

TOWN OF HINGHAM



WARRANT for the **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Page</u>	<u>Article</u>	
2		Town Meeting Procedures
14		Talent Bank Application
		<u>Special Town Meeting Articles</u>
4	1	Construction of New Foster Elementary School
9	2	Construction of New Public Safety Facility
11	3	Transfer of Unassigned Fund Balance to New Stabilization Fund

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

Welcome to the 2022 Hingham Special Town Meeting. As Hingham's legislative body, 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 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).
- No speaker is allowed to **indulge in personalities**, but must 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.
- This being 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 **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.

November 2022

Michael J. Puzo
Moderator

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 Hingham High School, 17 Union Street, in said Hingham, Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00 pm, then and there to act on the following Articles:

**ARTICLE 1
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FOSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Will the Town raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the 2017 School Building Committee for professional fees, constructing, equipping and furnishing a new elementary school to replace the existing William L. Foster Elementary School located at 55 Downer Avenue, Hingham, MA (Lot 1 on Assessors' Map 38), which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50 years and for which the Town may be eligible 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 any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town. Any grant that the Town may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) the MSBA-approved percentage of approximately forty and 54/100 percent (40.54%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, or act on anything relating thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the 2017 School Building Committee)

COMMENT: The William L. Foster Elementary School ("Foster") has reached the end of its functional life. Long-term investment in Foster has been postponed to prioritize other school infrastructure needs during the past 15 years. The Town needs to determine the path forward for supporting the education of students in the Foster district for the next 50-70 years.

Building Background

Foster opened in 1951 with additions constructed in 1957 and 1974 and accessibility renovations in 2008. In the 2005 Ten-Year School Facilities Master Plan (the "2005 Master Plan"), the School Facilities Study Committee identified overcrowding and facility deficiencies that warranted the exploration of a new elementary school, the potential renovation/replacement of Foster, updates for Plymouth River School, and a comprehensive Hingham Middle School project. The Town chose to prioritize the East Elementary project as a first project to pursue with the Hingham Middle School and potential Foster projects to follow when possible.

The 2005 Master Plan determined that Foster would require comprehensive renovations or replacement in the future. Educational programming is negatively affected by inadequate instructional space including classroom size, lack of windows in several classrooms, shared library and technology lab space, staff work areas in hallways, and undersized gymnasium and cafeteria spaces. Single pane plexiglas windows exist throughout the building resulting in poor, or no, natural light. The entire building envelope is very poorly insulated, resulting in significant heat loss and excessive energy costs during winter. The poor energy efficiency of the building adds unnecessary operating costs, while also increasing utilization of fossil fuels in contrast to the Town's "Net Zero" climate action goals, established by vote under Article 14 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

An aging 1950's mechanical infrastructure is a critical area of concern. The current steam heating distribution system is deteriorating, supplying inconsistent heat throughout the building. Most problematic have been leaks in the steam distribution infrastructure resulting in frequent and costly repairs as well as the displacement of students from their learning environments. Leaks have occurred in walls, under floors,

and in crawl spaces. On occasion, the relocation of students to other parts of the building and total evacuation to the High School auditorium has been necessary, while the system is being repaired. The leaks are also impacting the electrical system, as steam can travel through conduit into electrical/fire alarm panels and set off alarms and cause unreliable Wi-Fi communication. These conditions will only worsen and be more costly to address as time passes.

Building Study and Design Process To-Date

By vote under Article 2 of the 2008 Special Town Meeting held on March 3, 2008, \$7 million of funding was approved to “breathe new life” into Foster and Plymouth River Elementary School. Renovations made to Foster with that funding included redesign of specialized educational areas, reconfiguration of classroom and staff space, replacement of a few windows and doors, overall updating of the building with paint, carpet and lighting, and some ADA compliance issues. Due to costly required ADA upgrades, many of the windows intended to be replaced could not be and remained as is.

In 2011, a partial roof collapse at the Hingham Middle School contributed to the Town building a new middle school under the Massachusetts School Building Authority’s (“MSBA”) model school program. In 2014, the new Hingham Middle School opened and the School Committee began active discussions refocusing on a potential Foster building project.

The vote under Article 20 of the 2017 Annual Town Meeting authorized the appropriation of \$750,000 for a Foster Feasibility Study – a necessary first step toward securing state grant funding to explore options to determine a permanent solution to space and infrastructure issues, which options would include the construction of a new elementary school under the guidelines of the MSBA. A new building committee was also created by vote under Article 19 of the 2017 Annual Town Meeting.

