of this Article.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town of Hingham authorize, but not require, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 15A and all other applicable laws, the transfer of the care, custody, management and control of the property known as Assessor's Map 64-0-2 (as described in Certificate of Title No. 22301 registered with the Plymouth County Registry District of the Land Court) from the Municipal Light Board to the Select Board acting as the Board of Water Commissioners, upon the vote of said Boards approving said transfer, for the purpose of constructing a pump station as part of the Weir River Water System.

**ARTICLE 30
WEIR RIVER WATER SYSTEM: AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW FOR WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Will the Town vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to pay for the costs of designing, engineering, constructing, reconstructing, repairing and/or improving the Weir River Water System, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, or act on anything relating thereto? (Inserted at the request of the Board of Water Commissioners)

COMMENT: When the Town purchased the Weir River Water System (WRWS) in 2020, it committed to an ongoing annual program of capital improvements to the system's aging infrastructure. This capital spending request would enable additional upgrades to the system, including the replacement of water mains, the addition of new fire hydrants, system repairs, and upgrades and other improvements targeting improved water quality, reductions in "lost water," and other operational improvements. FY26 projects will include main replacements along the Summer Street/Route 3A corridor, as well as on Scotland Street. Work will also include maintenance supporting the system's flushing capabilities.

As an Enterprise Fund, WRWS funds such projects (and related debt service) out of WRWS cash flows received from water customer usage charges. As such, this project will not affect the Town's tax levy. Such expenditures must be approved by the Board of Water Commissioners, the Select Board, and by Annual Town Meeting.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate an amount up to \$3,000,000 for the costs of designing, engineering, constructing, reconstructing, repairing and/or improving the Weir River Water System, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto. To meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. c. 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town.

**ARTICLE 31
WEIR RIVER WATER SYSTEM: CELL TOWER LEASE AT WATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Will the Town authorize, but not require, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 3 and all other applicable laws the Select Board acting as the Board of Water Commissioners to renew and/or enter into a new lease for a portion of the Weir River Water System Treatment Plant site located at 900 Main Street (Assessor Map 158 - 36), Hingham, MA, for the purpose of continuing to locate a cell tower and appurtenances thereto, subject to all applicable zoning and permitting requirements and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems in the best interest of the Town, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: Currently there is an existing lease for a portion of land which the Town owns at the Weir River Water System Treatment Plant at 900 Main Street, Hingham, MA, utilized for a cell tower and appurtenances. The land area currently being leased is approximately a 4,900-square foot parcel, with a surrounding security fence. This existing lease is between the Town of Hingham and SBA Monarch Towers LLC of Bridgeport, CT, the owner of the tower and appurtenances. This lease was assigned to the Town of Hingham as part of the transaction transferring ownership of the land at 900 Main Street, Hingham, from The Aquarion Water Company to the Town of Hingham in July 2020. This lease will expire on August 31, 2025.

The cell tower utilizing this land was installed and permitted for use in late 2007. The vertical height of the tower is approximately 130-feet with a diameter at its base of approximately 4-feet. This Tower is used by three main cell phone carriers: Verizon, AT&T, and T-Mobile. Each rent space on this tower from the-owner to provide Hingham residents with cell phone service. Police and Fire also utilize this tower for emergency communications. The land presently being utilized at 900 Main Street, Hingham facilitates the equipment located on this site to provide the required functionality in a minimally intrusive manner.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town authorize, but not require, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 3 and all other applicable laws, the Select Board acting as the Board of Water Commissioners to renew and/or enter into a new lease for a portion of the Weir River Water System Treatment Plant site located at 900 Main Street (Assessor Map 158 - 36), Hingham, MA, for the purpose of continuing to locate a cell tower and appurtenances thereto, subject to all applicable zoning and permitting requirements and on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems in the best interest of the Town.

**ARTICLE 32
SCHOOL: HIGH SCHOOL TURF FIELD REPLACEMENT**

Will the Town vote to authorize, but not require, the Hingham School Committee to replace the turf field at Hingham High School at 17 Union Street, Hingham, MA and will the Town raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds a sum of money for said turf field replacement, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: The Turf Field at Hingham High School was originally installed in 2013 and now needs replacement. The purpose of this Article is to authorize the Hingham School Committee to replace the existing synthetic turf field at Hingham High School. This project will require the Town to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer the funds to do so. The total cost of this replacement will be \$880,000. The School Department revolving fund will provide \$250,000 of the replacement cost. This Article would authorize the Town to transfer from the Unassigned Fund Balance \$630,000 for said turf field replacement

The need for this replacement is driven by three factors.

- The field was installed in 2013. It is used on a regular schedule, approximately 100 games per year, between multiple Hingham High School interscholastic sports teams competing with schools from other districts. The field is severely worn and close to being unplayable
- Impact testing on the field surface was completed by an independent, third-party testing firm on September 11, 2024. Test methods included The American Society for Testing and Materials ASTM F355 Standard Test Method for Impact Attenuation of Playing Surface Systems and the ASTM F 1936 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Turf Playing Systems as Measured in the Field. These tests measure the magnitude of an object's acceleration during impact to the acceleration of gravity from a height of 2 feet (the hardness of the surface). The measurement is expressed in the G-max Value. The NFL's standard for synthetic turf fields is a G-Max range of 100 to 165. Fields with a G-max exceeding 200 are considered above an unsafe threshold, above which head injuries can occur. Hingham High School's Field had a G-max average of 170 with one area at the South End Lacrosse Goal having a G-max of 242.4.
- On September 10, 2024, a third-party testing company inspected and measured the depth of the field's surface In Fill material and the exposure of the monofilaments above the In Fill. These two conditions are integral to the G-max value. The In Fill depth varied from 3/8 inches to 1 1/8 inches below the specification of 1 7/8 inches necessary to absorb impact and protect the monofilaments from damage. A visual inspection of the monofilament material showed damage that limits its ability to hold additional In Fill in place, ruling out the option of "top dressing" the existing In Fill. Replacement of the synthetic turf system is required to restore G-Max values to safe levels and the overall playability of the field.

The contractor's quote for \$880,000 to replace the turf field includes removal and disposal of existing synthetic turf system and the installation of the replacement synthetic turf system. The contractor has provided the turf manufacturer's statement regarding its supply chain's compliance with not using PFAS based materials listed on California's Proposition 65 regulations or identified as target analytes in USEPA Methods or using fluoropolymer-based processing agents. Additionally, the manufacturer has provided third party EPA Method sample testing of its material. This laboratory test did not detect chemicals currently listed on California's Proposition 65 regulations or identified as target analytes in USEPA Methods for analysis.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to authorize, but not require, the Hingham School Committee to replace the turf field at Hingham High School at 17 Union Street, Hingham, MA and for the Town to transfer \$630,000 from Unassigned Fund Balance to pay a portion of the cost for said turf field replacement.

ARTICLE 33 SCHOOL: 2025 SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Will the Town authorize, but not require, the expansion of the role of the 2017 School Building Committee, or such other committee as may be designated by Town Meeting, to pursue, oversee and execute the replacement of roofs and the update of the heating, ventilation and Air Conditioning System with respect to Hingham High School and

the replacement of the roof at Plymouth River Elementary School and South Elementary School pursuant to and in conjunction with Hingham's invitation into the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Grant Program, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: Although the MSBA does not require prior existence or new formation of a school building committee for acceptance into the Accelerated Repair Grant Program, such a committee could provide valuable expertise and the benefit of shared learning during a lengthy repair and retrofit process that would materially extend the useful life of three of Hingham's largest municipal buildings. This Article will authorize a building committee to act in conjunction with the School Committee for the purpose of overseeing the expenditure of funds on feasibility studies, schematic designs, and any other proposed projects for those schools in the process.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town (1) establish the "2025 School Building Committee", which committee shall consist of seven (7) voting citizens of the Town of Hingham appointed as follows: two members by the Moderator, two members by the Select Board, and three members by the School Committee, with the chair of said committee to be jointly designated by the appointing authorities; and (2) authorize said committee to do everything necessary and appropriate to study, prepare, monitor, advise, and complete a feasibility study, schematic design, and other related projects for the replacement of the roof and an updated HVAC system at Hingham High School as well as the replacement of the roofs at Plymouth River Elementary School and South Elementary School, including, but not limited to, the employment of professionals and the payment of any and all other costs incidental and related thereto as necessary to carry out said projects subject to approved and available appropriations.

ARTICLE 34 SCHOOL: HIGH SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the 2017 Hingham School Building Committee, or such other committee as may be designated by Town Meeting, for the purpose of paying feasibility study and schematic design costs for a potential roof replacement and heat pump conversion project, at Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, Hingham, MA, which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the Town has applied for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"). The Town acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town.
(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: This Article requests funding from non-excluded debt of \$3,310,000 for the High School roof project consisting of:

1. \$750,000 for roof schematic design,
2. \$1,896,548 for HVAC/heat pump schematic design,
3. \$270,000 for solar schematic design,
4. \$233,324 for Owner's Project Manager ("OPM") costs, and
5. \$160,128 for contingency costs

The High School roof area is approximately 169,000 square feet. The building was constructed in 1955. There was an addition and extensive renovation in 1998, at which point the roof was replaced, now making the roof 27 years old. Currently, there are 24 sections of the roof at various elevations. These are designated as Roof-1 through Roof-24. Out of the 24 sections, 22 sections are flat.

Per the Habeeb & Associates Architects November 2022 study, the various roofs have ponding (some excessively), sponginess at many locations (indicating wet insulation), evident seam damage (coming apart), lots of patching, failing brickwork, cracked sealants, and even a few holes. Some roofs have other specific issues unto themselves. All this damage has caused excessive leaking into the school itself, including into the server room. Of the 24 roofs, Habeeb has stated that 22 of them have membrane roofing that have passed their 20-year warranty period, have reached the end of their 25-year life expectancy, and should be replaced. The two roofs not included here are Roof-14 and Roof-21, which are only 300 square feet each. Since 2023, there have been over 20 repairs with a cost of more than \$130,000. The roof is considered “failed” as it’s not doing the basic job of keeping water out of the school and is negatively impacting the activities in the school, especially when there is heavy rain or snow.

Installed in 1999, the current HVAC system at the High School has thirteen standard rooftop units (RTUs), three of which are air conditioning units (ACUs). A report prepared by New England Engineering in conjunction with Stephen J. Wessling Architects in January 2019 stated that most of the HVAC equipment that was currently in use was past its service life and must be replaced. The report was written when the equipment had been in use for 19 years. It has now been in use for 26 years. The report went on to say: “Repair costs will continue to rise as everything keeps breaking down.” This is exactly what has transpired. The Hingham Schools’ Director of Facilities must continuously either bring in their outside vendors or make repairs themselves. Repairs to the HVAC and boilers since 2023 is over \$180,000. The heat pumps assume the functionality of the boilers, and as such, the boilers will be mothballed and only used for back-up.

As described in the Article, the School Committee is applying to the MSBA for a construction grant. More specifically, they are applying to the MSBA Accelerated Repair Program (ARP). Per MSBA: “The ARP focuses on the preservation of existing assets by performing energy-efficient and cost-saving upgrades, which will result in direct operational savings for school districts.” They go on to say: “To facilitate schools moving toward Massachusetts’ goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, the MSBA is introducing heat pump conversion projects in 2025.”

As such, in conjunction with the roof replacement, the current standard HVAC system will be replaced with the more modern and efficient heat pump system. The request is for a combined system, replacing the typical RTU with an RTU that has an embedded heat pump for heating and cooling within the RTU itself. Having said that, the heat pumps can be placed either inside or outside the RTU. The design team would ultimately determine what the most beneficial system would be. Engineers who have been consulted so far state that an RTU with a heat pump embedded inside or outside the unit has no real cost difference.

Commencing in January 2025, the ARP will have a biennial Statement of Interest (SOI) opening every two years. There is a risk, if Hingham doesn’t get into the pipeline with this request, the new heat pump project would be significantly delayed due to a provision regarding the age of the High School’s windows and doors. If the windows are more than 30-years old (they were installed with the 1998 renovation), they would need to be replaced before the heat pumps could be installed. Doing the roof and heat pumps together makes sense as to not have to cut into the roof if it were completed before the installation of the new HVAC/heat pumps.

Another aspect of this project is the installation of new solar panels. The assumption at this time is for 100,000 of the 169,000 square feet to be covered. It should also be noted that the MSBA requires evaluation of solar readiness to qualify for the MSBA ARP, but does not require the actual installation of solar. This request is being made in keeping with the Climate Action Plan of the Town. If the standard HVAC system at the High School is replaced with more modern heat pump technology, the eventual addition of solar panels to the roof would have the following effects: powered by electricity, heat pumps will increase the school’s electricity usage and costs which can be offset with the installation of solar panels. Having solar panels on site and generating power during the daytime when the building is in use would allow the High School to use that power itself “before the meter” thus incurring no charge for the electricity generated nor for transmission and thus greatly lowering electricity costs during those hours. The estimated savings by the School Department is 30-50% of their electricity costs, which were \$228,000 in 2024. Local generation of non-carbon emitting power is consistent with the Town’s Climate Action Plan, as is the retrofitting of the High School (the largest municipal building in Hingham) to electric technologies. The solar aspect of this project should be eligible for federal, state, and local tax incentives.

For large projects of this size, it is customary to hire a project manager. According to Habeeb & Associates, the cost of an OPM during the design phase is estimated at 8.0% of total design cost (\$750,000 + \$270,000 + \$1,896,548 = \$2,916,548 x 8.0% = \$233,324).

Contingency costs, including buffers for early and conceptual estimates and internal cost related to owner-designer-OPM coordination are estimated at \$160,128. This is a School Department internal estimate at approximately 5% of total costs.

A vote for the feasibility study and schematic design is just the first step, so it is important to consider the potential costs of the project in its entirety. Possible reimbursement from the MSBA is in the 30-40% range, but the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need. There is no guarantee Hingham will receive MSBA funding. In the event of no reimbursement, the School Committee would request the full amount of the project be funded by the Town.

