

**Town of Brookline  
Advisory Committee Minutes**

**March 10, 2022**

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**Present:** C. Scott Ananian, Ben Birnbaum, Harry Bohrs, Clifford Brown, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, Katherine Florio, Harry Friedman, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Kelly Hardebeck, Anita Johnson, Georgia Johnson, Alisa Jonas, Janice Kahn, Carol Levin, Pam Lodish, Linda Olson Pehlke, Donelle O’Neal, David Pollak, Stephen Reeders, Carlos Ridruejo, Lee Selwyn, Alok Somani, Christine Westphal

**Absent** Carla Benka, Amy Hummel (on sabbatical)

**Also Attending:** Town Clerk Ben Kaufman, Administrative Services Director Devon Fields, Fire Chief John Sullivan, Public Safety Business Manager Kevin Mascoll, Perry Grossman, John VanScoyoc and other members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

**Announcements:** Pursuant to this Board’s Authority under 940 CMR 29.10 (8), all Advisory Committee Members will be participating remotely via telephone or video conferencing due to emergency regulations regarding the Corona virus. The Chair has reviewed the requirements of the regulations. There is a quorum physically present and all votes taken will be recorded by roll call so all above listed Advisory Committee members will be allowed to vote.

**7:00 pm            Public Comment - There was no public comment.**

**7:15 pm            Continuation of March 8th discussion on budget amendments**

The Chair gave a brief overview of the document he shared to frame the discussion on budget amendment process. It was agreed to move discussion of this process to the end of the agenda as time permits.

**7:30 pm            Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Vote on FY 23 Operating Budget of the Fire Department**

Alisa Jonas delivered the report on behalf of the Public Safety subcommittee which is linked and attached to this these minutes. The Department’s proposed FY23 budget of \$16,934,284 is \$452,812 higher than the FY22 budget, translating into a 2.7% increase. The increase primarily reflects annual salary increases for current employees, but also includes funding for an additional Lieutenant in the Fire Prevention Sub-program.

In addition to personnel and overtime costs and causes, the report covered the health of fire fighters, cancer rates and prevention, training, renovations of fire stations, and the increased needs of a growing population.

The subcommittee unanimously recommended favorable action on the Fire Department budget request of \$16,934,284.

Fire Chief Sullivan thanked Alisa for the succinct report. There are a lot of complexities to what we are doing and where we are going. The State Firefighter Academy is a top notch organization and does an excellent job of training firefighters. One of the major reasons we are looking at it are cost savings – we want to be able to fill vacancies as they come up. Regarding the renovation projects, we would do more studies as to the need for a ladder in South Brookline. But as we go through the renovations projects, there will be a ladder at the Reservoir Station for 3-5 years.

### **Comments/Questions**

Q: We built a training facility in the Hammond Street Station, presumably to make money training other firefighters from other communities. The training there is ongoing, continuing education but not for new recruits, which is why you are recommending the State Fire Academy? A: We have not historically charged neighboring communities for training recruits. We do charge them to use the facility for continuing education programs. They will offer us spots in their programs. We benefit that way. Otherwise, there is a daily charge for personnel and maintenance for other use.

Q: Firefighters with cancer, is there a body, State disability commission or something that determines whether it is job related? How does one know? A: There is Cancer Presumption – one has to do with disability retirements governed by PARAC, the other is through IOD which is also legislated that extended a number of cancers to presumptive state for injuries. Generally looking at skin cancers presumed to be a result of contact with carcinogens.

Comment: Training facility - understand wanting to train in Brookline in the Brookline way, insular core; in terms of going to a State Academy may get exposed to a broader array of ideas. Does this have to be negotiated for us to send people there? A: No nothing in the contract to do with recruitment.

Q: Issues with shift changes? We heard from other Fire Chiefs felt that 24-hour shifts were great but then thought differently. Have a lot of fire fighters who don't get to see or know each other in a fraternal type of profession? A: I personally have never worked a 24-hour shift. From the perspective of the Fire Chief, I understand where the trepidation may come from. There is a lot of cross pollination and plenty of opportunity to see the other folks. We did negotiate ability to sick days in half days (12-hour portions). Not yet extended to vacation or personal time.

Q: What areas would you like to see more funding for given budget constraints? A: The one area where we could use more funds is to actually have a discretionary training budget to provide for programs like the ones Cambridge brings in. If we want to do a high-angle rescue training, for example, we don't necessarily have the expertise in-house. Don't have a mechanism to hire in a vendor other than getting grants to pay for them but not guaranteed. It is hit and miss.

