

SELECT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, January 6, 2026 7:00 PM
The Great Hall- 10 Pearl Street. 3rd Floor STOUGHTON, MA 02072
& VIRTUALLY via GOOGLE.MEETS

Order extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c. 30A section 20 until June 20, 2027, this meeting will be conducted both in person and virtually via Google Meets.

A comprehensive record of the proceedings will be posted on the Town's website and/or SMAC as soon as possible after the meeting if live broadcast or livestreaming is unsuccessful. Times are approximate and items may be taken out of order at the discretion of the Chair.

Present: Chair Stephen Cavey, Vice Chair Debra Roberts, Joseph Mokrisky, Scott Carrara and Louis Gitto.

Also present: Thomas Calter, Town Manager.

Chair Cavey called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizens' Comments

Ms. Cynthia Walsh, 1096 Park Street resident, announced the kick-off event for the 300th Anniversary Celebration to be held on Saturday, January 10, 2026 from 11:00am to 2:00pm at the Stoughton High School. All are invited. The event is free and will partner with the Stoughton Food Pantry. Non-perishable items are welcome.

Ms. Lisa Lyons, precinct 2, asked the Board to consider the tax burden on the residents while in budget preparations. Ms. Lyons repeated her request for financial policies to protect against debt exclusion and expenditures surpassing revenue.

Mr. Peter Banis, Town Meeting Representative, spoke of concerns with the high tax bills and asked that consideration be given to the taxpayers.

Select Board Comments

Vice Chair Roberts announced the MLK day celebration on January 19, 2026 at the Stoughton Public Library. The event begins at 10:00am and continues to 1:00pm. Admission is free and all are invited. There will be several activities for all age groups.

Vice Chair Roberts encouraged the Board members to participate in the January 22 to January 24, 2026 MMA Connect 351 conference to be held at the Boston Seaport.

Mr. Carrara spoke in recognition of the two police officers (Guzman and Medeiros) who had assisted a in the delivery of a baby on Glen Echo Blvd.

Given the high interest in the lawsuit between the Town and SMAC, Chair Cavey read a statement. All parties strive to resolve the issues amicably. Town Counsel reports that progress is being made.

Town Manager's Comments

Town Manager Calter thanked Ms. Gilda Pereira, his Executive Assistant, for her diligent work in auditing the insurance premiums. In doing so, Ms. Pereira brought a \$65,000 credit to the Town.

Town Manager Calter commented out that the municipal budget stands at a 3.01% increase. He expressed his pride and appreciation towards the budget team.

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Water Department Rules and Regulations recommended policy amendments - Votes may be taken

Mr. Keith Nastasia thanked the Board, specifically Mr. Scott Carrara, for his expertise and valuable input. Mr. Mokrisky made a motion to approve and adopt the Water Department Rules and Regulations as presented, seconded by Mr. Carrara. On the motion, the Board voted 5 – yes 0 – no.

Water and Sewer Abatement Application/Request for a Hearing - 66 Charles Avenue

Mrs. Valerio, home owner, read a prepared statement explaining the request for an additional abatement on a large water bill and sewer because of a defective sprinkler system on the side yard of the property. When the leak was discovered, is repaired immediately at a cost of \$2,500. They wanted to pay the bill, but given all the expenses they had incurred since moving in 2024, it represents a financial burden. Ms. Valerio requested to pay only her average amount. Mr. Gitto asked the average amount when the sprinkler was not in use. Ms. Valerio responded \$366.00. Vice Chair Roberts asked who should be responsible, as the owners were new homeowners. Town Manager Calter responded that the owners were told of the irrigation system in the front yard, but were not told of the location of the side yard. The owners should direct questions to the realtor or to the home inspector. Mr. Carrara agreed and stated that he finds the Board cannot grant additional abatement. Mr. Mokrisky agreed with Mr. Carrara stating that it would be irresponsible and harmful to other residents. He would vote for a payment plan to be developed between the Town Manager, the Water Department, the Town Treasurer and the home owners. Chair Cavey agreed. Town Manager Calter thanked the home owners for their immediate response and their acceptance of responsibility. He asked the Board to permit a payment plan to be developed for the owners.

Mr. Mokrisky made a motion that a a payment plan to be developed between the Town Manager, the Water Department, the Town Treasurer and the home owners. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. On the motion, the Board voted 5 - yes 0 - no.

Mr. Gitto remarked that this was evidence that installation of the new and modern water meters are valuable, quickly detecting the leak.

Consider whether to accept a deed conveying 30 Porter Street to the town in accordance with Article 16 of the October 27, 2025 Town Meeting Vote- votes may be taken

Mr. Marc Tisdell, Town Engineer, explained that this is the end of a lengthy process. He thanked the Board and the property owner, Mr. Steve Anastos, who agreed to accept a lower price. Conveyance of this property will permit the Town to add 18 additional parking spaces.

Mr. Gitto made the motion to endorse the deed, seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. On the motion, the Board voted 5 - yes 0 - no.

Chair Cavey wished Mr. Tisdelle, Happy Birthday.