The current estimated construction costs are:

- \$14,000,000 Roof
- \$21,799,400 HVAC
- \$4,500,000 Solar

The School Department, based on consultations with other School Superintendents and School Business Managers, does not expect that the MSBA process (project approval, assignment of OPM, assignment of designer by MSBA, prepare documents and then seek approval by MSBA board, send contract out to bid, etc.) will be complete by Annual Town Meeting (ATM) 2026. As such, it is anticipated that the School Committee will request funding, through excluded debt, at ATM 2027 or a Special Town Meeting if necessary.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town of Hingham appropriate up to the amount of \$3,310,000 for the purpose of paying the costs of a feasibility study and schematic design for a potential roof replacement and heat pump conversion project, at Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, Hingham, MA, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the Town of Hingham has applied for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended under the direction of the 2025 School Building Committee. To meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. Chapter 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The Town of Hingham acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town of Hingham incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town; and that, if invited to collaborate with the MSBA on the proposed repair project, the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the Town and the MSBA.

ARTICLE 35 SCHOOL: PLYMOUTH RIVER SCHOOL ROOF SCHEMATIC DESIGN

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the 2017 Hingham School Building Committee, or such other committee as may be designated by Town Meeting, for the purpose of paying feasibility study and schematic design costs for a potential roof replacement at Plymouth River School, 200 High Street, Hingham, MA, which proposed repair project would

materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the Town has applied for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The Town acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town.

(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: The Article requests funding of up to \$370,000 for a schematic design study in preparation for an anticipated roof replacement at the Plymouth River School. The request is based on a November 2022 study and estimates performed by Habeeb & Associates, an architectural firm with expertise in school construction.

Plymouth River School was constructed in 1968. The school roof area is approximately 76,000 square feet. Approximately 13,000 square feet of the roof was replaced between 1998 and 2001. The Habeeb study found that the overall roof has experienced frequent leaks and repairs, with individual roof sections in "mixed" condition. It also noted that various hardware elements of the overall roof (i.e.-gutters, drains etc.) needed repair or replacement. It noted still further that that the roof's warranties had "likely" expired.

The estimated total cost of the eventual construction phase of this project (including soft costs) would approximate \$6,100,000. The project and all associated costs will be overseen by the 2025 Hingham School Building Committee, which will be named by representatives of the Town Moderator, the Select Board and the School Committee. It is expected (based on earlier projects) that 30-40% of the costs (except any potential solar installation costs) might be eligible for reimbursement via Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) grants. However, MSBA funding is not assured. The application for MSBA funding for the schematic design phase of the project has been submitted and Hingham Public Schools (HPS) are hopeful that the project might be approvable by MSBA by the fourth quarter of 2025. If the Town's application is accepted by MSBA, an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) will be selected by the MSBA (presumably by May 2026). The detailed schematic designs would be developed, then submitted to MSBA for approval (presumably by November 2026). Detailed construction designs would then be developed, with an estimated design completion date of July 2027. At this time, HPS would formalize a project funding agreement (PSA) with MSBA. Construction is expected to take place during the summers of 2028 and 2029.

MSBA rules require that the project be submitted to a Town Meeting vote. Depending on the timeline of the MSBA approval process, it is expected that the construction phase of the project would be submitted to a vote at Hingham's 2026 or 2027 Annual Town Meeting, or (if necessary) at a Special Town Meeting to be scheduled at a future date.

The Advisory Committee and Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town of Hingham appropriate up to the amount of \$370,000 for the purpose of paying the costs of a feasibility study and schematic design costs for a potential roof replacement, at Plymouth River Elementary School, 200 High Street, Hingham, MA, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the Project), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the Town of Hingham has applied for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), said amount to be expended under the direction of the 2025 Hingham School Building Committee. To meet this appropriation, the Town will transfer from the Unassigned Fund Balance an amount up to \$370,000. At a later date, the Town may authorize a borrowing to finance construction of the project. In that event, the Town may elect to reimburse the funds appropriated by this vote to pay preliminary expenses of the project with proceeds of bonds or notes that may be authorized by the Town to pay costs of completing the project. The Town of Hingham acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town of Hingham incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town.

ARTICLE 36
SCHOOL: SOUTH SCHOOL ROOF SCHEMATIC DESIGN

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the 2017 Hingham School Building Committee, or such other committee as may be designated by Town Meeting, for the purpose of paying feasibility study and schematic design costs for a potential roof replacement, at South Elementary School, 831 Main Street, Hingham, MA, which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the Town has applied for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The Town acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town.

(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: This Article requests funding of \$320,000 for a schematic design study of an anticipated roof replacement at the South Elementary School. The expenditure is based on a December 2022 study and on estimate performed by Habeeb & Associates, an architectural firm with expertise in school construction.

South Elementary School was constructed in 1948. The school roof is approximately 57,000 square feet. It underwent an extensive expansion and renovation in 1998. The 1998 renovation included replacement of the school's roof. Habeeb found that most of the 13 sections of the roof (and the associated drainage fixtures) needed repair, having passed the 20-year warranty of the system. It further noted that all roof sections are reaching the end of their standard 25-year life expectancy and thus should be replaced in the near to intermediate term.

The estimated total cost of eventual construction (including soft costs) would approximate \$5.4 million. The project and all associated costs will be overseen by the 2025 Hingham School Building Committee, which will be named by the Town Moderator, the Select Board and the School Committee. It is expected (based on earlier projects) that 30-40% of the costs (except any potential solar costs) might be eligible for reimbursement via MSBA grants. However, MSBA funding is not assured. The application for MSBA funding for the schematic design phase has been submitted and Hingham Public Schools (HPS) are hopeful that the project might be approvable by MSBA by the fourth quarter of 2025. If the Town's application is accepted by MSBA, an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) will be selected by the MSBA (presumably by May 2026). The detailed schematic designs would be developed, then submitted to MSBA for approval (presumably by November 2026). Detailed construction designs would then be developed, with an estimated design completion date of July 2027. At this time, HPS would formalize a project funding agreement (PSA) with MSBA. Construction is expected to take place during the summers of 2028 and 2029.

MSBA rules require that the project be submitted to a Town Meeting vote. Depending on the timeline of the MSBA approval process, it is expected that the construction phase of the project would be submitted to a vote at Hingham's 2026 or 2027 Annual Town Meeting, or (if necessary) at a Special Town Meeting to be scheduled at a future date.

The Advisory Committee and Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town of Hingham appropriate up to the amount of \$320,000 for the purpose of paying the costs of a feasibility study and schematic design costs for a potential roof replacement, at South Elementary School, 831 Main Street, Hingham, MA, which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the Town of Hingham has applied for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), said amount to be expended under the direction of a newly-formed 2025 School Building Committee. To meet this appropriation, the Town, will transfer from the Unassigned Fund Balance an amount up to \$320,000. At a later date, the Town may authorize a borrowing to finance construction of the project. In that event, the Town may elect to reimburse the funds appropriated by this vote to pay preliminary expenses of the project with proceeds of bonds or notes that may be authorized by the Town to pay costs of completing the project. The Town of Hingham acknowledges that the MSBA's

grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town of Hingham incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be for the sole responsibility of the town.

**ARTICLE 37
SCHOOL: EXTRAORDINARY CAPITAL REPAIRS FUND**

Will the Town vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money including the transfer of any remaining funds in the account established under Article 24 of the 2019 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting to be expended under the direction of the School Committee for the purpose of funding Roof and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) rooftop unit system Extraordinary Maintenance Capital needs for Hingham High School, Plymouth River Elementary School, and/or South Elementary School, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the School Committee)

COMMENT: This Article asks if the Town will transfer \$309,198 from available funds and transfer \$190,802 from Foster Elementary School Extraordinary Maintenance Capital needs account (the remaining balance in that fund) established in Article 24 at the 2019 Hingham Annual Town Meeting in order to fund an Extraordinary Maintenance Capital account to cover costs of repairs that may be needed to the roofs or HVAC systems at Hingham High School, Plymouth River School and South School in the period before comprehensive repairs or replacement of the roofs for each school and a new HVAC system for the High School are completed.

As noted above, the Town has funded such an Extraordinary Maintenance Capital account before, specifically to cover large repair costs at the former Foster School were they to be needed before the new school was built. In 2019 \$350,000 was appropriated for that purpose and \$160,000 was used between 2019 and 2025, with the balance as noted above now available for transfer for this new purpose.

The purpose of this proposed account is to have funds available in the event emergency repairs to the roofs and HVAC systems are needed to maintain these school buildings as safe and appropriate learning spaces for the Town's students. The monies in this account will be applied only to immediately needed repairs to either roofs or to HVAC systems at the three schools when the current systems are not operating to their function.

The School Committee is submitting applications to the Accelerated Repair Program (ARP) of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for the replacement of the High School roof and for replacement of the High School HVAC system with conversion to heat pump technology. If accepted into that program, the MSBA will be involved in the design, project management, and construction of these replacements and improvements and is expected to reimburse the Town between 30-40% of construction costs.

Applications for roof replacement or repairs are also being submitted to the MSBA's ARP for the Plymouth River School and for the South School. If accepted into the program, the MSBA process will involve inspection of these roofs and lead to the MSBA recommending and contracting to reimburse 30-40% of construction costs for a full replacement or a major repair to parts of the roof for each building.

The School Committee expects to know by December of 2025 whether these projects have been accepted to the MSBA's ARP and thus will have a better understanding of the timeline for completion of these projects. Based on the urgent repairs that were required to the roofs and HVAC systems of these three schools during the last two years, the School Committee anticipates that urgent repairs may be required to keep these schools functioning safely and at the temperatures required by the State before these replacement/repair projects are completed. The Extraordinary Maintenance Capital Repairs account being created with this Article is being funded with \$500,000.

The Advisory Committee voted 12-1 in favor and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate and transfer \$309,198 from Unassigned Fund Balance and appropriate and transfer the remaining balance (\$190,802) from the existing Foster Elementary School

Extraordinary Maintenance Capital account which was established under Article 24 of the 2019 Town of Hingham Annual Town Meeting to a new Extraordinary Maintenance Capital account for Hingham High School, Plymouth River Elementary School and/or South Elementary School to be established and available for expenditure under the direction of the School Committee for the purpose of funding Roof and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) rooftop unit system capital needs for Hingham High School, Plymouth River Elementary School, and/or South Elementary School.

**ARTICLE 38
DIGITIZATION OF TOWN OF HINGHAM MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS**

Will the Town raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the Select Board for the digitization of Town of Hingham municipal government records, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article seeks to launch the first phase of an iterative approach to digitizing all of Hingham’s municipal records, starting with the Historic Preservation Department. Due to manageable record volume and recent reorganization, the Historic Preservation Department is well-positioned to begin this pilot. If approved, a reputable vendor (selected per all applicable procurement laws, including M.G.L. c. 30B) will scan and index the department’s records offsite for over one and one-half to two months. Any needed documents during this period can be retrieved within four hours via on-demand scanning and electronic upload.

Once scanning is complete, records will be accessible through cloud-based software. A public-access version of the software will also be provided through the Town’s website. The total estimated cost for this first phase is approximately \$40,000. Subsequent phases will be proposed for Town votes in future fiscal years, with the ultimate goal of digitizing all Town records to enhance public access, safeguard against disasters (e.g., flood or fire), and streamline daily operations.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate and transfer from Unassigned Fund Balance an amount not to exceed \$40,000 to be expended under the direction of the Select Board for expenses associated with digitizing Town records, beginning with the Historic Preservation Department, including the purchase or licensing of software to facilitate scanning, indexing, and public access of such records.

**ARTICLE 39
SPECIALIZED ENERGY CODE**

Will the Town vote to amend the General By-laws of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, by adding a new Article at the end of said General By-laws to adopt the “Specialized Energy Code” for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, pursuant to the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, and including future editions, amendments or modifications thereto, as follows:

Article ____
SPECIALIZED ENERGY CODE

SECTION 1: Definitions

International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) - The International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is a building energy code created by the International Code Council. It is a model code adopted by many state and municipal governments in the United States for the establishment of minimum design and construction requirements for energy efficiency, and is updated on a three-year cycle. The baseline energy conservation requirements of the MA State Building Code are the IECC with Massachusetts amendments, as approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards and published in state regulations as part of 780 CMR.

Specialized Energy Code - Codified by the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, the Specialized Energy Code is an appendix to the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code, based on further amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the climate impacts of buildings built to this code.

Stretch Energy Code - Codified by the combination of 225 CMR 22 and 23, not including Appendices RC and CC, the Stretch Energy Code is a comprehensive set of amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) seeking to achieve all lifecycle cost-effective energy efficiency in accordance with the Green Communities Act of 2008, as well as to reduce the climate impacts of buildings built to this code.

SECTION 2: Purpose

The purpose of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC is to provide a more energy efficient and low emissions alternative to the Stretch Energy Code or the base Massachusetts Energy Code, applicable to the relevant sections of the building code for both new construction and existing buildings.

SECTION 3: Applicability

This energy code applies to residential and commercial buildings.

SECTION 4: Specialized Energy Code

The Specialized Energy Code, as codified by the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, and including any future editions, amendments, or modifications, is herein incorporated by reference into this By-law.

SECTION 5: Enforcement

The Specialized Energy Code adopted hereunder shall be enforced by the Town of Hingham Building Commissioner.

or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Climate Action Commission)

COMMENT: This Article asks if the Town will amend the General By-laws of the Town by adding a new article accepting the most recent Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (Mass DOER) opt-in regulations defining energy codes for construction of new buildings within the Town of Hingham in order to increase energy efficiency and help the Town make progress towards reducing carbon emissions.

In 2018, the Town adopted the Stretch Energy Code (Stretch Code) which calls for increased energy efficiency in the construction of new buildings, additions, renovations, and changes in use within Hingham. If adopted, this Article will retain the current requirements of the Stretch Code and add the requirements of the Specialized Code (the Code) for new residential and commercial construction.