Q: Currently a 40b development project across from Reservoir Fire House. There have been concerns about traffic and parking. Do you think this will impact on the Reservoir Fire House? A: We looked at that with Todd Kirrane and his department. Not worried about the parking and traffic but if we have to we will have Traffic post No Parking signs. Not an issue at this time. Pretty wide intersection. Not a detriment to us being able to service the north side.

Q: Your department was named as responsible for the Town's Emergency Management Plan. What training do individual departments receive in emergency management procedures? How much does it cost your department (personnel hours)? What types of emergencies does this include? Are public health emergencies considered part of this plan? A: The emergency management function historically has been as an ad hoc group. The vast majority of what we do is winter storms, sometimes hurricanes, and now a pandemic. The emergency management team came together in support of the Public Health Department. In the process of training our members – one full time staff member paid for by a grant but will transition to a full time position through the Fire Department budget. Leigh Jackson had previous experience and she joined us as Planning Coordinator. Mary Ellen Norman from the School Department and others and they became the logistics section of the team. It includes a host of participants from

Town departments. Staffed call center with volunteers to answer questions so Health Department could focus on contact tracing; we also were responsible for procurement of masks, PPEs, tests, etc. The Emergency Management system has come together and performed beautifully. We have made a full time relevant department in the Town that has served citizens well these past two years.

Q: Will you be doing an assessment of lessons learned from the experience? Also any recommended improvements to communications with the Town residents during an emergency? A: Yes we have documented all we have done and plan to put together a report to the Town. We can always improve communications, however, we did hire a public relations firm that have been a great help to every department of the Town to coordinate press releases and get information out to the Town. We don't have a Public Information Officer for the Town. General public notifications were put into action through the Town Administrator's office. New mask notification system, Code Red, to narrow, specific parts of the community or send to everyone. Many neighboring communities use the system as well and shares notifications. Also used message boards on roadways to get messages out about masking and safe distancing, and distributed flyers. There was a great coordinated effort. Shout out to Devon Fields who was also very instrumental in the communication process.

Q: Measurable objectives – injury reduction, reduced overtime costs, turnout and response time - are there goals set for these metrics and are they tracked in some way? A: We are trying but it is measured more in dollars, cost savings or not, when it comes to injuries. I have been working with HR to make sure our folks are getting the treatment they need to get them back on the job. Overtime costs are related to injuries. Consider doing more training on getting on and off the truck safely, for example, so these systemic changes hopefully reduce injuries. Plan to not let vacancies get to a high number to have a civil service list in place and replacing one or two at a time to keep our numbers consistent. We have dispatch time when a call comes in and is dispatched to fire house; then turnout time is the time from the fire house receiving the call to getting dressed and out the door; response time is technically the time it takes to reach the location. We are getting an upgraded dispatch system – a computer voice over the system which will standardize the call and remove extraneous information. Then when you get in the rig you will get the particulars of the call while you are driving. There will also be a countdown timer in the station which is designed to give them a visual affirmation that they are getting out the door in the proper amount of time.

Q: Organization Structure of the Communication Division what are obstacles to resolving this? Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system what is the effect on performance? A: CAD is a costly project \$4-\$7 million and will take up to 2 or 3 years for full implementation. Regarding the org structure of the Communication Division this is actually in the Police Department. But there is no supervisory structure and no opportunity for advancement or long term career opportunities. Part of the process would involve unions and change in organization structure which would add costs to the budget.

Janice added that they want to professionalize the Communication Division. Extra funding not happening this year but is not off the table. Dispatchers historically were police officers but we made it a civilian dispatch center. Also, a separate fire alarm division so two entities which combined under a single dispatch system.

Q: Come under Public Safety rather than under Police Department? A: About direct supervision of employees and accountability of supervisory levels. The model could be either way, a division or standalone department. It is really more about reorganizing to have more supervisory levels and accountability.

Q: Capacity to serve – geography or number of units – we have added new housing in North Brookline, what is involved in adding a ladder company? A: Both, volume and number of calls expected from more housing stocks; we saw in the census that the Town increased by nearly 4,000 people and our call volume increased. We can expect

close to 9,000 this year. Geography is an important factor in our response time. We have more stations in North Brookline because there are more people. It is less dense in South Brookline, difference between a ladder truck and an engine company. Capacity we are building into Station 4 (there had been a ladder there once). It is personnel and equipment. Renovating with the expectation we are putting a ladder back in there. It would involve funding for firefighters to staff that vehicle – approximately 20, and the cost of the vehicle itself. We are in good shape in North Brookline but could use more.