FY27 Operating Budget - Votes may be taken

Town Calter explained that any amendments can be processed. To date, there has been no response from the School Department, therefore the amount set aside for the School Department in the budget remains at 3.5% increase. The school department is delayed due to structural schedules, i.e. the receipt of state funds, and the dispersal of chapter 70 funds. House 1 decisions arrive in late January. Town Manager Calter recommended that the Select Board submit the balanced budget to the Finance Committee, leaving the line for the School Department budget blank. Chair Cavey reviewed the schedule for budget preparation per the Town Charter. The Select Board must submit the budget to the Finance Committee on or before the 3rd Tuesday in January. Mr. Gitto asked

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Town Manager Calter if the Town of Kingston experiences the same issues. Town Manager Calter responded that the Town of Kingston faces the same problem, but in Stoughton, all departments are cooperating in search of a solution. Mr. Gitto asked if there are communities that have solved this problem. Town Manager Calter responded that a change means a charter change. Budget preparations would be on a new schedule. Chair Cavey added that he had consulted with Town Counsel, and any change to the Town Charter may impact other departments and their deadlines. Town Manager Calter pointed out that the deadline of December 31st is the State law. Mr. Carrara suggested moving forward and added that he would like to see pages numbers and a "table of contents" in the budget. Town Manager Calter thanked Mr. Carrara and Mr. Gitto for their input. The budget as presented is fair, includes increases caused by retirements, increased health insurance and insurance liability and increased costs of vocational education for Stoughton residents. The interest due on debt was increased to \$1.8 million. Mr. Mokrisky commented that he had asked the Town Manager to consider additional staff to address code enforcement. Mr. Tisdelle concurred, stating that Mr. Matt Raposo is doing a great job, but must deal with repeat offenders. Mr. Gitto agreed with Mr. Mokrisky. Mr. Gitto added that the Board should consider the difficulties for senior citizens related to food, fuel and shelter. The board should become pro-active. He will be sending additional information to Mr. Tisdelle and to the Town Manager. Town Manager Calter thanked Vice Chair Roberts and Mr. Gitto and their supportive efforts on behalf of the senior citizens. The Community Preservation Committee has agreed to fund an outside facility for the senior center which will expand events for the seniors. In response to Mr. Gitto, Town Manager Calter explained that a new consolidation plan for the VNA will be announced on January 9, 2026. The plan is to consolidate health services, under oversight by the Fire Chief. The plan will care for residents from birth to hospice. Ms. Zaleski added that the Assessor is working on a plan that will give seniors property tax relief. Mr. Carrara asked for clarification of the Fleet maintenance budget. Ms. Zaleski responded that this line falls under the DPW budget. Mr. Gitto made the motion to table the vote on the budget pending information from the School Department. The motion was not seconded. The motion failed. Vice Chair Roberts made the motion to approve the municipal budget and to submit said budget to the Finance Committee without the inclusion of the School Department's budget. Mr. Carrara seconded the motion. Ms. Zaleski clarified that submitting the budget without the inclusion of the school department reduces the budget by \$69,612,304. The motion passed 4 - yes 1 - no. Mr. Carrara added the budget approved and voted has been fully vetted and includes the increases voted upon by the residents i.e fire station, high school and the new south elementary.

Open the Warrant for Special Town Meeting on March 2, 2026 - votes may be taken

Mr. Tisdelle explained that the warrant for the special town meeting scheduled for March 2, 2026 must be opened tonight, January 6, 2026 and closed on January 13, 2026. The following articles in the warrant are:

- Article 1 – Dissolve Stoughton VNA Enterprise Fund
- Article 2 – Transfer of Funds to South Elementary School Project to Reduce Borrowing
- Article 3 – Supplemental Funds for Exterior of Community Center. The opening of the new community center is planned for June 13, 2026.

Mr. Gitto questioned the need for a special town meeting at this time.

Mr. Carrara made the motion to open the warrant, seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. The motion passed 4 - yes 1 - no.

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Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Open Session Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2025, December 16, 2025 and December 18, 2025.

The minutes of December 16, 2025 were pulled for amendments.

Mr. Mokrisky made the motion to approve the minutes of December 11, 2025 and of December 18, 2025. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. The motion passed 5 - yes 0 - no.

Related to December 16, 2025 minutes, Mr. Gitto requested additional language be added to page 2 the Housing Production Plan.

Mr. Gitto made the motion to amend the December 16, 2025 minutes, seconded by Chair Cavey. The motion carried 5 - yes 0 - no.

Mr. Carrara asked to include a statement to page 2 of December 16, 2025. Mr. Carrara will provide the language.

Mr. Carrara made the motion to amend the December 16, 2025 minutes, seconded by Chair Cavey. The motion carried 5 - yes 0 - no.

Mr. Carrara made the motion to approve the minutes of December 16, 2025 as amended. Chair Cavey seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-yes to 0-no.

To consider and vote to delegate to Town Counsel the Select Board's response to the Open Meeting Law Complaint filed against it by Patrick Higgins on 12/23/25- Votes may be taken

Mr. Gitto asked to see the Town Counsel's draft response prior to submission. In response to Ms. Pereira responded that the dead line is January 14, 2026 to response.

Mr. Carrara made a motion to see the draft response before submission. Vice Chair Roberts seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 - yes 0 - no.

Executive Session:

Executive Session pursuant to Open Meeting Law (Chapter 30A Section 21 (a) (3)- To discuss strategy with respect to litigation concerning the Stoughton Media Access Corp., if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating or litigating position of the Board and the Chair so declares.

Mr. Carrara moved to enter executive session, seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. The motion passed 5 - yes 0 - no.

Mr. Cavey announced that the Board would adjourn from the executive session.

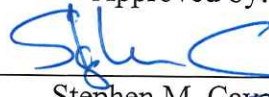
Mr. Mokrisky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chair Roberts. The motion passed 5 – yes 0 – no.

The open session of the Select Board on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 was adjourned at 9:32p.m.

Date:

January 20, 2026

Approved by:



Stephen M. Cavey, Chair

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