The Code provides two paths to compliance for new residential and commercial buildings. The all-electric path with electric heating, cooling and appliances has no additional requirements above the current Stretch Code. The mixed-fuel path allows for initial fossil fuel use, but requires pre-wiring for eventual conversion to electric technologies, increased energy efficiency and, where feasible for the site, installation of renewable energy generation (typically solar panels) aimed at offsetting the carbon emissions from fossil fuel use. There are additional requirements for larger buildings: for homes greater than 4,000 sq. ft. renewable generation is required to offset all the energy use of the home and for multi-family residential buildings greater than 12,000 sq. the required Passive House standard prioritizes a well-insulated building envelope, natural light and solar gain, and highly efficient heating and cooling systems. The specific details of the Code can be found at Mass DOER website, Code of Massachusetts Regulations 225, Energy Codes.

Similar to the Stretch Code, the Code is performance based, requiring residential and commercial construction to meet a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) rating target, based on the building's total expected energy use and overall efficiency rather than mandating the use of any specific building element (e.g. windows, insulation). Thus builders will continue to have choices in the design and materials used in construction in order to reach the targeted HERS rating, as well as the choice of the all-electric or mixed-fuel path.

At the 2021 Town Meeting, the Town voted to develop a Climate Action Plan “which will evaluate a wide range of carbon emission reduction strategies and propose measures within the Town of Hingham to achieve a zero sum of carbon emissions produced and taken out of the atmosphere (“net zero”) by the year 2040 or another target deemed feasible.” Hingham’s Climate Action Plan, adopted in 2023, found that heating and cooling of buildings contributes 69% of the Town’s current carbon emissions and recommended adoption of the Specialized Code.

Some have concerns that adoption of the Code will add complexity and possible increased costs which could impact Hingham’s attractiveness for commercial construction during the period before our neighbor towns adopt the Code. Others see the Code as providing protection for the new residential or commercial building owner against the considerably higher costs of retro-fitting a mixed-fuel building for future conversion to all electric technologies. Also, Hingham’s electricity is supplied by our own Municipal Light Plant, resulting in electricity rates that are considerably lower than our neighboring towns who are served by investor-owned utilities, making all-electric construction attractive.

To date, 48 Massachusetts cities and towns have adopted the Code, including seven of our 19 benchmark communities.

All-electric buildings are now cost effective because the heat pump technology (air source or ground source heat pumps) provides both heating and cooling with one system, does not require the cost of natural gas hook-up, and is highly efficient to operate. The Building Committees for both of the new municipal buildings (the new Foster School and Public Safety Facility) opted for electric heating/cooling through heat pump technologies because they were the most economical option considering initial capital expense, ongoing operating cost, and total cost of ownership over the life of the buildings. Mass DOER data show that most commercial buildings are less costly to build to the Code standard and that all commercial building types are less costly to operate when built to the Code standard. A 2024 review of residential and commercial buildings already constructed in Massachusetts to the net zero standard found that construction costs were increased by less than 1% in most cases and up to 2.5% for some buildings compared to the Stretch Code standard.

Adopting the By-law to accept the Code is a prerequisite for the Town becoming a Climate Leader Community with the Mass DOER and enhances Hingham’s opportunities for grant funding from DOER for projects to design and retrofit our municipal buildings to help reach the Commonwealth’s and the Town’s decarbonization goals.

If adopted, the Specialized Code will be enforced by the Building Department in reviewing plans for and permitting of new construction in the Town, effective January 1, 2026.

The Advisory Committee voted 12-1 in favor and the Select Board voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the General By-laws of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 13, 1939, as heretofore amended, by adding a new Article at the end of said General By-laws to adopt the “Specialized Energy Code” for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, pursuant to the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, and including future editions, amendments or modifications thereto, as follows:

**Article _____
SPECIALIZED ENERGY CODE**

SECTION 1: Definitions

International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) - The International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is a building energy code created by the International Code Council. It is a model code adopted by many state and municipal governments in the United States for the establishment of minimum design and construction requirements for energy efficiency, and is updated on a three-year cycle. The baseline energy conservation requirements of the MA State Building Code are the IECC with Massachusetts amendments, as approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards and published in state regulations as part of 780 CMR. Specialized Energy Code - Codified by the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, the Specialized Energy Code is an appendix to the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code, based on

further amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the climate impacts of buildings built to this code.

Stretch Energy Code - Codified by the combination of 225 CMR 22 and 23, not including Appendices RC and CC, the Stretch Energy Code is a comprehensive set of amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) seeking to achieve all lifecycle cost-effective energy efficiency in accordance with the Green Communities Act of 2008, as well as to reduce the climate impacts of buildings built to this code.

SECTION 2: Purpose

The purpose of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC is to provide a more energy efficient and low emissions alternative to the Stretch Energy Code or the base Massachusetts Energy Code, applicable to the relevant sections of the building code for both new construction and existing buildings.

SECTION 3: Applicability

This energy code applies to residential and commercial buildings.

SECTION 4: Specialized Energy Code

The Specialized Energy Code, as codified by the entirety of 225 CMR 22 and 23, including Appendices RC and CC, and including any future editions, amendments, or modifications, is herein incorporated by reference into this By-law.

SECTION 5: Enforcement

The Specialized Energy Code adopted hereunder shall be enforced by the Town of Hingham Building Commissioner.

SECTION 6: Effective Date

This By-law shall become effective January 1, 2026.

ARTICLE 40

CITIZEN PETITION: HOME RULE PETITION: LIQUOR LICENSE TO HINGHAM GAS

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to file a petition with the General Court in accordance with Article LXXXIC, Article II, Section 8 (M.G.L.A. Const. Amend. Art. 2, Section 8), of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) Notwithstanding section 17 of chapter 138 of the General Laws, the licensing authority of the Town of Hingham, Massachusetts may grant 1 additional license for the sale of all alcoholic beverages not be drunk on the premises under section 15 of said chapter 138 to MERHEJ AND SON, INC. dba HINGHAM GAS, located at 19 Whiting Street in the Town of Hingham. The license shall be subject to all of said chapter 138, except said section 17.

(b) The licensing authority shall not approve the transfer of a license granted pursuant to this act to any other location, but it may grant the license to a new applicant at the same location if the applicant files with the licensing authority a letter from the department of revenue and a letter from the Department of Unemployment assistance indicating that the license is in good standing with those departments and that all applicable taxes, fees and contributions have been paid.

(c) If a licensee terminates or fails to renew a license granted under this section or any such license is cancelled, revoked, or no longer in use, it shall be returned physically, with all of the legal rights, privileges and restrictions pertaining thereto, to the licensing authority which may, within 3 years after such return, then grant the license to a new applicant at the same location under the same conditions as specified in this section, otherwise such license shall dissolve.

(d) The license granted under this act shall be issued within one year after the effective date of this act: provided, however, that if the license is originally granted within that time period, it may be granted to a new applicant under subsections (b) and (c) thereafter.

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect upon its passage,

or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted at the request of registered voter William Brett and others)

COMMENT: This Article would authorize the Select Board to grant a new license for the retail sale of alcoholic beverages not to be consumed on the premises to the Hingham Gas store on Whiting Street. The granting of liquor licenses is regulated under a state law that combines oversight between the state Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission and a Local Licensing Authority (LLA) in each municipality – which in Hingham is the Select Board. Each municipality is authorized to issue a specific number of liquor licenses to applicants based on the population of that municipality. When all of the authorized liquor licenses are distributed to approved businesses, a new applicant must either 1) wait for one of the existing license holders to release their license, 2) a new population census to show population growth that leads to authorization of new licenses in the town, or 3) seeking special legislation.

This Article is a first step in pursuing the third option, special legislation. If approved by Town Meeting, the state legislature would need to also approve the new license.

While the Advisory Committee is eager to support the growth and success of local businesses, there is not an apparent or uncommon circumstance that warrants an exception to a specific legal process under state and local rules.

An example of a situation that may call for special action would be the opening of a new development that brings new residents into a particular area of town or generates new traffic patterns. In this circumstance there is no such new driver or evidence of particular need that necessitates breaking the traditional, well established license granting process.

The Advisory Committee and the Select Board voted unanimously to take No Action.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town take No Action on this Article.

**ARTICLE 41
AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: UPDATE OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT REGULATIONS**

Will the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, in order to update Section V-K of the Zoning By-Law for consistency with the provisions of Sections 1A and 3A of the Zoning Act as modified by § 8 of Chapter 150 of Acts of 2024 (the Affordable Homes Act) and any regulation promulgated pursuant thereto, by replacing Section V-K in its entirety as follows:

V-K Accessory Dwelling Unit

1. Purpose
The purpose of permitting dwelling units accessory to single-family dwellings is to:
 - a. Provide accessory dwelling units without significantly adding to the number of buildings in the Town or substantially altering the appearance of the residential property in order to protect the stability, property values and residential character of the surrounding neighborhood.
 - b. Provide housing units for persons with diverse housing needs including, without limitation, persons with mental and physical disabilities.

- c. Enable the Town to monitor accessory dwelling unit construction for code compliance.

2. Definitions

- a. An “accessory dwelling unit” is a second self-contained dwelling unit within a single-family dwelling or a detached structure accessory thereto, which second dwelling unit is subordinate in size to the principal dwelling and otherwise complies with the provisions of this Section V-K.
- b. A “principal dwelling” for the purposes of this Section V-K is a single-family dwelling exclusive of the area that constitutes the accessory dwelling unit.
- c. A single-family dwelling with an accessory dwelling unit shall not be deemed to be a two-family dwelling.

3. Eligibility Requirements

The Building Commissioner may only issue a building permit for an accessory dwelling unit that meets the following minimum eligibility requirements:

- a. The area of the lot on which the existing single-family dwelling is located shall not be less than five thousand (5,000) square feet for an accessory dwelling unit within the principal structure or ten thousand (10,000) square feet for an accessory dwelling unit in a detached accessory structure. In the case of new construction, the area of the lot shall comply with the applicable minimum lot size for the single-family zoning district in which the single-family dwelling is proposed.
- b. The application must be accompanied by written confirmation from either (i) the Board of Health that the requirements of the Massachusetts Title 5 septic system regulations and the Hingham Board of Health Supplemental Rules and Regulations for septic systems have been or can be met or (ii) the Sewer Department that there exists available capacity in the applicable sewer district, in either case, to support the total number of bedrooms proposed for the lot inclusive of the accessory dwelling unit.
- c. Only one accessory dwelling unit shall be permitted per lot so that the total number of dwelling units per lot shall not exceed two.
- d. In Residence District D and in Business Districts A and B, accessory dwelling units are only permitted in connection with preexisting nonconforming single-family dwellings.

4. Dimensional and Design Requirements Applicable to All Accessory Dwelling Units

An accessory dwelling unit shall meet the following dimensional and design requirements:

- a. The architectural character of a single-family dwelling shall be maintained.
- b. All stairways accessing an accessory dwelling unit above the ground floor of a single-family dwelling or detached accessory structure shall be enclosed within the exterior walls of the single-family dwelling; provided, however, that the Building Commissioner may permit an unenclosed stairway on the rear of a structure to access an accessory dwelling unit located on the second floor of an existing building.
- c. The maximum area of an accessory dwelling unit shall be the lesser of 900 square feet or 50% of the gross floor area of the principal dwelling. For this calculation, the gross floor area shall be as defined in Section VI of this By-Law.
- d. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section III-I,2 of the Zoning By-Law, no accessory dwelling unit shall be created by any extension of a non-conforming building dimension, including the front, side or rear yard setback.

- e. Any new entrance for the accessory dwelling unit or principal dwelling shall be located to the side or rear of the single-family dwelling or detached accessory structure.
 - f. Water and sewer utilities serving the accessory dwelling unit shall not be metered separately from the principal dwelling; provided, however, an accessory dwelling unit with a lawfully existing structure which already maintains separately metered utilities, if the request is accompanied by the written approval of the appropriate utility.
 - g. Additional or modified landscaping, fences or other buffers may be required to protect abutting properties from potential negative visual or auditory impacts of the accessory dwelling unit.
 - h. In addition to the minimum required parking spaces for a single-family dwelling, the parking requirement for an accessory dwelling unit is one space, provided however, that no parking space is required for an accessory dwelling unit located within 0.5 miles of a commuter rail station or ferry terminal.
 - i. An accessory dwelling unit shall not have more than two (2) bedrooms.
5. Additional Requirements Applicable to Accessory Dwelling Units in Detached Accessory Structures
A detached accessory dwelling unit shall meet the following dimensional and design requirements:
- a. The detached accessory dwelling unit shall comply with all building dimensions, including the front, side or rear yard setback and height limitations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an accessory dwelling unit may be located within a lawfully existing nonconforming detached accessory structure provided that the accessory dwelling unit is not less than 10' from a side or rear property line.
 - b. The detached accessory dwelling unit shall be located a minimum of 10' from the principal dwelling and (i) to the rear of the principal single-family dwelling or (ii) to the side of the single-family dwelling at a minimum position 10' further back from the front plane of the single-family dwelling.
6. General Conditions
Any permit issued pursuant to this Section V-K shall be subject to, and shall incorporate the following conditions:
- a. Neither the principal dwelling nor the accessory dwelling unit may be sold or otherwise conveyed or transferred separately from the other.
 - b. The principal dwelling and accessory dwelling unit, if not owner-occupied, shall have a minimum occupancy or rental term of 6 months.

or act on anything related thereto, including such further revisions to the Zoning By-Law as may be reasonably related to the regulation of accessory dwelling units?
(Inserted at the request of the Planning Board)

COMMENT: The intent of this Article is to update Section V-K of the Zoning By-Law to comply with the provisions of Sections 1A and 3A of Chapter 40A (the Zoning Act) as modified by Section 8 of Chapter 150 of the Acts of 2024 (also known as the Affordable Housing Act or AHA, which has been in effect since February 2, 2025. Among other things, the AHA allows accessory dwelling units (ADUs), that comply with a town's zoning requirements for single-family homes, to be built as of right. Accordingly, since February 2, 2025, ADUs that comply with the AHA, its regulations, and the Town's single-family zoning, can be built in Hingham as of right.