In 2019, the MSBA notified Hingham that it had been invited into its Core Building Program and that Foster would be considered for a renovation, addition/renovation, or a new school. Hingham began the process of working with the MSBA to evaluate all three options.

The vote under Article 17 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting authorized the appropriation of an additional \$350,000 for feasibility efforts to augment the 2017 appropriation and ensure sufficient funding based on comparable projects in the Commonwealth. The feasibility phase included geotechnical explorations, a traffic study, educational programming, a site survey, wetlands delineation, and other diligence and design work to identify a variety of options for a renovation, addition/renovation, or new school. The 2017 School Building Committee considered more than ten different design options for the project over several months. As required by the MSBA, those options included a renovation of the existing school and several different settings and configurations of a school to be newly constructed on the property.

The ultimate decision against renovation of the existing building and on the proposed new school building design was based on several factors, including the following:

- Significant costs associated with upgrading infrastructure and mechanical/electrical systems that are embedded in the “bones” of the building.
- Inherent structural deficiencies that could not be adapted to support delivery of aspects of the educational program.
- Costs associated with accessibility upgrades.
- Flood plain concerns.
- The multi-year phased construction schedule for renovation that would require relocation of students and extend the length and costs of the project.

The feasibility phase culminated in the submission to the MSBA of a design package detailing the preferred option for the construction of a new school, which is the optimal choice to fulfill educational goals for the least cost possible.

On March 2, 2022, the MSBA approved the Town’s preferred option for construction of a new school, and the schematic design phase began.

Proposed Project Cost and Major Factors

The total project budget for constructing a new school at the current Foster site – as approved by the MSBA on August 31, 2022, is \$113,335,749. This represents the most expensive single project ever undertaken by the Town and a clear understanding of the driving factors is critical. Among the major cost drivers are:

1. *The Site:* The 2017 School Building Committee researched potential alternative locations to serve the Foster district students, specifically analyzing several locations; including the Talbots Headquarters site, the School Bus Depot site, Carlson Field, a “mega-school” at Plymouth River, and a review of sites researched by the Public Safety Building Committee.

The alternative locations were all determined unworkable, unavailable, or otherwise infeasible by the Committee. This analysis led to the decision to pursue the development of the project on the current Foster site on Downer Avenue.

While the current Foster site evolved as the only workable location, there are meaningful costs inherent in preparing the property for construction of a modern educational facility. A major obstacle with the current Foster property is that it is partially situated in a flood plain that places the current building in jeopardy of significant flooding in the future. As a result, the newly designed building will be elevated to a level that is higher than the projected 2070 flood plain level in a large storm event. Extensive site work will be necessary to remove soil from a portion of Otis Hill and use it to raise the elevation of the new building, which is to be constructed in the playfields to the rear of the current school. The objective of the site work is to build a school in a manner that affords the most protection from potential flooding throughout the lifespan of the building while also maximizing the effective use of the entire property.

2. *Programming:* While the Foster School current enrollment is approximately 410 students, the MSBA, as part of its grant process, set the design enrollment for the new school at 605 students for K-5. The required MSBA enrollment figure is an average projected enrollment calculated from its own enrollment study that incorporates the existing and projected development in north Hingham. Using this enrollment basis, the total square footage of the proposed Foster building is 126,385, an increase from the current building size of approximately 72,000 square feet.

The increase of approximately 54,000 square feet is driven by several factors:

- MSBA guidelines for classroom and core educational spaces, such as gymnasium, cafetorium, music rooms, and special education.
- Requirements to implement the Town’s education program as is required by the MSBA as part of its grant program.
- A multi-purpose room to house the field science program and the expansion of the tuition-based Kids in Action program.
- Expansion of the integrated Pre-K program now currently offered only at the East Elementary School. This program is tuition-based for students without special needs.

These programmatic elements are driven by a comprehensive educational plan that was developed through collaboration among the 2017 School Building Committee, School Committee, School Department, and community input as is required by the MSBA grant program as part of the feasibility phase of the project. The entire educational program was ultimately approved by the MSBA and the Commonwealth’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

3. *Investment in Energy Efficiency:* The current heating system is fueled by heating oil and natural gas, relying entirely on fossil fuels. These systems require constant repairs, most notably in connection with the aging electrical systems and failing steam pipe distribution infrastructure. The combination of fossil fuel dependence along with poor energy efficiency from poor insulation and outdated technology both increases operating costs and runs counter to the “net zero” climate protection goals established for the Town by vote under Article 14 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

The new elementary school design proposes an all-electric building, including the heating and cooling systems. Investments are envisioned for usage of non-fossil fuel technology, modern and highly

efficient insulation techniques, and state of the art systems. Investment in these modern systems and technology will significantly reduce the amount of energy used to operate the school, reduce maintenance costs, and support Hingham's climate action goals.

