In either event, we will be better prepared for a large number of attendees at the upcoming Special Town Meeting than we were at our past Town Meeting.

Warmest Regards,

Laura FitzGerald-Kemmett

Hanson Select Board Chair

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On May 19, 2024, at 12:55 PM, Mike Day <mike@msday.net> wrote:

■

Good afternoon,

I'm writing to address some potential capacity concerns with regard to the upcoming Special Town Meeting currently scheduled to be held at Hanson Middle School on June 17, 2024. I am proposing that the town and school district collaborate to find a different and higher capacity venue for this meeting.

I believe that Hanson Middle School's auditorium has a capacity to hold something like 400 or 500 people. I attended the recent town meeting on May 6th, and the school budget override was a noticeable draw that saw a significantly more filled room that day. Recent (initial and unofficial) Hanson town election results showed that 1,393 voters cast a vote for the override question. Notably, 95% of all ballots had a vote cast for this question, signaling strong interest and engagement on this issue. (Where only 78 voters - or 5% - did not cast a vote on this issue, this compares to 664 voters - 45% - that chose not to vote for a Select Board candidate, and 223 - 15% - that chose note to vote for a School Committe candidate.)

The number of citizens that voted in the town meeting (and that placed a vote on the override issue) well exceed the HMS auditorium capacity. It would send a message of significance to the town, its voters, and citizens if the Select Board and others could arrange for the June 17th Special Town Meeting to be held in a venue with a higher capacity that can maximize community participation. A logical choice would likely be at Whitman Hanson High School where I believe this is some precedent in holding special town meetings there, and since June 17th is after the last day of school. By announcing that the town and school district have taken steps to encourage wide community participation in this important meeting, it would send a strong signal that the town and school encourage the attendance and engagement of as many people as possible. This would be a positive development regardless of the outcome.

I appreciate your time and consideration in reading this.

Best regards,