As a result of the AHA, several provisions of the Hingham ADU By-Law (i.e., Section V-K) are now unenforceable, including the provisions that require a special permit process and owner occupancy, and limit the overall number of ADUs that can be built in Town. The proposed amendment will bring the ADU By-law into conformance with State Law and provide necessary guidance to Hingham residents. Moreover, the current amendment includes reasonable regulations that do not conflict with the AHA or its regulations, including restrictions on short-term rentals, a

prohibition against the sale of ADUs separately from the primary dwelling, and restrictions on the location of entrances and exterior stairways to second-floor ADUs. Without these reasonable restrictions, only the AHA, its regulations, and the Town's single-family zoning will control the construction of ADUs in Hingham.

The Planning Board voted 3-1 with 1 member abstaining in support of this Article, the Zoning Board of Appeals voted unanimously in favor of this Article, and the Advisory Committee voted 13 to 1 in support of this Article, as revised through the public hearing process.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, in order to update Section V-K of the Zoning By-Law for consistency with the provisions of Sections 1A and 3A of the Zoning Act as modified by Section 8 of Chapter 150 of Acts of 2024 (AHA) and any regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, as follows:

Item 1 Replace Section V-K in its entirety as follows:

V-K Accessory Dwelling Units

1. Purpose

The purpose of permitting dwelling units accessory to Principal Dwellings is to:

- a. Provide Accessory Dwelling Units without substantially altering the appearance of the residential property in order to protect the stability, property values and residential character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- b. Provide housing units for persons with diverse housing needs including, without limitation, persons with mental and physical disabilities.
- c. Enable the Town to monitor accessory dwelling unit construction for code compliance.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Section V-K, the following terms shall have the meaning set forth herein:

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

A self-contained housing unit, inclusive of sleeping, cooking and sanitary facilities on the same lot as a Principal Dwelling, subject to otherwise applicable dimensional and parking requirements, that:

- a. maintains a separate entrance, either directly from the outside or through an entry hall or corridor shared with the Principal Dwelling sufficient to meet the requirements of the Building Code for safe egress;
- b. is not larger in Gross Floor Area (GFA) than ½ the GFA of the Principal Dwelling or 900 square feet, whichever is smaller; and
- c. complies with the provisions of this Section V-K and 760 CMR 71.

Gross Floor Area (GFA)

The sum of the areas of all stories of the building of compliant ceiling height pursuant to the Building Code, including basements, lofts, and intermediate floored tiers, measured from the interior faces of exterior walls or from the centerline of walls separating buildings or dwelling units, but excluding crawl spaces, garage parking areas, attics, enclosed porches and similar spaces. Where there are multiple Principal Dwellings on the Lot, the GFA of the largest Principal Dwelling shall be used for determining the maximum size of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

Lot

An area of land with definite boundaries that is used, or available for use, as the site of a structure, or structures, regardless of whether the site conforms to requirements of Zoning.

Principal Dwelling

A structure, regardless of whether it, or the Lot it is situated on, conforms to Zoning, including use requirements and dimensional requirements, such as setbacks, bulk, and height, that contains at least one Dwelling Unit and is, or will be, located on the same Lot as an ADU.

Short-term Rental

Short-term rental, as defined in M.G.L. c. 64G, § 1.

3. Dimensional and Design Requirements

To be eligible for a building or occupancy permit, an Accessory Dwelling Unit shall meet the following dimensional and design requirements:

- a. All stairways accessing an Accessory Dwelling Unit above the ground floor of a Principal Dwelling or detached accessory structure shall be enclosed within the exterior walls of the structure; provided, however, that the Building Commissioner may permit an unenclosed stairway on the rear of a structure to access an Accessory Dwelling Unit located on the second floor of an existing building.
- b. The Accessory Dwelling Unit shall comply with all building dimensions, including, without limitation, the front, side, or rear yard setback and height limitations for the applicable Zoning District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an Accessory Dwelling Unit may be located within a lawfully existing nonconforming structure, provided that the location shall not result in an extension of a nonconforming building dimension.
- c. Any new entrance for the Accessory Dwelling Unit or Principal Dwelling shall be located to the side or rear of the Principal Dwelling or detached accessory structure.
- d. In addition to the minimum required parking spaces for a Principal Dwelling, the parking requirement for an Accessory Dwelling Unit is one space, provided however, that no parking space is required for an Accessory Dwelling Unit located within 0.5 miles of a Transit Station as defined in 760 CMR 71.
- e. Only one Accessory Dwelling Unit shall be permitted per Lot.

4. General Conditions

Any permit issued pursuant to this Section V-K shall be subject to, and shall incorporate the following conditions:

- a. Neither the Principal Dwelling nor the Accessory Dwelling Unit may be sold or otherwise conveyed or transferred separately from the other.
- b. The Principal Dwelling and Accessory Dwelling Unit shall have a minimum occupancy or rental term of 30 days and shall not be used as a Short-term Rental.

Item 2 Delete subsection 1.8.9 to the Schedule of uses under Section III-A in its entirety, resequencing the existing subsections 1.8.10 and 1.8.11 to subsections 1.8.9 and 1.8.10.

Item 3 Insert a new subsection 1.9 to the Schedule of Uses under Section III-A as follows:

Residence					Business		Office Park*	Waterfront Business	Waterfront Recreation	Industrial	Industrial Park*	Limited Industrial Park	Business Recreation	Official and Open Space
A	B	C	D	E	A**	B								
1.9 Accessory Dwelling Units in connection with a Principal Dwelling, subject to Section V-K														
P	P	P	O	P	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

**ARTICLE 42
AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: EXEMPTION FOR LOTS AFFECTED BY TAKING**

Will the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, as follows:

Item 1 By inserting a new subsection “d” to Section III-I.1. as follows:

- d. Structures Affected by Takings – New or intensified dimensional nonconformities resulting from a taking by a governmental body through eminent domain may be continued.

and resequence the existing subsections d. and e. to subsections e. and f.

Item 2 By adding a new subsection “3” to Section III-I as follows:

- 3. Upon the issuance of a Special Permit A1, a building or structure affected by a governmental taking that resulted in a new or intensified nonconformity may be altered, reconstructed, extended or structurally changed, provided that any nonconforming yard and/or height conditions are not extended.

or act on anything related thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Planning Board)

COMMENT: From time to time, private properties are affected by public takings such as when the Town or the State widens a road right-of-way. In such instances, a yard or setback dimension might be reduced, which could result in an existing conforming setback becoming non-conforming, or an existing non-conforming setback becoming more non-conforming. The intent of this Article is to minimize the regulatory impact of these takings on the properties in question, since any new or increased non-conformities would have occurred through no fault of the property owners. Affected Single-Family and Two-Family Dwelling properties would have the same protections that pre-existing non-conforming properties have under Section III-I.2 (the Hatfield Amendment). Proposed alterations, reconstructions, extensions, or structural changes to all other affected buildings or structures would be subject to a Special Permit A-1 process, or to a variance process if nonconforming yard and/or height conditions are proposed to be extended.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Planning Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article, as revised through the public hearing process.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, as follows:

Item 1 By inserting a new subsection “d” to Section III-I.1. as follows:

- d. Structures Affected by Takings – New or intensified dimensional nonconformities resulting from a taking by a governmental body through eminent domain may be continued.
Re-sequence the existing subsections d. and e. to subsections e. and f.

Item 2 By adding a new subsection “3” to Section III-I as follows:

3. **A building or structure affected by a governmental taking that resulted in a new or intensified nonconformity may be altered, reconstructed, extended or structurally changed, as follows:**
 - a. **the alteration, reconstruction, extension, or structural change of a Single-Family Dwelling or a Two-Family Dwelling may be authorized upon the issuance of a building permit, provided that the extension does not further reduce the minimum linear measurement of the nonconforming conditions; and**
 - b. **the alteration, reconstruction, extension, or structural change of a building or structure for any use other than a Single-Family Dwelling or Two-Family Dwelling may be authorized upon the issuance of a Special Permit A1, provided that any nonconforming yard and/or height conditions are not extended.**

**ARTICLE 43
AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: SIGNAGE REFERENCE CORRECTION**

Will the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, as follows:

Item 1 By replacing the reference to “Section IV-C, 6” under footnote 3 to the Schedule of Signage Regulations Table in Section V-B.3 to “Section IV-C.7”

Item 2 By replacing the reference to “Section V-B.6 (e)” under footnote 3 to the Schedule of Signage Regulations Table in Section V-B.3 to “Section V-B.10.e”

or act on anything related thereto?
(Inserted at the request of the Planning Board)

COMMENT: The intent of this Article is to correct a clerical error in the By-Law. The proposed amendment will have no substantive impact.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Planning Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town vote to amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, as follows:

Item 1 By replacing the reference to “Section IV-C, 6” under footnote 3 to the Schedule of Signage Regulations Table in Section V-B.3 to “Section IV-C.7.”

Item 2 By replacing the reference to “Section V-B, 6 (e)” under footnote 3 to the Schedule of Signage Regulations Table in Section V-B.3 to “Section V-B.10.e.”

**ARTICLE 44
AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: EXTENSION OR ALTERATION OF NONCONFORMING
USES AND STRUCTURES**

Will the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, by replacing in the entirety, Section III-I.1.c with the following:

- c. Except as allowed under Section III-I.2, pre-existing nonconforming structures or uses may not be extended, altered or changed except upon the issuance of a Special Permit A1 by the Zoning Board of Appeals which

shall include a finding that such change, extension, or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure or use.

or act on anything related thereto?

(Inserted at the request of the Zoning Board of Appeals)

COMMENT: M.G.L. c. 40A, § 6 allows for pre-existing nonconforming structures or uses to be extended or altered if there is a finding by the permit granting authority or by the special permit granting authority designated by the zoning by-law. Section III-I.1.c of the Hingham Zoning By-Law refers back to M.G.L. c. 40A, § 6 without specifically designating the permit granting or special permit granting authority. In Hingham, the Board of Appeals (ZBA) issues a finding to applicants requesting such changes, but there is no clear procedure for review of such applications, and it is unclear whether a finding without a special permit process permits the imposition of conditions. The proposed amendment would expressly require a Special Permit A1 for such relief, allowing the ZBA to utilize the Special Permit criteria and add conditions to the permit if it deems they are needed. Based on a review of Hingham's benchmark communities and other similar communities, the majority of these communities requires a special permit for this type of application.

This proposed amendment would not apply to Single-Family and Two-Family Dwellings that are governed by Section III-I.2 (the Hatfield Amendment).

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Planning Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article, as revised through the public hearing process.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, by replacing in the entirety, Section III-I.1.c with the following:

- c. As set forth in M.G.L. c. 40A, § 6, except as allowed under Section III-I.2, pre-existing nonconforming structures or uses may not be extended, altered, or changed, except upon the issuance of a Special Permit A1 by the ZBA, which shall include a finding that such change, extension, or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure or use.

ARTICLE 45 AMEND ZONING BY-LAW: EXPIRATION OF CELL TOWER SPECIAL PERMITS

That the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, by deleting Section V.E.7.I in its entirety.

or act on anything related thereto?

(Inserted by the Zoning Board of Appeals)

COMMENT: Section V.E.7.I of the Zoning By-Law restricted the length of special permits issued for cell towers and monopoles under this section to five years, with the right of the applicant to re-apply for successive five-year-long renewals. Elimination of this section will relieve the applicants of the need to return before the Board of Appeals and repeat the Special Permit process every five years.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote by Town Meeting.

The Planning Board and Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town amend the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Hingham, adopted March 10, 1941, as heretofore amended, by deleting Section V.E.7.I in its entirety.

**ARTICLE 46
GRANTING AND ACCEPTANCE OF EASEMENTS**

Will the Town authorize, but not require, the Select Board to grant and to accept grants of easements for streets, water, drainage, sewer and utility purposes or any public purpose on terms and conditions the Board deems in the best interest of the Town, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: The Town benefits from many easements over private property throughout Hingham. From time to time, the Town, particularly its Department of Public Works, requires new easements in order to complete roadway and other public works projects. Under Massachusetts law, Town Meeting approval is required for the Select Board to accept or grant such easements. The Select Board has annually been provided authorization by Town Meeting to accept grants of easements necessary to complete public projects such as roadways, water, drainage, sewers and utility facilities. This Article will provide the Select Board with additional annual authorization to grant easements over Town land for the purpose of completing public projects such as roadways, water, drainage, sewers and utility facilities as the need is recognized. This Article would allow the Select Board to grant or accept such easements during the coming year avoiding potentially expensive delays and inconvenience to projects that benefit the Town. Easements granted to the Town covered by this Article are intended to be voluntarily granted to the Town, not allowing the Select Board to accept easements that require funds to acquire them.

Furthermore, the authority conferred by this Article is not unlimited in time; it is limited to the coming year. If continuing authority is required, the next Annual Town Meeting may be asked to approve it.

The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of this Article and the Select Board voted 2-0 in favor of this Article.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town authorize, but not require, for a period through the end of FY26, the Select Board to accept grants of easements for streets, water, drainage, sewer and utility purposes or any public purpose and to grant easements for the limited purpose of streets, water, drainage, sewer and utility purposes or any public purpose on terms and conditions the Board deems in the best interest of the Town.

