HINGHAM
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2025 School Building Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 – 6:00 PM

Location: Remote via Zoom

Committee Attendees:	Angela Thedinga, Chair	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Jim Cahill, Vice Chair	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Tom Donnelly	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Charlie Hayes	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Shane Nolan	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Brian Mulkerrin	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
	Jen Benham	2025 Hingham School Building Committee
Central Office/Town:	Aisha Oppong	Executive Director, Hingham Public Schools
	Matthew Meehan	Facilities Director, Hingham Public Schools
	Patricia Burke	Sustainability Coordinator / Town of Hingham
	Kathryn Roberts	Superintendent of Schools
	Julie Strehle	Select Board Member / Liaison to Roof Projects
High School Design/OPM Team:	Tom Ellis	Jones Lang LaSalle Americas (JLL) / OPM
	Brendan Bovard	Jones Lang LaSalle Americas (JLL) / OPM
	Kevin Riordon	Dietz & Company – Architects / Designer
	Dani Garber-Letitia	Dietz & Company – Architects / Designer
	John Kirby	Hesnor Engineering / MEPFP Engineering
	Josh Doolittle	B2Q Energy Consultant
Plymouth River and South Elementary:	Robert Todisco	P3 Project Planning Professionals / OPM
	John Kurpeski	Gale Associates – Architects / Designer
	Brian Neely	Gale Associates – Architects / Designer

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:02 PM. A quorum was present. The meeting Chair made the following statement:

"This meeting is being held remotely as an alternative means of public access pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 and all other applicable laws temporarily amending 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. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording."

The Chair formally welcomed Jen Benham as a new voting member of the Committee. Ms. Benham previously served as the School Committee liaison to the project since its start.

Chair confirmed committee attendees with roll call:

- Jen Benham – Present
- Jim Cahill – Absent (joined later, approx. 7:30 PM)
- Tom Donnelly – Present
- Charlie Hayes – Absent (joined later, approx. 6:20 PM)
- Shane Nolan – Present
- Brian Mulkerrin – Present
- Angela Thedinga – Present

1. **<u>Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes</u>**

Discussion: Minutes were presented for approval from the June 9, 2026 meeting. Chair inquired if the committee had any comments – none were raised. The Chair noted she had comments on the draft June 23, 2026 minutes and asked that approval of those minutes be held for a future meeting pending revision.

Decision: Committee APPROVED the June 9, 2026 meeting minutes via roll call vote:

Motion: Shane Nolan
Second: Brian Mulkerrin
Roll Call Vote: Jen Benham – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Motion Passed. (Jim Cahill and Charlie Hayes had not yet joined the meeting at the time of this vote.)

The June 23, 2026 minutes will be presented for approval at a future meeting.

2. **<u>Committee Communications Update</u>**

Select Board Update – June 30, 2026:

- The Chair presented the Committee's standard update to the Select Board, including the addition of Jen Benham as a new Committee member.
- The Select Board shared draft (and subject to change) Special Town Meeting timeline dates: Select Board review of draft warrant articles the week of July 21; Select Board vote to open, add articles to, and close the warrant on July 28; MSBA board approval and Special Town Meeting on October 28, 2026 (coinciding with the November 3 state election ballot); an ADCOM/Select Board vote on warrant article recommendations tentatively targeted for September 29; and the warrant going to the printer October 2.
- The Select Board expressed appreciation for the Committee's work, asked about confidence in the roof repair/MSBA submission timeline, and expressed support for evaluating Options 4 and 5 (like-for-like/boiler replacement) alongside the heat pump options so the community can see all options were considered.

Advisory Committee (AdCom) Update:

- Stephen Poole (AdCom liaison) gave a summary at the AdCom meeting. One question raised: whether the full high school would be air conditioned under Options 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Legal Update:

- Town Counsel completed review and confirmed use of project funds for evaluating Options 4 and 5 is an appropriate use of funds; this was also reviewed by bond counsel. As the ASR-004 approval had been contingent on this legal confirmation, ASR-004 is now officially approved and can be included in the overall budget.

Community Communications / Harbor Media:

- Harbor Media has agreed to assist with PR and communications and is lining up filming dates. Kathryn Roberts is coordinating a mix of on-site and studio segments featuring diverse voices (Committee members and building principals), supplemented by B-roll, FAQ documents, and website postings.

