

Joint Hingham School Committee/BOS/Advisory

March 23, 2021

7:00 PM

Remote meeting via Zoom:

Dial-in number: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 451-213-735

Passcode: 111222

Website: <https://zoom.us/join>

Members present: Kerry Ni, Carlos Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Jen Benham

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM.

2. The School Committee attended a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to:

- a. hear the BOS deliberations of the FY '22 Town Budget. Tom Mayo clarified the Municipal Budget which includes a new Assistant Town Administrator of Operations to solve three main issues: 1) financial planning, 2) improvement of office capacity, oversight, communications and responsiveness, and 3) remove bottlenecks, and provide more guidance/direction to departments and boards/committees. He emphasized that the town revenue and the number of BOS meetings have doubled in the past 15 years which is indicative of the growth and increased pace of the community. He stressed the burden of complex operations such as multiple large capital projects, the implementation of the Master Plan, South Hingham development, revitalization of downtown Hingham, climate change preparedness and resiliency, and the water system acquisition and transition. The budget also includes an Assistant Town Admin of Finance to help with long term financial analysis, coordination with boards/committees, paperless options, and oversight of eight departments. He showed proposed changes to the organizational chart that the two assistants would allow for. Furthermore there is a request for a new Transfer Station Heavy Equipment Operator, and a Field Maintenance Program recommended maintenance program for fields of \$241,180 that would cover seasonal employees and expenses.

The BOS expressed approval of the proposals. Mary Power emphasized the need for the two Assistant Town Administrators especially in light of the possible need for an override in FY 23. She acknowledged the importance of the letter from Dr. Austin which helped clarify items in the school budget. She acknowledged that ACES recommends fully funding the School Committee's proposed budget and

highlighted that the education and social emotional needs are urgent; the proposed FTEs appear high but they are essential. She suggested that rushing an override this year could be detrimental so we will need to address the growing needs in FY 23.

The BOS discussed the impacts of the proposed school budget in regards to our commitment to summer programs and full-day, in-school learning in the fall. The education budget growth is not sustainable within limitations of Proposition 2 ½, but the needs are urgent, and with our shared commitment through the strategic plan, M. Power expressed her support for the proposed budget and recommended asking the Advisory Committee and Town Meeting to support it as well.

The Budget will be funded with \$5M (\$2.4M from fund balance plus \$2.6M from federal stimulus). It also anticipates more from federal funds in future years and an override next year. M. Power cautioned that while we are covering additional FTEs for the upcoming year, we may be in the very uncomfortable position of having to contract services next year.

The budget recommendations for the schools is \$61,792,079 (federal offsets bring town commitment to \$60,415,887).

B. Ramsy motioned to approve the FY '22 Town Budget of \$1,311,976,000. Seconded by J. Fisher, all voted in favor. The BOS vote will be forwarded to the Advisory Committee which will make its final vote on Thursday, March 25 and will then forward their recommendations to Town Meeting.

b. Adjourn.

On a motion made by M. Ayer and seconded by N. Correnti the meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM.

This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.