REPORT OF THE CAPITAL OUTLAY COMMITTEE

I. WHAT WE DO

The Capital Outlay Committee (“COC”) is charged with:

- A. Ascertaining the capital outlay requirements of various Town departments, boards, and committees over the next five years. Capital assets considered by COC typically have a useful economic life of more than five years and cost more than \$15,000, or are otherwise classified as fixed assets on the Town's financial statements.
- B. Analyzing and evaluating proposed capital expenditures for all Town departments, boards, and committees and making recommendations to the Select Board and the Advisory Committee (“Advisory”). COC recommendations are developed as follows:
 1. Departments submit requests for the next five years
 2. COC reviews requests with the department heads, boards, and committees through an interactive process including meetings, site visits, and requests for more information
 3. COC determines which capital needs are most urgent for the Town and discusses possible alternatives for funding needs
 4. COC makes its recommendations to Select Board and Advisory
 5. Select Board accepts, alters, or rejects COC's recommendations and forwards them to Advisory Committee
 6. Advisory Committee makes the final capital recommendations to Town Meeting

COC reviewed the capital requests from the various Town departments for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) and herein submits its recommendations for FY26, as well as general projections of capital needs for the subsequent four fiscal years.

COC's recommendations for FY26 are based on the assessment of need. Capital items, for the most part, consist of the Town's infrastructure and the equipment to support that infrastructure. Over the long run, most capital spending on infrastructure is not discretionary. The Five-Year Capital Plan includes most proposed capital projects, including buildings and capital equipment that may require funding via borrowing or other sources.

At the start of the budget process, each department was requested to produce a realistic five-year capital outlay plan. The plan was compared to the prior year's five-year capital outlay plan and departments were asked to explain significant changes. Our budgeting software system, ClearGov, provides efficiency benefits for the current and future budgeting cycles, facilitates transparency across Town departments, and increases clarity on prior year capital funded spending.

II. WHY INVESTMENT IN OUR TOWN IS IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY

Capital funding is required for operating assets, building infrastructure subsystems, and new buildings and facilities:

- Operating Assets: The primary funding source for the Five-Year Capital Plan included with this report is the Tax Levy, which comes from the Operating Budget. Since these funds are limited, historically, the Five-Year Capital Plan has focused on operating assets such as information technology, security, vehicles, equipment, public safety, and some building infrastructure (major repairs, replacements, and upkeep).

- **Building Infrastructure Subsystems:** The Town has yet to embrace past COC recommendations for a study of Town-owned buildings and facilities. This study will provide an inventory of all key components in existing Town buildings and facilities, identifying the current age and condition of each subsystem, which will result in a long-term replacement plan of 10 to 20 years. This will provide Town management and citizens a more proactive quantitative and qualitative approach to the Town’s capital requirements. Some of these subsystem replacements are included in operating asset funding, but this is usually when the component is experiencing significant failure and in desperate need of replacement. COC realizes that some of this is due to budget limitations, but the Town must identify and plan for these expenditures in advance.
- **New Buildings and Facilities:** Funding for larger building and infrastructure capital projects is typically requested through a Warrant Article since project amounts exceed the COC’s operating funding capacity. They are funded by sources other than the Tax Levy (Borrowing, Available Reserves, etc.) and require separate approval at Town Meeting. Over the last few years, as several major projects have been proposed, COC determined that the best practice for reporting and disclosure is as follows:
 - If a project is at the Feasibility Study stage, then only the study amount will be included on the Five-Year Capital Plan with a footnote about the project since including the actual project presumes it will proceed.
 - If a project is at the Design & Bid stage, then an estimated project cost will be included, if reasonably determinable, on the Five-Year Capital Plan. A footnote may be included to provide additional information.
 - If a project is at the Renovation/Construction stage, then the project cost will be included on the Five-Year Capital Plan. A footnote may be included to provide additional information.
 - If a project is being contemplated but it is too premature for estimates, then a footnote will be included describing the project and the amount will be “To Be Determined”.

Note: All large-scope projects of this nature would likely be accompanied by a Warrant Article and subject to approval at Annual Town Meeting.

Based upon the work of COC, the FY26 capital recommendations by funding source are summarized below for a FY26 total of \$21 million*:

Funding Source	FY26 Amount	Percent of Total
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$7,468,612	35.6%
Capital Outlay Allocation (taxes)	\$3,500,000	16.7%
Borrowing	\$3,310,000	15.8%
Water Enterprise Fund	\$3,000,000	14.3%
SSCC Enterprise Fund	\$1,032,887	4.9%
Community Preservation Act Funds	\$758,640	3.6%
Excess Ambulance Receipts	\$611,124	2.9%
Sewer Special Revenue Fund	\$577,250	2.7%
Other Funding Source	\$285,683	1.4%
Grants	\$250,000	1.2%
Municipal Waterways Imp. and Maint. Fund	\$150,000	0.7%
Capital Stabilization Fund	\$30,000	0.1%
Recreation Revolving Fund	\$25,000	0.1%
Total Requested Funding Sources	\$20,999,196	100.0%

**Includes several Warrant Articles to be voted on at this Annual Town Meeting*

COC was able to fund the majority of departments' top self-identified needs for FY26. The table below shows the breakdown of the \$21 million in recommended funding by department:

Department	Total Recommended FY26 Capital Funding	Percent of Total
Education	\$6,812,650	32.4%
WRWS	\$3,000,000	14.3%
Recreation	\$2,676,650	12.7%
Center for Active Living	\$2,500,000	11.9%
SSCC	\$1,482,887	7.1%
Public Works	\$1,326,404	6.3%
Fire	\$831,124	4.0%
Police	\$621,670	3.0%
Sewer	\$577,250	2.7%
Transfer Station	\$310,000	1.5%
Town Hall	\$305,052	1.5%
Library	\$156,000	0.7%
Harbormaster	\$150,000	0.7%
Information Technology	\$135,000	0.6%
Bare Cove Park	\$58,914	0.3%
Building	\$46,000	0.2%
Treasurer/Collector	\$9,595	0.0%
Total	\$20,999,196	100%

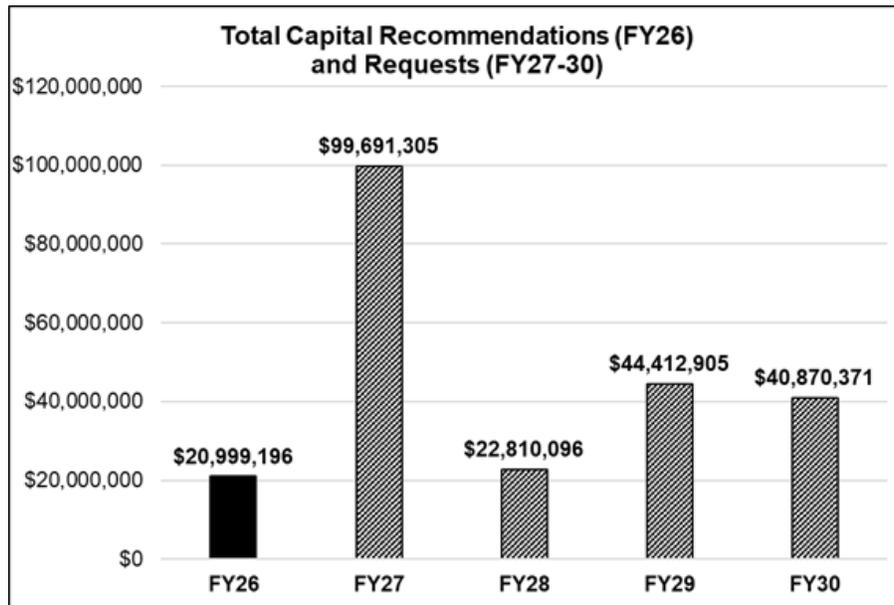
Note - In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 34, the total capital appropriations made to the School Department are under the School Committee's authority and can be allocated to capital expenditures at the School Committee's discretion. As such, the COC's capital recommendations for the School Department can be reallocated to other expenditures as ultimately determined by the School Committee.

Below are some notable recommendations for FY26 from the tax levy (see the FY26-30 Five-Year Capital Plan at the end of this report for full detail by department):

- Replacement of AHU/Condensers - South School \$543,814
- 5 replacement Cruisers - Police \$379,264
- 4 Enterprise Drones - Police \$88,000
- Cronin & Haley Field Accessibility - Recreation \$365,000
- Parking Lot Resurface - Town Hall \$142,800

This year, COC recommended the Town consider investing Unassigned Fund Balance in overdue capital projects (see Article 11). Some departments have had critical projects deferred for multiple budget cycles due to the overwhelming demand on limited capital resources. The DPW and Transfer Station teams have made equipment last well beyond its expected lifetime in order to provide the Town services that are critical to everyday life. Article 11 will help address these overdue investments for these departments, while not having to forgo the other critical projects needed by the Town.

Project and equipment costs continue to rise, in many instances significantly outpacing inflation. There are still significant ordering backlogs on some prior fiscal year vehicles, which has necessitated keeping them operational for longer than ideal. Forgoing investment today usually means we'll have to pay more later. Additional projects emerge and our forecasts are significantly impacted. For example, FY28 and FY29 funding requests increased \$10.6 million (+87%) and \$25.1 million (+130%), respectively, since our last report. The chart below shows the total recommended capital investments FY26 and total departmental requests for FY27-30:



While the Town is addressing some of its more urgent capital projects, additional significant projects await in future years, which COC would like to ensure Town Meeting is made aware of. Some of the large capital projects on the horizon include:

- Center for Active Living construction (FY27 \$32.5M)
- Hingham Harbor resiliency improvements (\$46.5M)
- School roofs: HHS (FY27 \$18.5M with solar), PRS (FY27 \$6.1M), South (FY27 \$5.4M)
- School mechanical system replacements (FY27 \$21.8M)
- South Fire Station solution
- Dredging (FY29 \$10M)
- School boilers (\$4M)
- Solar projects
- Library chiller & parking lot (\$2.2M)
- Central Fire HVAC (\$1-2M)
- Athletic field and ADA accessibility improvements

Disclaimer: The amounts noted above are preliminary estimates and subject to significant change.

Given the number and estimated cost of these projects and the Town's limited non-excluded debt capacity, many of these projects will likely be financed by excluded debt. Based on interest rate projections from the Town's financial advisors and using the Town's Financial Planning Model, **it is estimated that for the median assessed valuation home (\$1,011,500 in FY25), every \$10 million in excluded debt approved by voters would add approximately \$75 to the tax bill in the first year of debt service (assuming a 30-year level principal payback).**

Like the Advisory Committee, COC is mindful of the cumulative impact of excluded debt on taxpayers and encourages the Town to continue to pursue grant funding and other opportunities to offset the cost of large capital projects.

III. WHAT WE THINK THE FUTURE HOLDS

Town-wide capital spending can be divided into two distinct pieces. The first piece consists of ratepayer and/or user paid items. This includes Weir River Water System, sewer, and South Shore Country Club capital items. Capital spending in these areas is mainly to replace old or broken infrastructure or to replace or purchase equipment necessary to maintain service levels. This type of spending is necessary and is paid for by users through increases in user rates or fees. Property taxes do not fund these types of expenditures.

The second type of capital spending involves municipal departments such as Fire, Police, DPW, Recreation, and Schools. These departments provide basic, necessary services to residents. This type of spending is paid for through a combination of the tax levy, excess Unassigned Fund Balance, grants, borrowing, and other sources. The Town’s Financial Policy states that funding for these types of items (excluding expenditures financed by debt) should be equal to 3-6% of the Operating Budget. The Town has historically funded spending at the low end of this range, resulting in a significant backlog of unfunded items. The Capital Outlay Committee has consistently pushed for higher spending to address this backlog.

The charts below show the current and planned capital spending budget from the tax levy, departmental requests over the next five years, and the resulting backlog. These charts exclude large items such as school roofs, wharves, and the new Center for Active Living that we expect will be financed by debt.

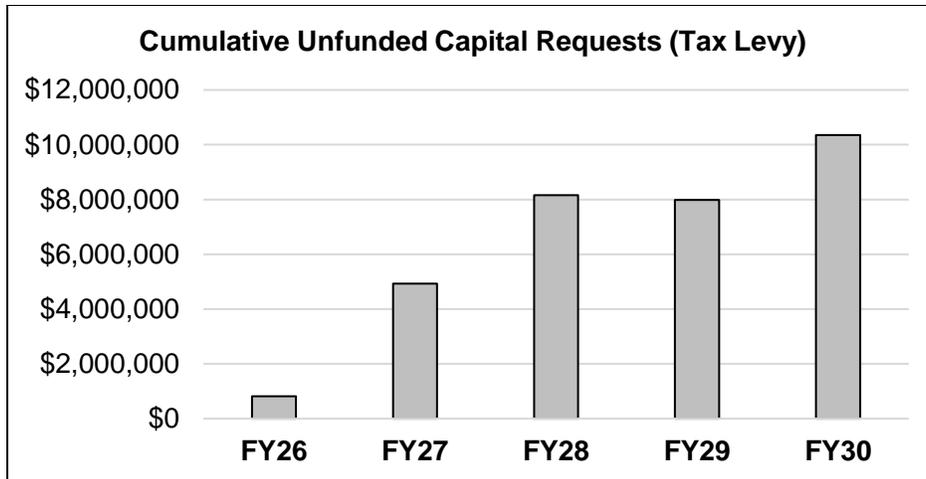
Current and Forecasted COC Tax Levy Allocation

	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
COC Tax Allocation included in Forecast	\$3,500,000	\$3,600,000	\$3,700,000	\$3,800,000	\$3,900,000
YOY \$ change	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
YOY % change	2.94%	2.86%	2.78%	2.70%	2.63%

Departmental requests for Tax Levy funds and Annual Backlog

	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Original Dept Request (for Tax Levy)	\$5,930,573	\$7,705,905	\$6,933,896	\$3,628,155	\$6,265,085
Plus Prior Year Roll Forward	\$0	\$819,169	\$4,925,074	\$8,158,970	\$7,987,125
New Total Requested for Tax Levy	\$5,930,573	\$8,525,074	\$11,858,970	\$11,787,125	\$14,252,210
COC Tax Levy budget per Forecast	\$3,500,000	\$3,600,000	\$3,700,000	\$3,800,000	\$3,900,000
Unassigned Fund Balance supplement	\$1,611,404	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cumulative Unfunded Backlog	\$819,169	\$4,925,074	\$8,158,970	\$7,987,125	\$10,352,210

The chart on the next page illustrates the cumulative unfunded backlog of capital requests based on the estimates and assumptions above.



