

# Observer Corps Report



## Select Board

January 29, 2026 Great Hall Town Hall 26 Court Street, Plymouth MA 02360

**All Members present:** Chair David Golden, Vice-Chair Dick Quintal, Bill Keohan, Deb Iaquinto, Kevin Canty

**Town Employees Present:** Town Manager Derek Brindisi, Assistant Town Manager Silvio Genao, Financial Director Lynne Barrett, Administrative Assistant Jade Anderton, Chief of Police Dana Flynn, Fire Chief Neil Foley, Crime Analyst Aaron Kearney, Energy & Environment Mike Cahill and David Gould and Parks & Forestry Nick Faiella

## Summary of important agenda items:

### Public Comments:

- Kate Sekarick (Plymouth resident) – Expressed dissatisfaction with the budget process and asked the Town Manager to include a monthly budget status update to his reports to the Board.
- Heather Phillibron (ex-Plymouth resident) – Aired her frustration with Plymouth Foundation and the town's allowing ecological damage. She called for an audit and then dissolution of the Foundation and a development moratorium.
- Alex Cook (online attendee) – Recommended increasing Board stipend to align to similar sized towns.

### Agenda Items:

- **Public Safety Staffing / Public Safety Complex.** Fire & Police Chiefs delivered a joint report outlining their challenges to providing services to the geographically largest town in MA. Both cited increasing response time, call numbers & complexity (more time on-scene), constrained area coverage (building capacity & locations), and staffing shortages.
  - **Fire Department (FD)** must use overtime to maintain 3 person crews; National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) minimum standard is 4, 5 for high volume/geographic restricted areas. An additional 20 firefighters would meet standard. Chief is requesting 8 which adds a company. Current station/equipment locations also do not consistently meet recommended within 1.5-mile distance to built-upon area. Fire response infrastructure impacts Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating that impacts homeowner insurance rates.
  - **Police Department (PD)** current staffing level - with 16 vacancies - of 1.7 officers per 1000 residents is well below FBI reported national average of 2.3. It will take 26 additional officers to reach 2.3. Chief stated he does not have a good measure of manhour per activity. Hiring, onboarding and retaining officers continues to be difficult; applicants who meet requirements and complete training are scarce. PD headquarters is at capacity.

- Discussion with Select Board members and Chiefs included awaiting results of study underway on joint campus/complex options, mutual aid agreements with neighboring towns, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants, and possible requests/requirements of developers to address complexity and station/staff location issues. Mr. Golden requested offline time to clarify a prioritized action plan, with milestones to address growing FD and PD constraints.
- Downtown Resiliency Project Updates. Mike Cahell delivered progress report on project begun in 2023 focused on resurfacing and planting street trees to mitigate heat in downtown area. Project is in 2 phases to best leverage funding windows, with Phase 1 at final design and Phase 2 design started. If \$3 million funding application for Phase 1 construction is approved, there will be a Fall Town Meeting request for matching funds. Total project cost is estimated at \$4.8 million with completion in Spring 2030. This Spring Town Meeting's funding request is \$115,250 toward Phase 2 design and permitting. Mr. Keohan suggested the Town Square plan from 2019 be incorporated into Phase 2 design. Mr. Quintal received confirmation that businesses can sponsor tree installations and stressed that ZBA, Planning and other Boards need to be aligned with this project's mission.
- Jenney Pond Project Updates. Dave Gould provided a detailed update, including expected completion around Thanksgiving this year and that \$2.5 million funding reimbursement request has been timely answered with funds wired.

### Articles Proposed for Spring Town Meeting Warrant:

- Article 18 – Annual Capital Budget article was unanimously approved. Ms. Barrett clarified difference between operating budget (annual expenses) and capital improvement budget (from department 10-year plans and funded by one time spending from various sources). There was discussion of the Capital Improvement budget planning process in response to Board concerns. Mr. Brindisi clarified that the Capital Improvements Committee (CIC)'s job is not to determine if town can afford an item (that's the Finance Committee), but rather to determine if the town needs the item. Mr. Keohan pulled Training Green Project lighting and irrigation design issues, prompting clarification from Nick Faiella.
- Articles 30 thru 34 – Articles covering solar power purchase agreements for solar arrays on town buildings in 6 locations would grant Select Board permission to sign the agreements and require another Board vote after Town Meeting approval. Mr. Cahill fielded Board questions about the procurement process, the company's background and reliability, and assurances that there is no cost to the town. All 5 articles were unanimously approved together.
- Article 4 – Select Board decided not to zero out their salaries as a matter of course, leaving the option open for individual Board members to make their own decision. Mr. Golden voted no, the rest of the Board voted yes.

### Other Business

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- Town Manager reported the Governor's budget preliminarily has \$800K for Plymouth.
- Mr. Keohan asked for agenda items to discuss resurrecting the Water Conservation Commission and hearing from Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe about their concerns
- Board members raised desires and concerns about a budget development/oversight process workshop raised at last meeting. Mr. Canty and Mr. Keohan agreed to outline activities, expectations, and suggested participants before the Board looks to choose date/s.
- Mr. Golden requested a 60-day extension on the Land Acknowledgement saying he needs more information to consider.

Open Meeting Law (OML) concerns	Yes	No
Meeting held in an accessible location?	X	
Name cards identifying Members in place and readable by attendees?	X	
All speakers audible to all attendees?	X	
All visuals visible to all attendees or handouts available?	X	
Motion wording, motion maker names, and votes audible to all attendees?	X	
Minutes from previous meeting posted per OML?		X
Opportunity for public comment?	X	
All attendees were courteous to each other?	X	
Executive Sessions were for one of 10 reasons per OML?	X	

**Observer name and date:** Lisa Hamilton, January 31, 2026

- Recorded meeting is on The Local Seen at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/live/TaR5uasfhEc?si=zA6wjeHsWvb65q-6>
- Once approved official minutes will at <https://www.plymouth-ma.gov/agendacenter>

**Suggested Headline:** Select Board Hears Police & Fire Challenges