

**JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE, APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, CAPITAL  
PLANNING COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**FEB. 10, 2026 – 6 P.M.**

**HYBRID ON ZOOM AND SOUTH HADLEY SENIOR CENTER**

*Present in person from the Selectboard were Chair Jeff Cyr, Vice Chair Nicole Casolari, Clerk Carol Constant, members Andrea Miles and Renee Sweeney, Town Administrator Lisa Wong and Assistant Town Administrator Chuck Romboletti.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Cyr called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

The School Committee, Appropriations Committee and Capital Planning Committee also called their meetings to order at 6 p.m.

**BUDGET TASK FORCE REPORT**

Kevin McCallister, co-chair of the Budget Task Force Committee, reviewed the Budget Task Force Report. This report can be found on the town website:

<https://www.southhadley.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/1072?fileID=59745>

The report outlines short and long-term recommendations including:

Short-term (Year 1):

The town's immediate priority is addressing the FY2027 budget gap, primarily through a Proposition 2½ override, while also managing costs carefully across all departments to preserve essential services. At the same time, officials should explore additional revenue sources like adjusting fees, evaluating School Choice losses, and beginning steps toward programs like PILOT and improved marketing efforts. Early planning for economic growth, stronger partnerships, and increased advocacy for state and federal support are also key to stabilizing finances in the near term.

Medium-term (2–5 years):

Over the next several years, the town should maintain strict fiscal discipline while improving efficiency through technology, audits, and better long-term planning for staffing and health insurance costs. Revenue efforts should expand through grants, a formal PILOT program, and strategies to reduce School Choice losses, alongside continued planning for better use of town assets. A major focus should be implementing an economic development plan to grow the tax base, supported by ongoing advocacy for fairer state funding and stronger community partnerships.

Long-term (5+ years):

In the long run, the town should continue emphasizing fiscal discipline, efficiency, and adaptability as conditions change, including evaluating potential regional collaborations and continuing efficiency studies. Sustained efforts to advocate for improved state funding and regularly reassess fees and revenue structures will remain important. Ultimately, the goal is to expand economic development and diversify the tax base to reduce reliance on homeowners while maintaining high-quality services.

As noted in the report, the BTF recommendations are founded on its members' current understanding of the issue and the analysis undertaken since July 2025. The report noted there is no single solution to the town's fiscal circumstances, therefore the town should implement a multifaceted, multi-year strategy to achieve financial stability. All recommended actions selected by the town must be systematically and diligently assessed and adjusted in response to ongoing economic and political developments or trends in complete transparency. The priority must be the long-term health and vitality of the Town of South Hadley.

Detailed documents regarding findings and recommendations are available at <https://www.southhadley.org/1504/Budget-Task-Force>

Michael Cote of 222 Nonotuck Ave, Chicopee, James Grandchamp of 17 Ranger St., Bonnie Gauthier of 327 River Rd., Robert Murphy of 89 Woodbridge St., Amy Foley of 82 Park St., and Katie DeBeer of 11 Lois Lane spoke during a public comment period about school choice, high school sports, student education, employee health insurance and other suggestions for helping the budget issue.

At 8:52 p.m., the School Committee, Appropriations Committee and Capital Planning Committee adjourned their meetings. The Selectboard took a five-minute recess for the boards the leave and returned to open session at 9:05 p.m.

#### **BUDGET TASK FORCE COMMITTEE**

Constant motioned to dissolve the Budget Task Force effective Feb. 10, 2026. Miles seconded. All in favor. Unanimous.

#### **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

Sweeney motioned to approve the Feb. 25, 2026 Special Town Meeting Warrant with Appendix A striking the \$3 million scenario. Miles seconded. Four in favor, one against (Cyr). The motion carried.

#### **ADJOURN**

Miles motioned to adjourn. Sweeney seconded. All in favor. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Kristin Maher  
Executive Assistant to Administration**