Q: Is your department contacted when there are laboratories for example being considered to be sited in Town? A: Yes, the actual building itself is under the Building Department. Pre build and up to the point it is built, Building has all the say. When it comes to specific areas like a lab because it will have a need for fire suppression, we get involved then. The industry is so regulated regarding safety features, it wouldn't change our operations but would require us to have a greater understanding of our responses and where hazards are but we already have capacity to respond to labs. We are prepared, however.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded for Favorable Action on the Fire Department Department's budget request of \$16,934,284. By a **VOTE** of 25-0-0, the Advisory Committee recommends Favorable Action on the Fire Department Department's budget request of \$16,934,284.

The Chief thanked the Advisory Committee.

**8:15 pm            Continuation of Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Vote on FY 23 Operating Budget of the Town Clerk**

Stephen Reeder delivered the report on behalf of the Administration & Finance subcommittee which is linked and attached to these minutes. The subcommittee recommended favorable action on the Town Clerk's budget request of \$830,521.

**Comments/Questions**

Q: Frequent Voter list is not listed by precinct – explain how to sort? A: You can request a specific precinct and we can send you that. Anyone who wants a voter list, we have to wait for the State to update the lists and we have them now. Email us if you want one.

Q: Update on status of voting machines, even though a Capital expense – also, software services expenses? A: We have new voting machines. We signed contract a few weeks ago and plan to use them for the May Town election. ES&S is the vendor we went with. Intuitive machines and easy to use, set up, etc. We pay for programming and it is built into the elections line item and will be included going forward.

Q: Any retraining expenses? A: That was included in the RFP related to capital expenses last year – have staff trained, and have staff on hand for first two elections.

Comment: During the Select Board hearing on the Town Clerk budget there was a curious question around voter registration and voter turnout and where those efforts might be directed. Doing it on a neutral basis or focus on areas that have had lower turnout? Neil recommended that members watch the Select Board hearing on this budget and thank Ben for taking a stand.

Ben added that the Town Clerk's office is always looking for election workers. Reach out to his office to learn more.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded for Favorable Action on the Town Clerk department budget request of \$830,521. By a **VOTE** of 25-0-0, the Advisory Committee recommended Favorable Action on the Town Clerk budget of \$830,521.

**8:45 pm          Other Business**

The Chair proposed that the conversation on budget amendments be moved to next week. He thanked Carol and Scott for preparing the document on the proposed process and asked everyone to review it in advance. He also asked that if anyone has questions or comments, that they send them to Dennis in advance.

The Chair showed the page on the AC website that contains subcommittee reports. He reminded that members can answer or correct any factual information with TMMs and direct them to this page.

The Warrant closed and it contains 35 articles. In addition to pro forma ones there are a few easements proposed by School and Building departments; some articles to address zoning for parking spaces; several articles that are climate or health related; athletic fields and use of artificial turf; establishing a ban on single use plastics; changes to the composition of the Parks and Recreation Commission; how HCA funds will apply to P&R; an article to ban gasoline powered leaf blowers; two home rule petitions and several resolutions.

There being no other business, a **MOTION** was made and seconded to adjourn, By a unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

**Documents Presented:**

[Overtime Figures from Kevin Mascoll REVISED](#)

[Fire Chief Sullivan's responses to the subcommittee's questionnaire](#)

[2022 02 25 Admin and Finance Subcommittee Report on Town Clerk FY 23 Budget](#)

[Presentation from the Town Clerk's Office](#)

[2022 02 28 Public Safety Subcommittee Report on FY 23 Fire Department Budget REVISED](#)

[Proposed AC Budget Reconciliation Process](#)

**VOTES**

|                      | <b>Vote 1</b>  | <b>Vote 2</b>  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| # Votes Yes          | 25   | 25   |
| # Votes No           | 0  | 0  |
| # Votes Abstain      | 0  | 0  |
| Vote Description:    | MAIN MOTION:<br>Favorable action on<br>Fire Department<br>FY23 Budget of<br>\$16,934,284 | MAIN MOTION:<br>Favorable action on<br>Town Clerk Budget of<br>\$830,521 |
| Scott Ananian        | Y  | Y  |
| Carla Benka          |  |  |
| Ben Birnbaum         | Y  | Y  |
| Harry Bohrs          | Y  | Y  |
| Cliff Brown          | Y  | Y  |
| John Doggett         | Y  | Y  |
| Katherine Florio     | Y  | Y  |
| Harry Friedman       | Y  | Y  |
| David-Marc Goldstein | Y  | Y  |
| Neil Gordon          | Y  | Y  |
| Susan Granoff        | Y  | Y  |
| Kelly Hardebeck      | Y  | Y  |
| Anita Johnson        | Y  | Y  |
| Georgia Johnson      | Y  | Y  |
| Alisa Jonas          | Y  | Y  |
| Janice Kahn          | Y  | Y  |
| Carol Levin          | Y  | Y  |
| Pam Lodish           | Y  | Y  |
| Linda Olson Pehlke   | Y  | Y  |
| Donelle O'Neal, Sr.  | Y  | Y  |
| David Pollak         | Y  | Y  |
| Stephen Reeders      | Y  | Y  |
| Carlos Ridruejo      | Y  | Y  |
| Lee Selwyn           | Y  | Y  |
| Alok Somani          | Y  | Y  |
| Christine Westphal   | Y  | Y  |
| Dennis Doughty       |  |  |