It is clear from these charts that the Town must significantly increase annual capital spending to address the backlog. The Capital Outlay Committee recommends an annual budget of 5-6% of the operating budget as a base level of spending. This can be accomplished through an increase in tax levy funds, the use of excess Unassigned Fund Balance and the Capital Stabilization Fund, and borrowing. The Town has a significant inventory of items and buildings that are necessary to provide basic services to residents. Failure to maintain these assets can result in costly breakdowns, excessive repair/replacement costs, and a decrease in services for residents.

Further, with an increase in the Town's capital base, there will be a greater need to establish a formal system to track and monitor building assets and subsystems. It is critical for the Town to accurately identify and quantify the ongoing capital needs of all Town-owned assets, including facilities and their related subsystems, so that these expenditures can be anticipated and included in long-range plans.

COC continues to be concerned that expenses related to *all* capital assets of the Town have not been reflected in the Five-Year Capital Plan. This issue was first mentioned in the Report of the Capital Outlay Committee in the 2012 Warrant. Specifically, COC was concerned that major expenditures, such as the repair/refurbishment of all Town-owned real estate, were not in the capital budget. As a result, COC recommended an externally prepared comprehensive multi-phase study of Town-owned buildings and facilities and subsequently a Town Facilities Manager to oversee these assets. **Neither recommendation has been adopted to date.**

IV. CONCLUSION

As the Town's Financial Policy notes, "The capital assets of the Town comprise the Town's physical infrastructure, inherited from previous generations and intended to be passed on to future generations... It includes assets such as the roads and buildings we use, the harbor which must be dredged periodically, and the equipment needed by our Town staff. We are the current caretakers. It is our collective responsibility" to maintain these assets responsibly and invest in the Town's future.

The Capital Outlay Committee thanks the Advisory Committee, Select Board, Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrators, and department heads for their support. Their contributions are critical to the budget process, and we extend our appreciation for their dedication and hard work.

Michael Donovan, Chair
 George Danis
 Lyndsey Kruzer
 Ted Ciolkosz, Advisory Committee
 Steven Pohl, Advisory Committee

FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN: FY26-30

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
	\$20,999,196	\$99,691,305	\$22,810,096	\$44,412,905	\$40,870,371
Bare Cove Park					
New chassis for BCP Ranger Vehicle	\$58,914				
New Roof for Building 80		\$360,200			
Power for BCP Green Dock House Museum		\$58,000			
Total Bare Cove Park	\$58,914	\$418,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Building					
Vehicles for Building Inspectional Staff	\$46,000	\$47,380			
Total Building	\$46,000	\$47,380	\$0	\$0	\$0
Center for Active Living					
Center for Active Living	\$2,500,000	\$32,500,000			
Vehicle Replacement FY27		\$190,000			
Total Center for Active Living	\$2,500,000	\$32,690,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Education					
Building 132 - Painting and Restoration	\$70,000				
Building 179 / 123 Boiler Replacement			\$350,000		
Building 179 Renovations (excludes sprinklers)			\$354,312		
Building 179 Sprinklers			\$212,587		
East - ERU Replacement		\$68,956	\$68,956	\$68,956	\$68,956
East - Building Repairs and Improvements		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
East - LED Lighting Upgrade		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
East - Flag Pole Lighting		\$5,000			
East - Sound Systems				\$50,000	
Energy Management System: ONA Parts		\$20,000	\$20,000		
Facilities - Replacement of tractor	\$68,390				
Firewall			\$30,000	\$30,000	
HHS - Roof with Solar - major Repair/Replacement	\$3,310,000	\$18,500,000			
HHS - Synthetic Turf Field Replacement	\$880,000				
HHS - BACnet IP BMS Communication Systems Parts (98 total)	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000		
HHS - Mechanical Systems Replacement		\$21,799,400			

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
HHS - JV Softball Field		\$661,000			
HHS - Auditorium Lighting Modernization/Rigging		\$225,000			
HHS - Boiler Assessment and Contracts		\$75,000			
HHS - FOB Stations/Access Control: Gym; Science & Main Entrance (3)		\$51,549			
HHS - Building Repairs and Improvements		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
HHS - Lighting - Update Interior Lighting to LED		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
HHS - Sound Proof Drama Room		\$35,810			
HHS - Windows/Doors		\$30,000	\$30,000		
HHS - Safety and Security Store Front			\$200,000		
HHS - Floors: Refinish all Locker Room Floors			\$87,605		
HHS - Sewer Grade Repair - Guidance Office			\$80,000		
HHS - Building: Envelope Repairs			\$75,000		
HHS - Art Lab Countertop Replacement			\$65,000		
HHS - Wrestling Room Floor Replacement			\$53,662		
HHS - Atrium Design			\$25,000		
HHS - Woodshop - Slop Sink Replacement			\$10,000		
HHS - Boiler Replacement - Heat - Bidding & Construction				\$3,640,000	
HHS - Pavilion				\$500,000	
HHS - Vape detectors x30				\$25,000	
HMS - Building Repairs and Improvements		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
HMS - Lighting - Update Interior Lighting to LED		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
HMS - Field Drainage			\$120,000		
HMS - Parking Light Replacement			\$42,000		
HMS - Tech & Working Lab Slop Sinks			\$8,000		
HMS - PV Solar Array					\$3,645,786
HPS - New Extraordinary Capital Repairs Fund	\$309,198				
HPS - Roof repairs	\$50,000				
HPS - Instructional Equipment / Furniture	\$44,214	\$44,214	\$44,214	\$44,214	\$44,214
HPS - Safety and Security	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
HPS - Copiers (2/year; 32 total units)	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
HPS - Sealcoating and Safety Painting		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
HPS - Mobile Phone Signal Boosters		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	
HPS - Digital Radio System		\$90,000			
HPS - Upgrade Wireless Access Points		\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	
HPS - Area Carpet/Flooring (Replacement Plan)		\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000
HPS - Grounds maintenance			\$75,000		
HPS - Avigilon camera NVR				\$55,000	
IT - Laptop Refresh	\$330,000	\$125,000			
IT - Viewsonic Viewboard IFP	\$75,000	\$87,500	\$87,500		
IT - Wireless Access Point Replacements	\$32,000	\$75,700			
IT - Arubanetworks Mobility Controller		\$25,000			
IT - Core Switch			\$25,000		
IT - Uninterruptable Power Supplies			\$16,000	\$18,000	\$12,000
IT - Smart-UPS Battery Backups			\$15,000		
IT - Domain Controller				\$5,000	
IT - Server Backup Domain Controller				\$5,000	
IT - Acronis - Server backup					\$5,000
IT - ArubaNetworks L3 Core Switch					\$25,000
PRS - Roof replacement	\$370,000	\$6,100,000			
PRS - Ventilator Heating Improvements	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
PRS - Hot Water Heater(s) Replacement	\$40,000				
PRS - Lighting - Update Interior Lighting to LED		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
PRS - Building Repairs and Improvements		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
PRS - FOB Stations/Access Control		\$20,000			
PRS - Garden Pathways to make ADA Accessible		\$15,500			
PRS - Flag Pole Lighting		\$5,000			
PRS - Security Vestibule/Office/Library Redesign			\$150,000		
PRS - Emergency Generator			\$58,500		
PRS - Building Envelope Repairs			\$50,000		
PRS - Cement Pole Repair			\$38,000		
PRS - Synchronized Clock System Tie-in			\$10,000		
South - Replacement of AHU/Condensers	\$543,814				
South - Roofs - Major Repair/Replacement	\$320,000	\$5,400,000			

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
South - Design Costs for Library AHU/condensers	\$63,000				
South - BACnet IP BMS Communication System Upgrades	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
South - Main Driveway Asphalt Paving		\$80,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
South - Lighting Update Interior Lighting to LED		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
South - Replace Window Sealant and Backer Rod		\$126,750			
South - Building Repairs and Improvements		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	
South - Painting of Floors, Hallways & Gym		\$43,000			
South- Door Hardware -Exterior Replacement		\$30,000			
South - Hydration Station		\$10,000			
South - Door Hardware - Interior replacement		\$10,000			
South - Basketball Courts			\$140,000		
South - Repointing Masonry			\$134,550		
South - Gym - Ventilation - Ceiling Fans x4			\$8,000		
South - Security - Build Security Entrance to Front Hallway				\$20,000	
South - AC Unit 3rd Floor				\$11,000	
South - Sand, Stain & Repoly All Cabinets & Door Trim				\$10,000	
Transportation - Wheelchair Van	\$88,049			\$91,000	
Transportation - Ford Transit 10 Passenger Vans	\$30,000	\$77,000	\$78,500	\$79,500	\$80,500
Transportation - Security cameras	\$8,985	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Transportation - New School Buses x22		\$400,000			
Transportation - 14 Passenger Bus		\$107,000			
Transportation - Replacement of Vehicle #2		\$75,000			
Transportation - Digital Radios for Buses		\$60,000			
Transportation - SUVs			\$40,000		\$85,000
Total Education	\$6,812,650	\$55,435,379	\$3,649,386	\$5,449,670	\$4,288,456
Fire					
Ambulance	\$540,000		\$595,000		\$654,500
Automated CPR Devices	\$71,124				
FD Administration Vehicle	\$70,000	\$75,000	\$80,000		
Fire Turnout Gear	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000
FD UTV	\$50,000				

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Fire Hydrants and Fire Hose	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	
Fire Boat Community match		\$200,000			
Utility Truck		\$90,000			
SCBA Cylinders			\$125,000		
SCBA Compressor				\$150,000	
Total Fire	\$831,124	\$470,000	\$905,000	\$255,000	\$719,500
Harbormaster					
Hull Repair Marine I	\$150,000				
SafeBoat 25 Repower		\$45,000			
Harbor Dredging				\$10,000,000	
SafeBoat 31 Repower				\$80,000	
Total Harbormaster	\$150,000	\$45,000	\$0	\$10,080,000	\$0
Information Technology					
Annual Technology Upgrades	\$135,000	\$145,000	\$155,000	\$165,000	\$175,000
Total Information Technology	\$135,000	\$145,000	\$155,000	\$165,000	\$175,000
Library					
Cooling/Chiller System Engineering Services	\$80,000				
Carpet Replacement	\$32,000	\$83,000	\$130,000	\$135,000	
Furniture Replacement	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
Computers & Technology	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
Cooling/Chiller System Replacement		\$580,000			
Children's Entrance Stairway And Walkway Replacement		\$32,375			
Replace/Repair/Repaint Exterior Wood Trim and Windows as needed			\$400,000		
Bathroom Renovation/Repairs			\$200,000		
Building Renovation Feasibility Study				\$100,000	
Parking lot Design, Permitting, and Construction Documents				\$75,000	
Construction of Parking Lot Expansion and Front Walkway Replacement					\$1,652,000
Structural Repairs to 2nd Floor Exterior Balcony and Av Room Bump-out					\$100,000
Lighting Replacement					\$80,000
Landscaping Design and Upgrades					\$50,000
Total Library	\$156,000	\$739,375	\$774,000	\$354,000	\$1,926,000

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Police					
Police Vehicles (5)	\$379,264	\$332,152	\$354,510	\$378,985	
Police Enterprise Drone	\$88,000			\$88,000	
Police Radars	\$58,406	\$6,594			
Polaris Off Road Vehicle	\$47,000				
Police Cruiser Radios	\$28,000		\$19,000		
Body Armor (17)	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$23,000
Rifle Plate Carriers		\$13,000		\$13,000	
Police Firearms (Rifles)				\$40,000	
Total Police	\$621,670	\$372,746	\$395,510	\$541,985	\$23,000
Public Works					
#6 (2018) IH Dump 7400DP Plow & Sander	\$365,301				
#23 (2011) Elgin Street Sweeper	\$326,104				
#39 (2013) Trackless Sidewalk Tractor	\$201,800				
#28- 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump (1-Ton) with Plow & Spreader	\$133,233				
#2 (2014) Chevy Tahoe	\$75,332				
#17 (2017) Chevy 2500HD Quad Cab Pickup w/ Plow	\$75,332				
#37 2014 Chevy 2500 HD Pickup w/ Plow	\$75,332				
#3 (2015) Chevy 2500 Silverado Pickup Truck with Plow	\$73,970				
#5 2016 IH 4990 Dump w/ Sander & Plow		\$230,000	\$230,000		
#27 (2016) IH 7400 Dump 444E w/ Sander & Plow		\$230,000			
#24 1993 Bombardier Sidewalk Tractor		\$175,000	\$175,000		
#18 (2013) Chevy 3500 HD 4 Wheel drive 1 Ton Dump w/ plow & sander.		\$109,640			
#46 2013 Stump Grinder 602 18 Ton		\$93,000	\$93,000		
#43 2013 Chevy 2500 Quad Cab 4WD P/U w/ Plow		\$74,585			
#52 2002 Drum Roller 1.5 Ton		\$30,000			
#35 2008 Compressor		\$27,000			
#54-(2017) Falcon Slip in Hot Box		\$15,000			
#49 2015 Leaf Sucker		\$4,000			
#16 2017 IH 7000 Dump W/ Plow & Sander			\$230,000		
#20T MORBark Chipper M18R (2018)			\$100,000	\$100,000	