Resident Communication / Open Meeting Law:

- The Chair received a resident inquiry raising two concerns regarding virtual meeting access: (1) the public must email the address listed on the agenda to obtain the meeting ID/passcode, and (2) callers are asked to identify themselves before participating. The Chair has sought legal guidance on whether these practices are consistent with the Open Meeting Law and will report back. The resident also suggested linking the Committee's website more prominently from the Town website; Aisha Oppong will confirm/complete this.

Select Board Liaison Update (Julie Strehle):

- Select Board Member Julie Strehle confirmed the Select Board will take its warrant and ballot-question votes on July 28 (not August 4), since ballot questions must be physically delivered to the Attorney General's office by August 5. She confirmed the Special Town Meeting date itself will be selected at the Select Board's July 21 meeting. Any warrant articles not approved by this Committee before July 28 would need Committee approval by that date to be included.

Charlie Hayes joined the meeting at this point (approx. 6:20 PM).

3. Plymouth River Elementary School and South Elementary School MSBA Roof Project Updates

a. Warrant Articles – South Elementary School and Plymouth River Elementary School

- The Chair presented draft warrant article language (based on the MSBA standard template, populated with project information, and reviewed by Town Council) for both South Elementary and PRS, proposing funding through construction bid documents at the fall Special Town Meeting, followed by a full project funding vote for PRS at the April 2027 Annual Town Meeting once MSBA design/full-project approval is obtained.
- The Committee discussed sequencing (South ES and PRS combined at the fall Special Town Meeting vs. separate town meetings), and confirmed this approach results in two town meetings total (fall Special Town Meeting and April Annual Town Meeting), consistent with prior planning; a January special town meeting option was raised and set aside as impractical.

Decision: Committee APPROVED the draft warrant articles for South Elementary School and Plymouth River Elementary School, as presented, for submission to the Select Board ahead of the Select Board's meeting the following week, via roll call vote:

Motion: Brian Mulkerrin
Second: Tom Donnelly
Roll Call Vote: Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.
The Chair noted the Committee may convene an ad hoc meeting to revisit the warrant articles if material new information arises before the Select Board vote.

b. Updated Timeline and Summary of Key Milestone Dates

- Robert Todisco (P3) explained that MSBA locks in a construction/grant budget based on the total eligible cost submitted at Schematic Design; the grant percentage (approximately 36.89% referenced for this project) is applied to that budget and cannot later increase, only decrease. MSBA maintains per-square-foot cost caps by scope category (e.g., roofing) but the project's estimated costs remain below those caps. Design contingency and construction contingency are carried to absorb refinement during design development; scope can still be adjusted later provided it does not exceed the locked budget or introduce non-participating premium materials.
- Aisha Oppong confirmed with Robert Todisco that additional/unknown scope discovered later (e.g., new structural findings) can generally still be considered MSBA-eligible at the 60% Design Development submission or via change-order review during construction, reviewed by MSBA on a case-by-case basis.
- The Committee discussed whether to continue toward the planned August 27 MSBA submission given the new Tectum deck finding, or to pursue a later submission window to allow more design/estimating certainty. Design team members (Robert Todisco, Brian Mulkerrin, Charlie Hayes) generally favored continuing on the current schedule given the proximity of upcoming milestones (structural/cost estimator numbers expected around August 11; SD substantially complete by August 27). No formal decision to delay was made; the Committee's consensus was to continue on the current path while building in conservative cost assumptions and design/construction contingencies.

c. Structural Design Updates:

South Elementary School Structural Roof Assessment

- Gale presented an updated color-coded structural framing map: red areas require structural augmentation to meet current code-prescribed snow/snow-drift loads; orange areas meet code-prescribed loads but cannot additionally support solar; green areas support both. Updated information from Matthew Meehan's team allowed Gale to resolve previously undetermined ("yellow") areas.