Advisory Committee  
Public Safety Subcommittee  
FY23 Fire Department Budget  
Public Hearing Held via Zoom February 28, 2022

Attendance:

Janice Kahn, Subcommittee Chair; Subcommittee members David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, and Alisa Jonas; Dennis Doughty, Advisory Committee Chair; Carla Benka, Advisory Committee Vice-Chair, Katherine Florio, Advisory Committee member; John Sullivan, Chief of the Brookline Fire Department; Paul Trahon, President of Brookline Firefighters Local 950; Kevin Mascoll, Public Safety Business Manager; John VanScoyoc, Select Board member; Justin Casanova-Davis, Acting Director of Finance/Treasurer; Patricia Cripe, Brookline Firefighters Local 950 Co-chair of the Human Relations Committee; Brian Bergeron, Treasurer of Brookline Firefighters Local 950; Kristine Knauf, Precinct 15 TMM

Hearing Recording:

Click on the link below. Enter the passcode when prompted to view the recording of this hearing.

Meeting Recording: [https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/xVHN\\_-UAz4waaVeSK7tbvIy9JMYOJrDvfBDZcZSZzkTdVWDos8hDHVaJ5da0NQnu.0zYgDBoGG3hrK\\_Ym](https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/xVHN_-UAz4waaVeSK7tbvIy9JMYOJrDvfBDZcZSZzkTdVWDos8hDHVaJ5da0NQnu.0zYgDBoGG3hrK_Ym)

Access Passcode: 9+=mS3=4

Recommendation:

The subcommittee unanimously recommended favorable action on the Fire Department budget request of \$16,934,284.

| <b>FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET</b>  | <b>FY21 Actuals</b> | <b>FY22 Budget</b> | <b>FY23 Budget</b> | <b>Variance</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>SALARIES</b>                | \$ 16,029,429       | \$ 15,865,351      | \$ 16,104,040      | \$ 238,689      |
| <b>SERVICES</b>                | 126,251             | 168,426            | 168,426            | 0               |
| <b>SUPPLIES</b>                | 104,513             | 126,952            | 126,952            | 0               |
| <b>OTHER</b>                   | 22,978              | 27,100             | 27,100             | 0               |
| <b>UTILITIES</b>               | 195,143             | 225,037            | 251,970            | 26,933          |
| <b>BUDGETED CAPITAL</b>        | 67,899              | 68,606             | 255,796            | 187,190         |
| <b>INTERFUND TRANSFERS OUT</b> | 426                 | 0                  | 0                  | 0               |
| <b>Total</b>                   | \$ 16,546,639       | \$ 16,481,472      | \$ 16,934,284      | \$ 452,812      |



For further details on the Fire Department budget, see the Brookline FY-2023 Financial Plan, Section 4J, pages 65-72 and online at

[https://brooklinema.opengov.com/transparency#/60726/accountType=expenses&embed=n&brea kdown=types&currentYearAmount=false&currentYearPeriod=false&graph=bar&legendSort=co a&proration=true&saved\\_view=309418&selection=D3C059E77187D7DC57041F9848F54F28 &projections=null&projectionType=null&highlighting=null&highlightingVariance=null&year= 2023&selectedDataSetIndex=null&fiscal\\_start=earliest&fiscal\\_end=latest](https://brooklinema.opengov.com/transparency#/60726/accountType=expenses&embed=n&brea kdown=types&currentYearAmount=false&currentYearPeriod=false&graph=bar&legendSort=co a&proration=true&saved_view=309418&selection=D3C059E77187D7DC57041F9848F54F28 &projections=null&projectionType=null&highlighting=null&highlightingVariance=null&year= 2023&selectedDataSetIndex=null&fiscal_start=earliest&fiscal_end=latest).