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
#30 2017 Groundsmaster 4000D Mower			\$100,000		
#4 (2016) Chevy 3500 HD 4 Wheel drive 1 Ton Dump w/ plow & sander.			\$85,000		
#39SB Snow Blower 4150-SB (2003)			\$15,000	\$15,000	
#WS1 Wright Sentor Mower (2008)			\$12,000		
#9 (2019) Chevy 2500 Silverado Pickup Truck with Plow				\$62,500	
WS-1 Wright Sentor Mower				\$10,000	
#14 (2019) IH 7499 Dump w/ Plow & Sander					\$363,500
#13 (2020) IH 7499 Dump w/ Plow & Sander					\$363,500
#11 (2014) Intl. Dump w/ Plow And Sander					\$363,500
#8 (2013) Intl. HV5075FA Dump w/ Spreader And Plow					\$363,500
#22 (2021) Elgin Street Sweeper					\$325,630
#21 (2017) John Deere Backhoe 410L					\$250,000
#7 (2020) IH 7499 Dump w/ Plow & Sander					\$230,000
#29 Trackless MT7					\$192,785
#36 (2017) Bombardier SW-45					\$145,000
#25 (2018) Trackless sidewalk Tractor MT7					\$125,000
#32 TORO Ground Master 4010D					\$120,000
#26 (2020) Chevy 2500 Quad Cab 4WD P/U w/ Plow					\$75,000
#45 (2021) Chevy 2500 HD P/U w/ Plow					\$75,000
#41 (2018) Chevy 2500 HD P/U					\$75,000
#38 (2010) Chevy 2500 P/U					\$75,000
#34 (2021) Chevy 3500 HD 1 TON					\$75,000
#33 (2021) Chevy 2500HD Utility Body					\$75,000
#15 (2022) Chevy 2500 HD P/U w/ Plow					\$75,000
Total Public Works	\$1,326,404	\$988,225	\$1,040,000	\$187,500	\$3,367,415
Recreation					
Pickleball Courts	\$2,036,650				
Improve Accessibility at Cronin and Haley Field	\$640,000				
Improve Accessibility at Hersey Field		\$460,000			

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Plymouth River School: New Backstop, Field Layout, Fencing, Dugouts		\$365,000			
South School basketball Court		\$350,000			
Plymouth River Basketball Court		\$350,000			
Lynch Field			\$2,400,000		
Carlson Basketball Courts			\$600,000		
Kress Basketball Court			\$350,000		
Bradley Woods Basketball Court and Accessible Paths linking the field, playground, and court			\$350,000		
Accessibility Improvements at Kress Field			\$175,000		
Plymouth River Tennis Courts				\$1,500,000	
Accessibility Improvements at Margetts Field				\$500,000	
Accessibility Improvements at Lynch Field				\$175,000	
Powers Field				\$125,000	
Cronin Tennis Courts					\$1,600,000
High School Track					\$500,000
Carlson Skate Park					\$500,000
Total Recreation	\$2,676,650	\$1,525,000	\$3,875,000	\$2,300,000	\$2,600,000
Select Board					
Hingham Harbor Resiliency Improvements			\$5,095,000	\$19,834,000	\$21,529,000
	\$0	\$0	\$5,095,000	\$19,834,000	\$21,529,000
Sewer					
Weir River- Manhole Rehabilitation	\$105,000				
I&I Investigation	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Main Repairs - Emergency Sewer Repair- Force And Gravity Mains	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
Service Repairs- Sewer Lateral Repair & Replacement	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
South St. Flow Meter Scada	\$32,500				
Greenbush Wet Well	\$31,500				
Mill St. - Removal Old Controls/Equipment	\$26,500				
Install / Replace Flow Meters	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$45,000
Broad Cove - Replace Ventilation System	\$22,500				
Bradley Woods - Replace Aerator	\$21,500				
Malcom St. - Replace Pump #1	\$21,500				
Broad Cove - Replace Flow Meters	\$20,500				

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Walton Cove - Replace Transfer Switch	\$15,250				
Lewis Court Control System	\$15,250				
Town Pier Wet Well Modifications	\$10,250				
Mill St. - Force Main Replacement		\$865,000			
Malcom St. - Replace Force Main		\$825,000			
Weir River - Manhole Rehabilitation		\$115,000			
Weir River Fencing		\$34,500			
Weir River Sewer Station Maintenance / Paint & New Roof		\$32,500			
Malcolm St. Sewer Pump Station Wetwell Riser		\$31,500			
Broad Cove - Wet Well Fence/Bollards		\$27,500			
Mill St. Internet/Wifi/Scada Upgrades		\$26,250			
Walton Cove - Replace Flow Meters		\$23,500			
Power Monitoring System - Various Stations		\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
Weir River - Force Main Cleaning and TV Inspection		\$11,250			
Walton Cove - New Fence / Rear of Property		\$6,500			
Night Soil Plant			\$527,500		
Town Hall Sewer Station			\$425,200		
Vactor Truck - Shared Cost (25%)			\$155,000		
Lewis court - Replace Pumps And Rail Systems			\$52,500		
Greenbush-Upgrade Ventilation System			\$33,500		
Broad Cove- Replace /Upgrade Pump 3				\$345,000	
South St. - Replace Generator				\$147,500	
S 3 - (2013) Chevy P/U With Utility Body Replacement				\$145,000	
Weir River District				\$95,000	
Broad Cove-Driveway Improvements				\$76,500	
Bel Air Rd. - Improve Gate				\$14,250	
Broad Cove Replace /Upgrade Pump 2					\$345,000
S2 (2015) Chevy P/U w/ Utility Body and Crane					\$145,000
Malcome St. - Replace Generator					\$132,000
Lewis Court - Replace Generator					\$132,000
South St. - Replace Pumps					\$112,500
Total Sewer	\$577,250	\$2,266,000	\$1,461,200	\$1,090,750	\$1,154,000

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
South Shore Country Club					
Old Pool Demolition	\$750,000				
Golf Course Equipment	\$657,887	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$80,000
Golf Course Master Plan	\$50,000				
Machinery & Equipment	\$25,000				
HVAC System for the Bowling Alley		\$350,000			
Golf Cart Barn			\$750,000		
Electric Golf Cart purchase			\$600,000		
Golf Course Bathroom			\$125,000		
Repave Cart Paths, Walkways, And Parking Areas				\$150,000	
Plumbing and Electrical upgrades - Restaurant				\$150,000	
Total South Shore Country Club	\$1,482,887	\$375,000	\$1,525,000	\$370,000	\$80,000
Town Hall					
Resurface Town Hall Parking Lot, Driveway, and Walkways	\$142,800				
Heat Pump Replacements	\$52,632	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Replacement Domestic Hot Water System	\$38,320				
Town Hall General Repairs/Renovations	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Replace Bathroom Fixtures	\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000
Upgrade original HVAC Control Panel to DDC	\$21,300				
Installing Fobs on Interior and Exterior Doors		\$129,000			
Exterior Painting of Town Hall		\$100,000			
Town Hall Partial Roof Replacement			\$300,000		
Cooling Tower Repairs				\$145,000	
Replace all five York roof top units				\$95,000	
Town Hall Main Roof Replacement					\$450,000
Replace Elevator Cars					\$258,000
Total Town Hall	\$305,052	\$274,000	\$370,000	\$290,000	\$793,000
Transfer Station					
T9 Open Top Trash Trailer (2011)	\$110,000				
Paper Compactors #1 & #2 (2001)	\$100,000				
#L-1 Chevy 2500 HD Pick Up w/ Plow	\$75,000				
Trailer Tires and Undercarriage Repair	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
L7 - 2011 Kenworth T-900 (Tractor for trailer)		\$250,000			

Department/Request	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
#L2 Chevy 3500 1-Ton Truck with Plow		\$110,000			
Cement Pad Replacement at Recycling Container Area		\$100,000			
T4 - 100 yard Closed Top Trash Trailer		\$90,000			
#L-32 244J John Deere Mini Loader			\$125,000		
T6 - 100 Yard Closed top Compactor trailer			\$90,000		
L21 - 410G John Deere Backhoe					\$250,000
#L-8 Kenworth LT-800 Tractor					\$100,000
#L37 Mitsubishi Diesel Fork Truck					\$50,000
Total Transfer Station	\$310,000	\$575,000	\$240,000	\$25,000	\$425,000
Treasurer/Collector					
New Postage Machine	\$9,595				
Total Treasurer/Collector	\$9,595	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Weir River Water System					
Water System Improvements	\$3,000,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,470,000	\$3,790,000
Total Weir River Water System	\$3,000,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,470,000	\$3,790,000
Total Capital Projects	\$20,999,196	\$99,691,305	\$22,810,096	\$44,412,905	\$40,870,371

Proposed Funding Sources	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$7,468,612	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Outlay Allocation (taxes)	\$3,500,000	\$7,705,905	\$6,933,896	\$3,628,155	\$6,265,085
Borrowing	\$3,310,000	\$84,299,400	\$5,095,000	\$30,545,000	\$26,826,786
Water Enterprise Fund	\$3,000,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,325,000	\$3,470,000	\$3,790,000
SSCC Enterprise Fund	\$1,032,887	\$375,000	\$1,525,000	\$370,000	\$80,000
Community Preservation Act Funds	\$758,640	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Excess Ambulance Receipts	\$611,124	\$0	\$595,000	\$0	\$654,500
Sewer Special Revenue Fund	\$577,250	\$2,266,000	\$1,461,200	\$1,090,750	\$1,154,000
Other Funding Source	\$285,683	\$1,525,000	\$3,875,000	\$2,300,000	\$2,100,000
Grants	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Municipal Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund	\$150,000	\$45,000	\$0	\$3,009,000	\$0
Capital Stabilization Fund	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Recreation Revolving Fund	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Proposed Funding Sources	\$20,999,196	\$99,691,305	\$22,810,096	\$44,412,905	\$40,870,371

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL BOARD

In anticipation of the 2025 Annual Town Meeting, the Personnel Board is pleased to submit this report of its activities since the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. As part of our report, we acknowledge and extend the Board's gratitude to Russell Conn for his stalwart service on the Personnel Board. We would also like to welcome Lynn Carroll as the newest member to the Board.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Following the 2024 Annual Town Meeting, the Personnel Board began collective bargaining agreement negotiations with the Hingham Library Staff Association, the Hingham Police Patrolman's Association, the Hingham Police Superior Officers Union MCOP, Local 405 and the Hingham Permanent Firefighters Association, IAFF, Local 2398. The Board will begin collective bargaining agreement negotiations with the Department of Public Works Teamsters Local 25 during FY26.

Hingham Library Staff Association

On recommendation of the Board, the Select Board has agreed to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with the Hingham Library Staff Association. This agreement provides for an equity adjustment retroactive to July 1, 2024 for one position and, for its term, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027, a general wage increase of 3% annually. Additionally, the vacation time entitlement was modified to provide that employees employed within the first calendar year will receive 1.25 days for each month worked, granted following the 90-day introductory period; 1-5 years will now be eligible for 3 weeks; 5-20 years will be eligible for 4 weeks, and 20 years or more will remain at 5 weeks. The longevity incentive was modified to include an increase in annual Longevity payment as follows: 10 but less than 15 years- \$900; 15 but less than 20 years- \$1,000, 20 but less than 25- \$1,100, and 25 years or more \$1,300. The Sick Leave Buy Back was increased starting at \$12 per day for 1-149 sick days; \$1,788 plus \$14 per day for 150-199 days and \$2,488 plus \$16 per day for each day over 199. Certain Stipends were increased and a new "Art Exhibit Coordinator Stipend" was created, effective 7/1/24 with a stipend of \$1,000 per year. "Maternity Leave" under the contract was renamed to "Parental Leave".

OTHER TOWN EMPLOYEES AND TOWN OFFICERS

The Board recommended a general wage increase of 3%, effective July 1, 2025, for employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

The Board approved an adjustment to the FY24 salary scale for Grade 13 and approved the placement of the DPW Superintendent and the Water Superintendent on the adjusted Salary Schedule.

The Board approved job descriptions for the following newly created positions: Sustainability Coordinator and placed the position on the Salary Schedule at Grade 8; Program Assistant for the Recreation Department and placed the position on the Salary Schedule at Grade 2 and Assistant Sewer Superintendent and place the position on the Salary Schedule at Grade 11.

Pursuant to the Board's authority in Section 12 of the Personnel Bylaw to approve requests to place new hires on the salary scale above Step 1, the Board approved the following Town requests for higher step placement: Center for Active Living Program Coordinator at Grade 6, Step 3 of the Salary Schedule with an additional week of vacation time; Administrative Assistant for the Conservation Department at Grade 3, Step 6 of the Salary Schedule; South Shore Country Club Grounds Keeper at Grade X-15, Year 4 on the Seasonal Salary Schedule; Building Maintenance Specialist at Grade 5, Step 3 of the Salary Schedule with 2 additional weeks of vacation; Tax Receipt Clerk at Grade 3, Step 4 of the Salary Schedule; Sustainability Coordinator at Grade 8, Step 5 of the Salary Schedule; Assistant Golf

Superintendent at Grade 6, Step 5 of the Salary Schedule with an additional week of vacation time; Assistant Town Engineer at Grade 10, Step 3 of the Salary Schedule; Conservation Officer at Grade 10, Step 5 of the Salary Schedule with an additional week of vacation time; Procurement and Contracts Manager at Grade 8, Step 4 of the Salary Schedule; Conservation Department Administrative Assistant at Grade 3, Step 2 of the Salary Schedule, and the GIS Coordinator at Grade 9, Step 5 of the Salary Schedule.

The Personnel Board also approved revisions to the job descriptions of the Assistant Conservation Officer; Procurement and Contracts Manager; DPW Superintendent; Water Superintendent; Assistant Water Superintendent; Land Use and Development Coordinator and the Historic Preservation Administrator.

The Personnel Board granted sick leave extension to one employee and approved eligibility of education incentive pay to one Police Officer commensurate with such officer’s level of education.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE PERSONNEL BY-LAW

The Personnel Board recommends that the Town, at the 2025 Annual Town Meeting, amend the Personnel By-Law, effective July 1, 2025, so that, as amended and restated, it will be in the form on file in the Town Clerk’s office immediately preceding Town Meeting.