4. *Inflation:* Increases in prices throughout the U.S. economy have become a significant challenge over the past year. Cost increases in the construction industry are directly impacting the cost of building the new elementary school.

Financing

Of the total project budget there are certain non-reimbursable items as part of the MSBA grant guidelines. For instance, the MSBA considers construction costs above \$360 per square foot ineligible for reimbursement. This is not based on the actual cost of school construction or specific to Hingham. This is a policy that the MSBA employs so it can support grants to as many districts as is possible given its available funding. The actual projected construction costs based on current and similar school building projects in Massachusetts are approximately \$600 per square foot.

The MSBA also limits its reimbursement participation for sitework to 8% of the building construction cost. Given the site's unique physical characteristics, including tidal marsh, riverfront, wetlands, wooded upland, and associated topography, this project will require much more sitework than this funding cap will provide. Additionally, there are cost caps on technology, furniture, and equipment based on per student allotments. As with construction costs, these limits do not reflect the cost of furniture, equipment, and technology, but instead allow the MSBA to maximize the number of grants it can provide across the Commonwealth.

Based on the MSBA approved total project budget of \$113,335,749, non-reimbursable costs totaling \$47,832,839 have been identified, resulting in net approved costs of \$65,502,910. After applying the MSBA reimbursement rate of 40.54% to these net approved costs, the projected Town share (59.46%) of the total project cost is expected to be \$88,745,566.

The anticipated MSBA reimbursement rate of eligible costs is calculated as follows:

<u>Project Reimbursement Rate</u>
36.89 % Base reimbursement
1.65 % Maintenance Credit
<u>2.00 % LEED Certification (green and sustainable components)</u>
40.54 % Total

If this Article is approved, using a 10-year average for FY24 through FY33, the associated excluded debt service would result in an average property tax increase of approximately \$396 per year (3.9%) for the median assessed property value of \$739,400. This assumes a 30-year borrowing with level payments and current interest rate projections from the Town's financial advisors.

Implications of Voting "No"

The price tag of this project is a significant issue. As a result, the Advisory Committee spent considerable time understanding the process undertaken by the 2017 School Building Committee, the School Department and the relevant boards and committees to analyze the value to the Town of this project. The information above summarizes the process leading to the project. In addition to the above, the Advisory Committee explored the implications if the Town declines to approve the project.

In general, a no vote would set back the Town's educational planning process, add years of further delay to the replacement of a building identified as insufficient almost 20 years ago, force implementation of education practices explicitly decided against by our expert professionals and elected officials, and damage the inherently valuable community culture of Hingham prioritizing investments in education.

While no definitive plan of action has been decided upon, potential steps that would be considered by the School Administration in the event this Article is not approved include:

- Require students and staff to continue utilizing a facility that has been determined to be inadequate to support the educational goals of the community while alternative long-term plans are developed.
- Creation of an entirely new planning and building committee process to reevaluate the next options, adding at least a year until a step forward could be determined.
- Any new planning process would essentially be forced to consider options – such as redistricting to larger schools, modular classrooms, space leasing, renovation of the current Foster School, which have already been determined to be contrary to School Department policies, insufficient, ineffective, or unworkable.
- MSBA approval of state funding for a new elementary school in Hingham would be rescinded. Once a new proposal is identified for constructing a facility that could incorporate the current Foster population, it would need to begin an entirely new round of consideration for state funding by the MSBA – a process that can take several years.
- It is not reasonable to assume that a future building project to accommodate Foster students can be constructed for less money. It is expected that costs will only increase with time.

Anticipated Timeline

With positive action on this Article at Town Meeting and at the November 8, 2022 election, it is anticipated that the new elementary school will open in September 2024.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting and an affirmative majority vote at the November 8, 2022 election.