The Fire Department budget funds 6 Sub-programs: Administration, Suppression, Prevention, Equipment Maintenance, Training and Emergency Management, with the last responsibility added to the Fire Department in FY21. The Department's proposed FY23 budget of \$16,934,284 is \$452,812 higher than the FY22 budget, translating into a 2.7% increase.

The budget for salaries is \$16,104,040, comprising 95% of the total budget; and its increase of \$238,689 from FY22 represents 53% of the total FY23 increase. The increase primarily reflects annual salary increases for current employees, but also includes funding for an additional Lieutenant in the Fire Prevention Sub-program. Fire Prevention is responsible for the issuance of fire permits, approvals of building plans related to fire protection, investigations of fires, inspections, and education of the public in fire safety. With the volume of building units increasing over time, the current staffing of the Fire Prevention Sub-program was insufficient to inspect new units in a timely manner, and so personnel in the Suppression Sub-program were supporting these tasks. Addition of the new Lieutenant position should enable the Prevention Sub-program to handle the increased volume of permitting and inspections without support by Suppression personnel.

Of the remaining \$214,123 budget increase over FY22, \$187,190 is for Budgeted Capital. \$49,500 of that amount is for a replacement automobile, and \$137,234 is for equipment.

#### Discussion Topics:

A broad range of topics was discussed at the Public Hearing. Included among these were the following:

#### Personnel and Overtime

The full complement of 161 FTEs is funded by the budget. As in other years, the full complement of approved positions is funded, regardless of whether some of the positions are vacant. The amount saved as a result of vacancies is used to fund the overtime budget. As vacancies increase OT increases, since current personnel must work overtime to ensure that each station has the required staffing levels.

In FY22, there were 11 vacancies, which accrued over fiscal years 20-21 (3 vacancies occurred in FY20, 5 occurred in FY21, and 3 in FY22). Of these vacancies, 6 were retirements and 5 were resignations, including that of Gerald Alston in FY22 following the settlement agreement of his lawsuit against the Town. According to Chief Sullivan, the Department has not had difficulty hiring qualified candidates; however, because the Town does its own training of recruits, it must wait until there are a sufficient number of vacancies to fill to justify the expense of a training program (see further discussion below). The Department has hired recruits to fill all

vacancies. Of these, 1 is female and 3 are BIPOC. They will begin receiving training in the academy in the spring, but overtime staffing must continue to be used to ensure minimum staffing until the recruits can begin working in the field.

Kevin Mascoll, the Public Safety Business Manager, has provided the subcommittee with estimates of FY22 total and net overtime costs, with the latter obtained by deducting savings related to personnel vacancies. Starting in February the full cohort of new recruits were receiving salaries, so there no longer were savings arising from vacancies. The recruits will not be able to staff positions until they have completed the training academy, however, so that the need for overtime has continued.

Overtime costs also result from long term injury, long term sick leave, and various benefit leaves, such as vacation, personal days, and leaves under the Family Medical Leave Act. In FY22 the Department was hit with many sick leaves due to Omicron in January, resulting in particularly high overtime costs during that month, approximating 40% of the total overtime for FY22. COVID, in general, resulted in increased overtime throughout the year. ARPA funding may thus be used to cover some of these overtime costs.

Total overtime costs are estimated to be \$1,632,588 and the estimated net cost, after deducting the cost savings of vacancies, is \$907,111. After deducting reimbursements and grants, the estimated FY22 overtime shortfall is \$725,477.

### Training

As noted above, vacancies were high in FY22 because they accrued over the course of 3 years, and since the Department runs its own training academy, the cost can only be justified if enough recruits need to be trained. Chief Sullivan believes that we could reduce costs by having recruits trained at the State academy, for which participation is free. By having recruits enter the State academy, the Department could fill vacancies as they arise, thereby reducing the need for overtime staffing for longtime vacancies. It will also eliminate the need to fund the training academy for recruits. He noted that very few municipalities still do their own training. Paul Trahon supports the Town continuing the training academy. He told the Subcommittee that there were waiting lists for the State training academy that trains firefighters for all municipalities. The town academy also provides training with the specific firefighting procedures used by the Town's Fire Department.

Chief Sullivan expects that there will be few vacancies arising within the next few years, since there was a hiring freeze for 6 or 7 years during the 1990's, and it is personnel that would have been hired during those years that would be retiring in the upcoming years. With few new hires expected for FY23 and the following few years, Chief Sullivan plans to use the state training program for those hires and assess how this form of recruit training compares to use of in-house training.