Plymouth River Elementary School Structural Roof Assessment – Tectum Deck Finding

- Gale reported that further structural analysis found the existing cementitious wood-fiber ("Tectum") roof deck at PRS cannot support the applied 1.5 safety factor over current code-prescribed snow-drift loads, essentially building-wide (excluding a small entranceway area). This is a deck-capacity issue separate from, and in addition to, the structural framing findings previously presented.
- Matthew Meehan asked the design team to clarify the practical implications for the Committee. Gale Associates explained that the existing Tectum panel system (common in schools built in the 1940s–50s as an alternative to poured gypsum decking) was designed for roughly 50 psf, which does not meet current snow-load/drift requirements; in-kind roof replacement would not resolve this, and full deck replacement is now the anticipated approach, which may also affect existing interior finishes and MEP attachments depending on final design.
- The Committee discussed alternatives raised by Matthew Meehan (e.g., a PVC roof system without full deck replacement) and by Brian Mulkerrin (snow-melt/heat-tracing systems as a possible offset to structural augmentation costs); Gale Associates will evaluate and discuss further.
- Tom Donnelly and Angela Thedinga asked about the deck's current condition; Gale indicated no large-scale deterioration has been observed in test cuts or the interior leak audit performed to date, though a unit-price allowance will be carried for any deteriorated sections found during construction.
- The Chair noted a 2015 partial roof/library collapse at PRS involving snow and debris; Jim Cahill (joining the discussion remotely) asked whether the prior remediated area meets the current 1.5 safety factor. Matthew Meehan and Gale Associates will follow up on this history.
- Matthew Meehan noted the most recent multi-day snow-removal closure at PRS cost approximately $32,700 for two days and closed the school for two days, and asked the team to weigh operational/educational disruption in evaluating design options.

d. Hazardous Materials Update – Gale Associates / Atlas Technical Consultants

- Plymouth River Elementary (PRS): Asbestos-containing material identified in roof drain leader fitting insulation and drain bowl mud insulation in the cafeteria only. Lead-based paint identified on accessible cafeteria structural steel.
- South Elementary School (SES): No asbestos-containing materials identified in samples collected. Lead-based paint identified on a red metal roof truss in the mechanical room.
- The study was not all-inclusive (no masonry rising-wall test cuts; limited interior sampling). The cost estimator will carry a conservative allowance for additional unknown hazardous materials, and design/construction-phase allowances for monitoring and further testing once the full structural repair scope is defined (anticipated as a next-phase item after the MSBA report).

e. Solar Feasibility / PV Panel Study Proposal – Gale Associates

- Gale Associates presented a proposal from Solar Design Associates (SDA) for a 35% schematic-design-level PV panel feasibility study for both buildings, covering panel layout, ballasted vs. mechanically-attached considerations, and ownership vs. PPA options. Total proposed fee, inclusive of Gale's $10,000 management fee and standard 15% markup on the SDA subconsultant fee, is $53,400 for both buildings ($26,700 per building).
- Gale confirmed this study would not be complete in time for the August 27 MSBA submission and is not required for MSBA purposes (MSBA funds making the roof "solar ready" but not solar panel installation itself, which would be a separate project). Aisha Oppong noted that if solar installation is to

be included in the total project cost presented at fall Town Meeting, the Committee would not have a later opportunity to add that cost without returning to Town Meeting.

- The Committee did not identify a compelling reason to approve the proposal at this meeting. Gale/SDA confirmed a two-week delay to the next meeting would not impact their schedule. Brian Neely and John Kurpeski agreed to provide the written proposal to the Committee before the next meeting. No vote was taken; the item will be placed on the agenda for approval at the next meeting.

4. **Hingham High School MSBA Roof and HVAC Project Updates**

a. High School Warrant Article

- The Chair presented draft warrant article language (prepared by Town Council with edits from Tom Ellis/JLL) to extend the scope of the Committee's existing $3.3M design authorization so it may continue to be spent through the April 2027 Annual Town Meeting, when full project funding approval is anticipated. Tom Ellis confirmed the existing $3.3M is projected to be sufficient to fund design activity through April, though design will not be 100% complete by then (estimated in excess of 65% complete, with some scopes, such as geothermal site work, potentially ready to bid earlier).
- At the Committee's direction, the warrant article language was revised during the meeting to read "up to and including the preparation of construction documents, including but not limited to early bid packages," to preserve flexibility without expanding the article's scope beyond what design funding is intended to cover.