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

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirteen Million Three Hundred Thirty-Five Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Nine Dollars (\$113,335,749) to be expended under the direction of the 2017 School Building Committee for professional fees, constructing, equipping and furnishing a new elementary school, to replace the existing William L. Foster Elementary School located at 55 Downer Avenue, Hingham, MA (Lot 1 on Assessors’ Map 38), which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50 years and for which the Town may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”). 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, and M.G.L. c. 70B, or pursuant to any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor. The Town acknowledges that the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town. Any grant that the Town may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) the MSBA-approved percentage of approximately forty and 54/100 percent (40.54%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, and provided that no construction contract shall be awarded for the new school until a Project Funding Agreement has been executed between the Massachusetts School Building Authority and the Town, and further provided that the appropriation hereunder shall be subject to and contingent upon an affirmative vote of the Town to exempt the amounts required for the payment of interest and principal on said borrowing from the limitations on taxes imposed by M.G.L. c. 59, § 21C (Proposition 2½), and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to such vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the Town and the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

ARTICLE 2 CONSTRUCTION OF NEW PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

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 to be used to pay for professional fees, constructing, equipping, and furnishing a new Public Safety Facility located at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: This Article asks Town Meeting to approve \$46,700,000 for construction of a Public Safety Facility building (“the Facility”) to be located at 335 Lincoln Street. The Facility is designed to combine the operations of the Hingham Police Department (“HPD”) and the North Fire Station (“North Station”) and is expected to have a 50-to-70-year lifespan. Since 2020, four Town Meetings have voted funds totaling \$8,610,380 for the initial phases of the project which included a site feasibility study, land acquisition, preliminary design documents, and pre-construction bid documents. Approval of this Article will authorize funding for construction of the proposed Public Safety Facility, the final stage of this project.

The project at the proposed site began in 2020 when a parcel of land at 335 Lincoln Street became available. The vote under Article 12 of 2020 Annual Town Meeting authorized \$250,000 for a feasibility study of the site and created a Public Safety Building Committee (“the Committee”). That Committee was tasked to determine whether the location could house an appropriately sized facility to serve the needs of Hingham’s current and projected population. The Town retained Kaestle Boos Associates (“KBA”), an architectural firm with strong experience in designing municipal public safety buildings, to prepare conceptual floor plans and site plans, and evaluate traffic issues. Subsurface environmental and geotechnical investigations also were completed. As part of its work, the Committee visited facilities in other communities to further understand considerations in the design of fire and police stations. Upon completion of its review, the Committee unanimously voted that the property is a feasible location for a public safety facility.

Based on the Committee’s recommendation, the vote under Article 1 of the Special Town Meeting held on November 21, 2020, authorized the Select Board to purchase the 335 Lincoln Street property for the sum of \$5,525,000. The vote under Article 18 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting approved \$1,250,000 in funding to prepare schematic and design documents for the facility and the Town retained Hill International (“Hill”) as the Owners Project Manager (“OPM”) for project oversight. The vote under Article 24 of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting approved \$1,585,380 for the pre-construction bid documents.

Before identification of this site, the Town considered several initiatives to address the needs of key municipal departments as our population has grown and changed in demographics. In particular, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and the Senior Center have outgrown their current facilities making it more difficult to provide appropriate services. This project addresses the space needs of all three departments.

The North Fire Station is the primary station serving northwest Hingham. The Town has long recognized the deficiencies of this facility, which has had minimal upgrades since it opened in 1942. It still uses many original systems, has no sprinkler system, and is neither sized nor configured to accommodate modern fire equipment. Moreover, the housing areas in the station do not have proper bathrooms and living space for both male and female fire fighters. Modern fire stations are separated into hot and cold zones; hot zones are those that are working areas potentially contaminated with carcinogens from normal firefighting activities. These areas should be clearly segregated from a station’s cold zones – including administrative, living, and eating areas. This segregation is not possible in our current North Station. Prior to 2020, the Town made several attempts to renovate the existing North Fire Station. The vote under Article 14 of the 2015 Annual Town Meeting formed a Fire Station Building Committee and approved design work to renovate North Station. That Committee determined that renovating the current station was not feasible given the site constraints – specifically, its size and the nature of the soil under the site. The vote under Article 14 of the 2016 Annual Town Meeting approved additional monies for new site selection.

Similarly, the Police Department is currently housed in Town Hall; the space was originally added to the building in 1967 as the Science Wing to the then Central Middle School. The building became Town Hall in 1998. As the space was not intended for a Police Station, it has inadequate entry areas, meeting rooms, and training spaces. As with North Station, the current Police Station also suffers from deficiencies and sub-standard working conditions. The Police Department facility was not built with both female and male officers in mind, lacks adequate training areas, has lockers original to the Middle School that are not adequate for public safety personnel, lacks private areas for officers to speak with victims of a crime, and lacks private offices for the mental health clinician and domestic violence advocates. A modern, combined facility will be sized for Hingham's current and projected population and density. The layout will provide operational efficiencies, such as shared meeting rooms, training areas, and workout facilities. Both departments will be able to adequately accommodate both male and female living spaces, locker rooms, and bathrooms.