On another training topic, Chief Sullivan is urging the establishment of a funded training division that can provide advanced professional training for firefighters. The Town has a brand new training facility but we need outside consultants to provide the specialized training that the

Department would benefit from. We try to obtain grants to fund this type of training, but the funding does not always become available.

### Health of Firefighters

There is increasing awareness of the increased risk of cancers resulting from firefighting. As building materials, both for the buildings themselves and for the furnishings, contain more carcinogens, and these are breathed in by firefighters, this has resulted in increasing rates of cancer for firefighters. Firefighting equipment also makes use of carcinogenic materials. Discussed at the hearing was the use of PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances), a widely used chemical that has been used for waterproofing of uniforms and in the foams used to extinguish fires. To date, there has not been a good replacement available to replace its use in firefighting gear, but the foams used now have lower concentrations of PFAS.

The Department has not formally tracked the rate of job-related cancers, but there is knowledge of about 6 job-related deaths due to cancer over the past 20-25 years. Currently at least 3 firefighters have had job-related cancers but are in remission. The Union, working with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, has recently been attempting to compile statistics. The Department administration is currently negotiating with the union regarding the use of annual physicals for improved early detection.

The cancer risk to firefighters can also be reduced by providing firefighters with 2 sets of clothes, so that they can replace contaminated ones, by the provision of shower pads, making use of extractors, and improving air quality conditions in the fire stations, which will be included in the renovations planned for all the stations.

### Renovations of Fire Stations

The current estimate for the renovation of fire stations is \$50 million if the buildings are not renovated to have net-zero emissions, and \$60 million if they are to be net-zero. The project will be multi-year, with stations renovated one at a time and individual renovations taking approximately 1 to 1 1/2 years to complete – longer if net-zero. The project would thus be completed in 5-7 years. Chief Sullivan is urging that the override vote for the renovations be presented to the voters this November. The need for the renovations is pressing, given the current environmental hazards affecting the health of firefighters, the lack of separate changing areas for the increasing number of female firefighters, and the need to add facilities for firefighters to remove chemicals from their clothes and skin following a return to the station after fighting a fire.

### Increased Town Population

Brookline's population has been increasing over the years, with a particularly large increase projected for south Brookline. There has been much new construction in the Route 9 area by Hammond and Hammond Pond Parkway, and in a few years, there will be approximately 500 new units added to Hancock Village, which in itself adds 1% to the total housing stock. Chief Sullivan stated that addressing the increased need in south Brookline could be addressed by adding an additional ladder company for that part of Town. As planned, it will be added to the renovated Station 4, located at Route 9 and Reservoir Road. The renovation schedule has Station 4 as the first one to be renovated. Until that time, the ladder company would temporarily be

located at Station 6 on Hammond Street. Chief Sullivan is hoping that the Town can receive a “SAFER” federal grant that would fund 70% of the cost of the new ladder company in year 1 and 30% in year 2, with the Town required to fund 100% starting in year 3.

By a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions, the Public Safety Subcommittee recommends favorable action on the Brookline Fire Department’s FY23 Operating Budget of \$16,934,284.

Voting:

Alisa Jonas,  
David-Marc Goldstein  
Neil Gordon  
Janice Kahn, Chair



# BROOKLINE FIRE DEPARTMENT

## *Town of Brookline Massachusetts*

### FIRE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

John F. Sullivan  
Chief of Department  
Emergency Management Director

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Brookline MA 02447-0557  
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1. Staffing: FTEs budgeted for \_\_\_\_\_  
FTEs filled: FY21 FY22 FY23  
FTEs vacant: FY1 FY22 FY23 - also where in the organizational chart were the vacancies?

- The FTE compliment for the BrFD has been:
  - FY21 – 159 total
    - 153 uniformed members
    - 5 civilian
      - Executive assistant
      - IT professional
      - FP Clerk
      - (2) Mechanics
      - **EM Coordinator (grant funded 100% - employed starting 1/21)**
  - FY 22 – 159.5
    - 153 uniformed members
    - 6.5 civilians
      - Executive assistant
      - IT professional
      - FP Clerk
      - (2) Mechanics
      - EM Coordinator (grant funded .75/yr)
      - **.5 EP Buddies coordinator (grant funded)**
  - FY 23 – 159.5
    - 154 uniformed members (**Exp. Request #1 – additional FP Lieutenant**)
    - 5.5 civilians
      - Executive assistant
      - IT professional
      - ~~FP Clerk~~
      - (2) Mechanics
      - EM Coordinator (grant funded .75/yr)
      - .5 EP Buddies coordinator (grant funded)

#### Vacancies:

- FY 19-20 3 vacancies ( from last recruit class forward)
- FY 21 5 vacancies
- FY 22 3 vacancies

How is the BrFD doing with the recruitment of women and BIPOC candidates? We know that you received approval to hire 11 firefighters who are in the current class. Demographic information?