Decision: Committee APPROVED the High School warrant article, as amended, for submission to the Select Board for the October Special Town Meeting, via roll call vote:

Motion: Charlie Hayes

Second: (seconder not clearly identified on recording)

Roll Call Vote: Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.

b. Life Cycle Cost Analysis (LCCA) – Heat Pump Options 1–3 Update

- Dietz & Company and Hesnor Engineering (presented by John Kirby, standing in for Mike Trzcinski) presented an updated LCCA for Options 1 (ground source geothermal), 2 (hybrid ground/air source), and 3 (air source), incorporating updated summer-occupancy/AC-zone assumptions and current incentive/grant estimates. The Chair clarified the Committee was being asked to weigh in on a preferred direction among Options 1–3 for continued schematic design, not to make a final decision, since Options 4 and 5 (like-for-like/boiler replacement) are still in development.
- Matthew Meehan and Kathryn Roberts confirmed the summer AC-zone assumptions shown (administrative areas, gymnasium, auditorium, and one classroom wing) reflect realistic anticipated 40-year building use; Kathryn Roberts noted there has been no full-building summer occupancy in recent years and none is anticipated absent a major shift in the educational calendar.
- Estimated HVAC-only construction costs before incentives: Option 1 is the highest of the three (approximately $42M), driven substantially by geothermal well-field site work (well borings in the track infield/football field area). John Kirby confirmed the geothermal wells themselves have an estimated service life of approximately 100 years.
- After incentives, grants, and reimbursements: Option 1 construction cost is reduced to approximately $16M (over $26M in funding/incentives applied), while Options 2 and 3 are approximately $18M each, making Option 1 the least expensive on construction cost alone.
- Total present-value life cycle cost of ownership over 40 years (construction after incentives, plus 40-year operating/maintenance costs and equipment replacement, carbon-adjusted): Option 1 – approximately $33M; Option 2 (hybrid) – approximately $36.9M (highest of the three); Option 3 (air source) – approximately $36M.
- Much of Option 1's cost advantage depends on an assumed approximately $11M federal IRA geothermal tax credit (roughly 30% of eligible cost). Several committee members (Jim Cahill, Jen

Benham, Brian Mulkerrin) raised concerns about the certainty of that credit given the project's scale (which may trigger domestic content and federal prevailing wage requirements not present on the smaller Foster Elementary geothermal project) and expressed a preference for further verification, including engaging a tax consultant, before relying on it. Patricia Burke noted Hingham's Foster Elementary School geothermal tax credit application was approved in under two months, but cautioned that few comparably sized retrofit projects exist in Massachusetts as a point of comparison.

- Jim Cahill and Jen Benham indicated a preference leaning toward Option 3 (air source) given the tax-credit uncertainty and concerns about hybrid-system maintenance complexity (Jim Cahill) and geothermal site disruption/loss of track and backup athletic field space (Jim Cahill). Brian Mulkerrin requested an updated LCCA comparison with the assumed tax credit amounts removed to assess sensitivity of the results; this was not completed live during the meeting. Dani Garber-Letitia agreed to circulate an updated comparison chart following the meeting.
- No decision or vote on a preferred heat pump option was reached at this meeting. The Committee asked the design team to provide (1) an updated LCCA comparison excluding the assumed IRA tax credit, and (2) engagement of a tax consultant to assess the confidence level of achieving the full geothermal tax credit, before the Committee finalizes a recommendation.

5. **Approve Invoices**

Dietz Invoice #9 – $25,489.76 (base scope):

Decision: APPROVED via roll call vote. **Motion:** Shane Nolan. **Roll Call Vote:** Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.

Dietz Invoice #10 – $24,363.22 (approved Additional Services Requests):

Decision: APPROVED via roll call vote. **Motion:** Shane Nolan. **Roll Call Vote:** Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.

A third Dietz invoice was not included in the pre-read packet due to a five-cent discrepancy being corrected with Kevin Riordon; it will be brought for approval at the next meeting.

JLL Invoice – May 2026 – $21,685:

Decision: APPROVED via roll call vote. **Motion:** Shane Nolan. **Second:** Jim Cahill. **Roll Call Vote:** Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.

JLL Invoice – June 2026 – $34,300 (base scope; CM at Risk services amendment):

Decision: APPROVED via roll call vote. **Motion:** Shane Nolan. **Second:** Charlie Hayes. **Roll Call Vote:** Jen Benham – Yes; Jim Cahill – Yes; Tom Donnelly – Yes; Charlie Hayes – Yes; Shane Nolan – Yes; Brian Mulkerrin – Yes; Angela Thedinga – Yes. Unanimously approved.

6. **48 Hour Items:** None

7. **Next Meeting Date(s)**
July 20, 2026
August 11, 2026
August 18, 2026

8. **Adjourn**
After discussion of agenda items, the committee concluded the meeting at approximately 10:48 PM.

Recorded by Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc. / Hingham High School ARP OPM
Committee approved minutes during the August 11, 2026 meeting.