The new building is designed to address space deficiencies of existing facilities for both the Hingham Police Department and the Hingham Fire Department ("HFD"). During Schematic Design and Design Development, the programmatic requirements of both departments were developed and confirmed during a series of regular working sessions with KBA, Hill, HPD, HFD, representatives of the Building Committee, and the Town Engineer. Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant and Hingham Net Zero have been involved throughout the design process. The current design is for a 49,000 square foot building which will be three stories facing the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") parking lot and two stories facing Lincoln Street (Route 3A). The facility has 128 parking spaces: 75 secured garage spaces for fire and police vehicles, 50 general use spaces, and 3 spaces on the apron. Both garage and general parking areas will be equipped with electric charging stations and allow for increased capacity as demand grows.

Due to the location on 3A, traffic engineering has been a critical component of the design; the design allows for quick access and egress by emergency vehicles and minimizes impact to the traffic flow on 3A. The Building Committee has incorporated low emission technology into the mechanical and electrical systems wherever technically feasible and practical. The design provides for electricity as the power source for 97% of the building and for the construction of systems that make the building ready for subsequent installation of solar panels. The remaining 3% will be powered by natural gas and will be used to recoup heat loss when the truck bay doors are opened during the winter months; existing electric technologies are not sufficient for this purpose, but can be retrofitted as technologies become available.

The proposed Public Safety Facility will house both the Police Department and a satellite station of the Fire Department, replacing the current North Station. The Fire Department Headquarters will remain at 339 Main Street. The South Shore Regional Emergency Call Center ("SSRECC") will remain at Town Hall. The design for the proposed Facility addresses deficiencies in the current facilities. It also includes the flexibility to accommodate a dynamic workforce while providing the functionality and space necessary to serve the needs of modern-day fire and police departments.

This project also affects the needs of the Senior Center. The vote under Article 14 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting authorized funds to redesign the Senior Center, incorporating space at Town Hall currently used by the Police Department. The work on the Senior Center cannot begin until the Police Department has vacated its current location.

In September 2022, independent professional cost estimators were hired by KBA and Hill to provide updated construction cost estimates based on the current construction documents as well as changes to the building design made at the request of the Planning Board. The two estimates were reconciled and the construction cost estimate for the total project is \$39,658,840. The Building Committee requests \$46,700,000 for a total project budget to complete the construction, as well as provide furnishings, equipment, security/access control systems, audio visual and technology equipment, and specialty fire equipment as well as contingencies for design, construction, and inflation.

Favorable action on this Article would allow the Committee to continue working with KBA and Hill to proceed into the Construction Phases of the Project. The Building Committee will continue to use the services of KBA for architectural services, and Hill for project bidding and construction oversight. It is anticipated that

the project will be put out to bid in late fall/early winter of 2022, construction will start in the Spring of 2023, and the Facility will be completed and ready for occupancy in the Fall of 2024.

There are no anticipated increases in staffing requirements as a result of this project.

If this Article is approved, using a 10-year average for FY24 through FY33, the associated excluded debt service would result in an average property tax increase of approximately \$258 per year (2.6%) for the median assessed property value of \$739,400. This assumes a 30-year borrowing with level principal payments and current interest rate projections from the Town's financial advisors.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting and an affirmative majority vote at the November 8, 2022 election.

The Planning Board voted unanimously in support of this project.

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

RECOMMENDED: That the Town appropriate an amount of up to \$46,700,000 to be expended by the Select Board for professional fees, constructing, equipping, and furnishing a new Public Safety Facility located at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, Massachusetts. To meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under M.G.L. c. 44, or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor, and further provided that the appropriation hereunder shall be subject to and contingent upon an affirmative vote of the Town to exempt the amounts required for the payment of interest and principal on said borrowing from the limitations on taxes imposed by M.G.L. c. 59, § 21C (Proposition 2 ½).