The BrFD continues under the Massachusetts Civil Service system. The candidates for hire are afforded veteran and residents' preferences. The pool of female and BIPOC candidates continues at a slow but steady pace with one (1) female and three (3) BIPOC candidates among the 11 new hires

2. Vacancies: The last class (prior to this FY) was in 2019. In the intervening time, how many vacancies (leaves due to retirements, illness or injury) occurred? Is this typical?

The "attrition" rate for the BrFD remains consistent with previous years and department expectations. Since 2019 we have realized 11 vacancies for the following typical and various reasons:

- Retirements – (6)
- Resignations – (5)
  - We re-hired one firefighter in the intervening years who had previously resigned. That firefighter remained employed for approximately one (1) year and resigned for a second time and is counted among the resignations above.
  - Three additional firefighter's resigned to pursue other employment opportunities.
  - FF Gerald Alston was returned to the BrFD compliment in May of 2019 and remained employed as an Administrative status until October 2021 (4-months into FY 22) where FF Alston subsequently resigned in a settlement agreement.

**The above numbers accounts for vacancies as a result of voluntary termination of employment (retirements, resignations) and does not include "operational" vacancies which occur as a result of long-term injury or personal illness which is addressed below.**

How are vacancies affecting operations? For how long have you had these vacancies? Are they difficult to fill?

Vacancies affecting operations occur as a result of several factors

- Typical attrition (as described above)
- **Long-term injury (Injured on duty – IOD)**
- Long-term sick leave ( personal illness or injury – non-job related)
- Military leave (long-term)
- Various benefit leaves
  - Sick leave – including family sick
  - Vacation
  - Personal days – earned and unearned
  - Jury Duty
  - Union Leave
  - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
    - Personal
    - Family member
    - Birth of a child / adoption
- **State and Federal COVID related leave - Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**
  - **Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)**
  - **Expanded Family and Medical Leave**

**These extended sick leave benefits have resulted in a substantive portion of the Overtime (OT) deficit in FY 22.**

The main contributing factors above for the FY 22 OT deficit are:

- Typical attrition (11-vacancies)
- Long-term injuries (upwards of 17 members on IOD at any given time – currently 12 members)
- State and Federal COVID related leave (many hundreds of hours of OT resulting from this unfunded mandate)

3. This relates, as well, to **Overtime**. I am including Kevin Mascoll and Justin Casanova-Davis on this email for data. Vacancies typically drive OT costs. Can you provide a more complete view of the drivers of the current budget deficit due to OT - and what is that deficit? How does this FY's OT compare with other years? If there's a significant change, can you identify some root causes?

Budget data information to be provided by JCD and KM to committee

Overtime has been an ongoing issue for the BFD. What strategies do you think might help to mitigate those expenses? We have in the past discussed minimum manning changes - some communities do that by type of apparatus or by season, for instance; more flexibility in tours (12 hours vs. 24 or some other arrangement to be able to attend a family event, stay home with a sick child, etc.).

I continue to be opposed to any changes to the minimum staffing – the current practice is the safest most efficient utilization of resources and is generally in compliance with the NFPA staffing standard for our demographics.

One important strategy to reduce on-going overtime costs is to discontinue the practice of conducting independent recruit training for our membership. Brookline has traditionally conducted its own recruit training despite the relatively low annual rate of attrition. This practice is not common among nearly all small-to-medium sized departments in the Commonwealth. Other than it being a historical practice, I can find no practical reason that Brookline has or should continue this practice going forward. Running an academy is a time-consuming, costly endeavor and can only be justified when there are multiple vacancies (minimum 7-10). Each training academy comes with significant costs on many levels:

- The compounded attrition cost associated with vacancies.
- Training staff OT and back-fill (extra training staff needed)
- The majority of company training is limited throughout the training academy schedule

The vast majority of like-sized and even larger communities in the state and metro-Boston area send their recruit candidates to the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services training academy free of charge. These communities generally send their candidates extemporaneous to the vacancy occurring, thus minimizing the length of a vacancy and associated OT costs. That is, a firefighter leaves employment, the process to replace that firefighter is immediately begun. This new practice should largely eliminate long-term vacancies waiting for a cost-effective training academy,

Starting in FY 23 – there will be a 6-7 year gap for anticipated retirements due to a hiring freeze in the 1990's, further justifying a new recruit training strategy.