To amend Section 16 c 1 of the Personnel By-Law to read in its entirety as follows:

- (1) Accumulated unused sick leave will be paid to all employees at normal retirement only, according to the following schedule:

<u>Accumulated Sick Days</u>	<u>Payment</u>
1-149	\$12.00 per day
150-199	\$1,788, plus \$14.00 per day for each day over 150
200 & over	\$2,488 plus \$16.00 per day for each day over 200.

THE PERSONNEL BOARD
 Jack Manning, Chair
 Lynn Carroll
 Karen Johnson
 Courtney Orwig
 David Pace

REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD

The Warrant for the 2025 Hingham Annual Town Meeting contains five proposed amendments to the Hingham Zoning By-Law. The Planning Board initiated three of these Articles and the Zoning Board of Appeals initiated two Articles. The proposed amendments broadly fall into three categories: state-mandated changes, locally-identified changes, and corrective changes.

The report of the Planning Board, submitted in accordance with MGL Chapter 40A, Section 5, is set forth below. The full text of each Article and the Comments and Recommended Motions of the Advisory Committee is available in the body of the Warrant.

ZONING ARTICLE 41: Update to Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations

The intent of this article is to update local regulations related to Accessory Dwelling Units (“ADU”) in order to comply with the Affordable Homes Act (the “Act”), which was enacted by the state in August 2024 and became effective in February 2025. As authorized by the Act, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) issued Final Regulations (the “Regulations” under 760 CMR 71.00) in January 2025. The Act and the Regulations make certain provisions of the Town’s existing requirements under Section V-K of the Zoning By-Law legally unenforceable.

The proposed amendment is intended to accomplish the following goals:

1. Bring the local zoning regulations into compliance with state law;
2. Incorporate additional reasonable regulations to the extent permitted under the Act and Regulations; and
3. Provide necessary guidance to residents of the Town wishing to create an ADU.

It is important to note that the new state law governing ADUs is already in effect for all communities in Massachusetts. If Town Meeting does not approve this Warrant Article, the new law will still be in effect in Hingham and existing provisions of Section V-K of the Zoning By-Law that do not comply with state law will be void and unenforceable. In addition, Hingham will not have the benefit of the additional reasonable regulations that are included in this Article as discussed below. Finally, residents who wish to consider creating an ADU will not have clear guidance in the Zoning By-Law as to the applicable regulations.

The following is a summary of the more substantive proposed changes to the By-Law as revised through the public hearing process and reflected in the Recommended Motion:

Update to Permit Process: ADUs must be allowed by-right, instead of requiring a special permit, in all single-family zoning districts.

Elimination of Certain Restrictions:

- The maximum size allowed has been increased from the lesser of 875 sf or 35% of the primary dwelling to the lesser of 900 sf or 50% of the primary dwelling;
- The Town may no longer require that the owner of the property occupy either the house or the ADU;
- The Town may no longer cap the overall number of ADUs; and
- Minimum lot sizes may not be required.

Adoption of Reasonable Regulations: The Town may apply reasonable or objective regulations that do not conflict with the Act or the Regulations. The Recommended Motion includes the following reasonable regulations:

- Prohibition on use of an ADU as a short-term rental with an occupancy term of less than 30 days (this is reduced from six months in the existing By-Law as required by the new Regulations);
- Limitation on the sale of an Accessory Dwelling Unit separate from the principal residence;
- Requirement that an ADU comply with all dimensional standards unless located in a preexisting nonconforming structure;
- Regulation of the location of entranceways to the ADU; and
- Restriction on the number of ADUs to one per lot.

The full text of the Recommended Motion is found in the Warrant. A majority of the Planning Board voted (3-1-1) to recommend adoption of this article as revised through the public hearing process and reflected in the Advisory Committee’s Recommended Motion. The Zoning Board of Appeals also voted to support the Recommended Motion.

ZONING ARTICLE 42: Exemption for Lots or Structures Affected by Taking

The intent of this article is to create exemptions under Section III-I of the Zoning By-Law that would allow structures to be maintained if new or intensified dimensional nonconformities result on the lot from a governmental taking.

A taking results when a public agency seizes private property for a community purpose. A taking may result from, for instance, a roadway improvement or a utility project. A taking of land may result in noncompliance with certain dimensional requirements related to frontage, lot area, or setbacks.

The Planning Board initiated this article so that takings for public purposes do not negatively impact an affected property owner’s rights. As proposed, the buildings or structures remaining on a lot following a taking would be allowed to remain even if the taking resulted in a new or worsened zoning nonconformity. These structures would also newly be allowed to be altered, reconstructed, extended, or changed by special permit, provided that any nonconforming yard or height conditions is not extended. This requirement would not apply to single-family and two-family homes that already have the benefit of Section III-I.2 of the Zoning By-Law known as the Hatfield Amendment.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend adoption of this article as revised through the public hearing process.

ZONING ARTICLE 43: Signage Reference Correction

The intent of this article is to correct references in a footnote to the Schedule of Signage Regulations Table under Section V-B of the Zoning By-Law that govern the location of signs in order to maintain corner clearance and sight distance requirements. As such, this Article represents a cleanup of previously approved zoning amendments that resulted in the erroneous references.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend adoption of this article.

ZONING ARTICLE 44: Extension or Alteration of Nonconforming Uses and Structure

The intent of this article is to update the review process for the extension or alteration of pre-existing nonconforming structures or uses. Applicants wishing to make changes to these uses or structures are presently required to obtain a “finding” under MGL c. 40A, § 6 from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The finding process is unclear. The Zoning Board initiated this amendment in order to establish a more precise review procedure for such applications by replacing the finding with a special permit process. Doing so would enable the Zoning Board of Appeals to utilize defined special permit approval criteria, as well as

impose conditions if deemed appropriate. This requirement would not apply to single-family and two-family homes that are governed by Section III-I.2 of the Zoning By-Law.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend adoption of this article as revised through the public hearing process.

ZONING ARTICLE 45: Expiration of Cell Tower Special Permits

The intent of this article is to encourage improved wireless service throughout the Town by eliminating an automatic 5-year expiration period for approved cell towers. The zoning amendment was proposed by the Zoning Board of Appeals, who administers permitting of Personal Wireless Service Facilities, in an effort to address a locally-identified need for better connectivity. Elimination of the lapse provisions under Section V.E.7.I. of the Zoning By-Law would relieve cell tower providers of the need to return before the Board and repeat the Special Permit process every five years, while still maintaining other safeguards against negative impacts.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend adoption of this article.

Full text of the proposed Articles and recommendations of the Planning Board may be reviewed by the public in the Office of the Town Clerk and the Community Planning Department. Materials are also available to view online at <https://www.hingham-ma.gov/679/Proposed-By-Law-Amendments>.

HINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

Kevin Ellis, Chair
Gordon Carr
Rita DaSilva
Tracy Shriver
Gary Torndorf-Dick

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The 2024-2025 school year was marked by collaborative work and focused efforts to ensure the academic achievement, personal growth, and social-emotional wellness of HPS students. From classrooms to the athletic fields, from the artistic stage to engagement opportunities in the broader community, HPS students continue to develop skills, explore strengths, foster interests, and contribute talents to local and global communities. These successes are a direct result of the dedication and hard work of our staff, as well as the unwavering support from our families and community.

Strategic Plan

During the 2024-2025 school year, Hingham Public Schools completed the third and final year of the district's three-year strategic plan. One area of strategic focus for the 2024-2025 school year was the development of a "Portrait of a Learner," an initiative which outlines the skills and competencies students will need to thrive in their academic journeys and beyond. This guiding document will serve as a "north star" for the 2025-2028 strategic plan, which is currently under development. Other major areas of focus during the 2024-2025 school year included continued emphasis on the district's multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to address the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. Additionally, the district maintained its focus on the implementation of high-quality, aligned, and research-based curricula, as well as ensuring the facilities, structures, and climate needed to foster a safe and supportive school environment.

New Elementary School Building

A highlight of the 2024-2025 school year included the opening of the new Foster Elementary School in January 2025. The new 126,385 sq. ft. learning space will accommodate up to 605 students in Hingham's Pre-K-5 program. The new building features grade-level "neighborhoods" with common collaborative spaces featuring ecosystem designs, specialist spaces for art, music, library, gym, and computer science, and an outdoor nature classroom. In addition to serving the needs of students, the building will also be a resource for the broader community, with a large gymnasium, cafetorium and playground spaces. We are grateful to the town citizens for supporting this project, and to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for providing partial financial support. Special thanks to the 2017 Building Project Committee for their work in guiding the project from the initial feasibility study, conducted in 2017, through the project completion.

Community Partnerships

In FY25, Hingham Public Schools continued to benefit from strong and long-standing community partnerships. The cooperative efforts, volunteerism, and generosity of parents, PTOs, boosters, community groups, civic organizations, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, the Hingham Education Foundation, the Hingham Sports Partnership, and the Hingham Arts Alliance have again supported the School Department in supporting its mission and achieving goals. During the 2024-2025 school year, HPS was grateful for the support of the Hingham Education Foundation for the "Building Thinking Classrooms" initiative to support innovation in secondary mathematics instruction. We also acknowledge the work of the Hingham Sports Partnership in leading efforts to construct a new Wellness Center, to be known as "The Dock," at Hingham High School, with an anticipated completion date of June 2025. The School Department and the School Committee gratefully acknowledge and appreciate the many community efforts that enhance facilities, programs, and activities of the Hingham Public Schools.

FY26 Proposed Budget

As has been the experience of many of our peer districts across the South Shore, the FY26 budget cycle for HPS has been impacted by several significant factors including increased utility costs (natural gas, fuel, and electricity), increases in legally required special education costs, including specialized services, out-of-district tuitions, and transportation, and contractual obligations resulting from the settlement of recent contracts. Simultaneously, the district is working to meet the parameters of a Memorandum of

Understanding, developed by the School Committee, Advisory, and Select Board following the spring 2023 override, that capped spending for the FY25-FY28 school years to an overall 3.5% increase. Based on this agreement, the town will allocate \$70,383,752 for the FY26 budget to the schools, representing a 3.5% increase from FY25.

To meet the parameters of the 3.5% MOU, for FY26 the Hingham Public Schools have proposed \$1.5 million dollars of cuts and efficiencies. These cuts include 5.2 positions at the elementary level, 2.4 positions at the middle school, 5 positions at the high school, one special education administrator, one maintenance position, a partial reduction of a Central Office position and reductions to technology. Additional offsets have been outlined through increases of fees for parking, athletics, and facility rentals, as well as the addition of a new transportation fee for secondary students.

As noted above, legally required special education costs, including Out of District tuition, transportation and specialized services have continued to increase post-pandemic. The Memorandum of Understanding with the town allows the schools to request increased funding for special education costs above a 2% threshold. During the FY26 school year, HPS anticipates special education costs to exceed the 2% threshold by \$1.2 million dollars.

Roof Repair/Replacement

HPS is actively working to address urgent roof maintenance and repair needs at Hingham High School, Plymouth River School, and South School. Due to the aging condition of these roofs and associated urgent repair needs, the district has applied to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Program seeking partial funding for roof repairs and replacement. If accepted into MSBA and/or pending approval of full town funding, roof replacements are anticipated to be completed by summer 2029.

Acknowledgements

Hingham Public Schools continues to thrive due to the unwavering support of parents, community organizations, and local partners. The School Committee and HPS administration appreciate the citizens and voters of the town for their ongoing support and financing of annual education budgets and facility enhancement projects.

Superintendent of Schools, Kathryn (Katie) Roberts

HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Nes Correnti, Chair

Jen Benham, Vice Chair

Alyson Anderson, Secretary

Michelle Ayer

Matthew Cosman

Tim Miller-Dempsey

Kerry Ni

Slater Fairfield, Student Representative

MUNICIPAL FINANCE TERMS

APPROPRIATION - An authorization by the Town Meeting to make obligations and payments from the treasury for a specific purpose.

ASSESSED VALUATION - A valuation set upon real or personal property by the Board of Assessors as a basis for levying taxes.

CAPITAL BUDGET - A plan of proposed capital outlays and the means of financing them for the current fiscal period.

CHERRY SHEET - A form showing all state and county charges and reimbursements to the Town as certified by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

DEBT SERVICE - Payment of interest and repayment of principal to holders of the Town's debt instruments.

FISCAL YEAR - A 12-month period, commencing on July 1, to which the annual budget applies.

FUND BALANCE - The unencumbered cash remaining in a fund at the end of a specified time period, usually the end of the fiscal year.

GENERAL FUND - The major Town-owned fund which is created with Town receipts and which is charged with expenditures payable from such revenues.

GRANT - A contribution of assets by one governmental unit or other organization to another. Typically, these contributions are made to local governments from the State and Federal government. Grants are usually made for specific purposes.

LINE-ITEM BUDGET - A format of budgeting which organizes costs by type of expenditure such as expenses, equipment, and salaries.

OVERLAY - The overlay is the amount raised by the Assessors to be used for potential abatement of property taxes. The Overlay Surplus is the portion of each year's overlay account no longer required to cover property tax abatements.

OVERRIDE - An override is a voter-approved, permanent property tax increase. It is designed to provide a community with the ability to generate sufficient revenues to fund recurring costs that are likely to continue into the future, such as annual operating expenses for educational and municipal services.

PROPERTY TAX LEVY - The amount produced by multiplying the assessed valuation of property by the tax rate. The tax rate is expressed "per thousand dollars" of assessed valuation.

RESERVE FUND - Money set aside by Town Meeting to be allocated by the Advisory Committee for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.



TALENT BANK APPLICATION

Select Board
Town Hall
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043-2757
781-741-1451 • 781-741-1454 (Fax)

Date _____

Name _____

Home Address _____

Business Address _____

Telephone _____ (home) _____ (business)

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Occupation _____

Educational Background _____

Civic, Charitable, and Educational Activities

Town Committees or Offices _____

I am interested in the following Committees _____

NOTES

NOTES

Office of the Select Board
Town Hall
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043-2757

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