ARTICLE 3 TRANSFER OF UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO NEW STABILIZATION FUND

Will the Town transfer an amount of money from available reserves into a "Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund" established hereby under M.G.L. c. 40, § 5 for the purpose of paying debt service payments for the excluded debt notes and/or bonds to be issued for the new Public Safety Facility and/or the new Foster Elementary School in order to reduce the need to raise these funds through the annual tax rate, or for any other lawful purpose, or act on anything relating thereto?
(Inserted by the Select Board)

COMMENT: his Article asks if the Town will create a "Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund" ("Fund") and transfer \$7,000,000 to this Fund for the purpose of paying capital costs and/or offsetting a portion of debt service on debt issued to build the Public Safety Facility and/or the new elementary school to replace Foster School. If funds are set aside for these purposes, annual appropriations from the Fund by future Town Meetings can be used to mitigate tax increases to pay debt service on the bonds for the projects, or for any other lawful purpose as determined by a future Town Meeting.

The Town has known for many years that replacements for the North Fire Station and for the Foster School would be needed and has made clear its intent to use excess Unassigned Fund Balance (the Town's "rainy-day" fund) to help reduce the increase in taxes resulting from undertaking significant capital projects. The creation of this Stabilization Fund and transferring a portion of currently available excess Unassigned Fund Balance into this Fund is the enactment of that plan and commits the Town to using these monies for this purpose.

The use of a Stabilization Fund to mitigate property tax increases on large capital projects is consistent with the Town's Financial Policy. Hingham's Financial Policy states: "The Town should maintain Unassigned Fund Balance at a level of no less than 16% and as high as 20% of Total Annual Expenditures." (Financial Management, sect. 6). "When Unassigned Fund Balance exceeds 20%, the Advisory Committee should consider recommending that Town Meeting apply such amounts in excess of 20% to items such as

unfunded long-term liabilities, long-term and non-recurring capital expenditures, retirement of debt, or targeted tax relief.” (Financial Management, sect. 7). Currently the Unassigned Fund Balance exceeds 20% of the Total Annual Expenditures.

If the establishment of a “Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund” is approved through this Article the Town will have the ability to evaluate alternative opportunities to use this Fund. The decision as to what amount will be used in any given fiscal year towards capital projects or to offset debt service will require a two-thirds vote at a future Town Meeting. Should the Town find it needs these funds for some other purpose that is consistent with the Town’s Financial Policy of Unassigned Fund Balance usages, these funds could be transferred from this Stabilization Fund or the Fund could be closed with a two-thirds vote at a future Town Meeting.

Solely by way of example, if the “Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund” is approved, the Fund could, but need not, be used to provide approximately \$621 in tax relief for the median Hingham property owner (property assessed at \$739,400) spread over the course of the initial years when debt service costs are projected to peak.

Approval of this Article requires a two-thirds vote by Town Meeting.

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

RECOMMENDED: That the Town establish a “Capital Project Cost and Debt Service Stabilization Fund” under M.G.L. c. 40, § 5 and transfer \$7,000,000 to this fund from excess Unassigned Fund Balance for the purpose of paying debt service payments for the excluded debt notes and/or bonds to be issued for the new Public Safety Facility and/or the new elementary school to replace Foster School in order to reduce the need to raise these funds through the annual tax rate, or for any other lawful purpose.

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: 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 Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 7:00 am, then and there to give their votes "Yes" or "No" on the following Town ballot questions which will appear as question #5 and question #6 on the Official State Election Ballot:

#5. Shall the Town of Hingham be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and-one-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to pay the costs of professional fees, constructing, equipping and furnishing a new elementary school to replace the existing William L. Foster Elementary School located at 55 Downer Avenue, Hingham, MA (Lot 1 on Assessors' Map 38)?

#6. Shall the Town of Hingham be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and-one-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to pay the costs of professional fees, constructing, equipping and furnishing a new Public Safety Facility located at 335 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA?

The polls for the reception of ballots as aforesaid will be open at 7:00 am and remain open until 8:00 pm.

And you are directed to serve this warrant by causing an attested copy thereof to be posted in the Town Hall seven days at least before the day appointed for said meeting.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this warrant with your doings thereon to the Town Clerk on or before Monday, October 24, 2022.

Given under our hands at Hingham on October 6, 2022.

William C. Ramsey
Elizabeth C. Klein
Joseph M. Fisher

HINGHAM 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
October 7, 2022



Office of the Select Board
TOWN OF HINGHAM
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043-2757
781-741-1451 • 781-741-1454 (Fax)

TALENT BANK APPLICATION

Date _____

Name _____

Home Address _____

Business
Address _____

Telephone _____ (home) _____ (business)

Fax _____

Email _____

Occupation _____

Educational Background _____

Civic, Charitable, and Educational Activities

Town Committees or Offices

I am interested in the following Committees _____

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