

## Call to Order

### Call to Order

Chair Paula Colby-Clements called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Present were Deidre Lockhart, William Haskell, Andrew McBrien, Kim Perry, Paula Colby-Clements, Brian Major, Yican Cao and Jerry Pendleton. Also present was Town Manager, Andrew Flanagan and Chief Financial Officer, Hayley Green.

### General Updates from the Town Manager

Town Manager, Andrew Flanagan Introduced Dr. Brittney Lavoie, The new Deputy Town Manager, Director of Administration. Dr. Lavoie previously served as the Towns Director of Human Resources/Chief People officer.

### AHS Update

Town Manager, Andrew Flanagan along with Shauna Murray, School Committee Chair and Austin Simko, Deputy Town Manager, gave an update on Andover High School.

At Town meeting 2023 it was voted to develop an interim approach to maintain the existing Andover High School building until a new building can be built. The Town would Continue submitting MSBA Statements of Interest. The Improvements would be funded over a 15-year borrowing schedule to help preserve the Town's bond rating.

Since then, the project has experienced delays due to no bidders on the initial designer RFP and a change in OPM. The Town opted to fully develop the base scope, including all design/OPM fees, and add a third option for community consideration.

The architect was tasked with developing budget-level estimates for Modular space needs, cafeteria servery updates, limited classroom renovations, sidewalk and roadway repairs, new parking lot and on-site turf field and identify potential educational improvements with a plan to maintain AHS for 10–15 years.

The following options were presented:

#### **Option 1: Base Scope + Science Wing**

- Full base scope upgrades (furniture, security, mechanicals, electrical, lighting)
- New Science Wing
- Renovated spaces within AHS
- Estimated Cost: \$80M
- Annual Tax Impact: ~\$540
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#### **Option 2: Base Scope**

- Core infrastructure upgrades (furniture, security, mechanicals, etc.)
- Estimated Cost: \$17–27M
- Tax Impact: ~\$100–175
- Cost varies based on single-phase vs. two-phase approach.

#### **Option 3: Furniture, Security & Facilities Reserve**

- Focus on essential replacements and facilities reserve for HVAC, utilities, envelope work, and security.

- Can go to April 2026 Town Meeting.
- Estimated Appropriation: \$15–18M
- Tax Impact: ~\$32–100
- Borrow only as needed; maintain flexibility and reduce sunk costs.

The next steps for will be for the School Committee to ☐ Prepare responses to specific questions, hold a workshop to discuss options and public engagement and depending on readiness for 2026 Town Meeting, seek recommendations from other boards and committees.

Mr. Major asked if we could go for MSBA funding this year? Mr. Flanagan stated that it would be tough with us having an interim superintendent and being in the middle of budget season. Best case would be to apply in 2027. The town will need to be ready and that appetite will have to be there and would require Heavy town engagement. The MSBA will only reimburse 20-22% it will not solve the financial complexity.

Ms. Colby-Clements asked if there would be a new Permanent Town Building Committee. Mr. Flanagan stated that the Town is required to establish a building committee.

Mr. McBrien referenced the Social Emotional Learning Plan to which Mr. Simko explained that the SEL plan predated these three options, and all discussions have been cognizant of SEL plan. Option 3 will require a 2/3 vote at TM plus a ballot vote.

### **Overview of Town Managers Recommended 2027 budget**

The FY 2027 budget focuses on balancing stability with strategic investment, maintaining essential services while managing rising costs and planning for future needs. It is built using conservative revenue estimates and remains fully balanced.

Total revenue increases by 5.04%, driven primarily by property taxes, state aid, and local receipts.

Total expenditure increases by 5.15%, keeping the budget balanced.

The budget does not include the Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds. Health insurance remains the largest cost driver, increasing by 12%

School Department budget increases 3.74% and the Town Departments increase 2.75%. Health insurance growth alone accounts for 33% of total budget increases

To meet growing service demands and align with best practices, several staffing changes are funded, most with minimal taxpayer impact. Public Safety will add 2 firefighters to fully staff a third ambulance as well as establishing an Assistant Fire Chief. 50 of this cost will be funded through ambulance revenue.

Public Works will add a Transportation Program Manager which will be funded through parking revenue and a Capital Projects Manager which will be funded through Water Enterprise Fund.

Legal will add a part-time Assistant Town Counsel. Lastly, the Town will create a Civic Media Division within IT to oversee government access programming. Total General Fund staffing increase is minimal—about 1.0 FTE—with a taxpayer impact of \$7–10.

### **Review of Operating Budget - Fire**

Chief Murphy spoke to the Committee about his FY2027 Operating Budget. He noted that two new hires will get him to be 100% staffed. There are currently two new hires in the academy. He will also be adding additional FTE's including an Assistant Fire Chief and an additional Administrative Assistant as well as adding the third ambulance full-time. The benefit of the third

ambulance is that it will give employees time to decompress, restock and clean the vehicle after a call.

### **Review of Warrant Articles**

The following Preliminary Warrant Articles were reviewed:

**P3 – Salaries of Elected Officials** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

**P12 – Minor Financial Articles A-E** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

**P13 General Housekeeping A-E** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

**P15 Chapter 90 Authorizations** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

**P17 Stabilization Fund Bond Premium** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

**P20 Indemnification of Public Safety Medical Costs** Following discussion and upon motion duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of article P4 as printed in the preliminary warrant. Motion carried 8-0.

### **Liaison Updates**

None

### **Approval of Minutes of**

Upon motion, duly made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2026, Finance Committee meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Upon Motion made by Mr. Major and seconded by Ms. Perry, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:00pm.

### **Documents:**

2026 Preliminary Town Meeting Warrant

AHS Update PowerPoint Presentation

FY 2027 Budget PowerPoint Presentation

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Salvi  
Recording Secretary