4. What, if any, operational concerns do you have? Are there some parts of the operating budget that are underfunded?

The BrFD budget is generally well-funded for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and Capital Outlay requests. The FY 23 budget addresses one of my main operational concerns in the Fire Prevention (FP) division by adding another Lieutenant's position. This additional staff will help alleviate a back-log of necessary work in FP, and will also free some time on the suppression forces which are now obliged to perform FP duties to help close the gap, thus taking time from their ability to conduct in-service prefire planning.

A consistently underfunded, essentially unfunded, portion of the department's operating budget is in the Training division. I along with previous Chiefs have consistently requested a "training budget" beyond personnel costs to be able to provide comprehensive developmental training to our members. This year, I requested a moderate amount of \$25,000 to allow our department to better utilize our tremendous facility by contracting outside training resources to augment our training.

5. Emergency management was consolidated in the BFD in FY21. How has that organizational change been working for the Department and the Town? With new leadership in the Health and Human Services Department, have you thought about new initiatives regarding emergency management in the Town?

The addition of Emergency Management (EM) under the Fire Department's umbrella has been tremendously successful. EM has, and continues to be a driving force in the Town's COVID response. The limited EM staff have continued to augment the Health and Human Services Department during this time of transition, and will continue to collaborate with the new Director to maintain existing programs, and find new initiatives, and funding to meet the needs of our community.

6. With the expected and real impacts of Covid the operating budgets of departments across the Town were reduced. What has been the impact of those reductions on the BFD operating budget? Service impacts, if any? Impacts on replacement schedule for firefighting equipment, vehicles, etc.

As an essential public safety department the impacts of budget reductions during this pandemic period on the BrFD has been minimal. The department has worked closely with the Town Administration to maintain the majority of its necessary CIP and capital outlay requests. Our "programmatic" initiatives, Apparatus rehabilitation and replacement, 10-year PPE replacement and SCBA cylinder replacement schedules have mostly been maintained. Additional programmatic initiatives such as, technical rescue equipment repair and replacement, and gas-meter calibration service and replacement, have been placed on a temporary hold until such time as the budgetary forecast becomes more stable.

7. Please talk about grants that the BFD has received. Also UASI grants. I presume you are still acting as the Town's JPOC.

Supt. Morgan, and now Acting Chief Allen serve as the Town's UASI JPOC. IT was then Chief Lipson's intent to name me as the Deputy JPOC, but I do not believe that ever came to fruition.

The BrFD and to a greater extent EM pursue and are often awarded a number of annual and competitive grants from various sources within the federal and state government system.

BRFD grants:

- SAFE and Senior SAFE grants are awarded annually from the state Department of Fire Services (DFS) to initiate and train students and the elderly respectively in fire safety practices.
  - approximately \$10-12K/year (recurring)
- Recently the department has benefited from state equipment grants administered by DFS and the Executive Office of Public Safety (EOPS) – funding included:
  - \$5000+ to install a PPE "extractor" washer @ the Training division
  - \$22K – SCBA cylinder replacement ( cut from FY 22 budget)
  - \$9K – EOPS for ASHER table-top training with PD
- The federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) is a substantive competitive grant which provides funding to department's based on a designated submission of need in various areas including training, equipment and PPE.
  - The BrFD submits grant proposals annually and have been successful in receiving funding to augment our operational needs. Recent awards include:
    - FY 20 – no AFG due to COVID
    - FY 19 - \$50K – new SCBA air-compressor – Station 6 and Training division

- FY 18 - \$160K – professional development training / Fire Instructor I\_ Fire Officer I – (currently seeking amendment for augment recruit PPE)
  - FY 17 - \$292K – Technical rescue training
- Fire Prevention and Safety grants (FP&S)
  - FY 16 – \$76 K Smoke detector installations

Emergency Management: multiple sources including UASI, MEMA, FEMA, State divisions etc.:

- UASI – multiple grants
  - Planning and Community Preparedness (PCP) – FY 18
    - Emergency notification \$30K
    - EP Buddies – \$70.5 K
    - Community Preparedness initiative (CPI) - \$2.5K
  - Planning and Community Preparedness (PCP) – FY 19
    - EOC upgrades - \$45.5K
    - EM reorg – (EM Coordinator) - \$140K
    - EP Buddies - \$60K
  - Planning and Community Preparedness (PCP) – FY 20
    - No grants – COVID
  - Planning and Community Preparedness (PCP) – FY 21
    - Emergency notification \$13.5K
    - EP Buddies – \$55 K
    - EM equipment -- \$45K
- EMPG – Emergency Management Preparedness Grant
  - FY 18 - \$21.5K
  - FY 19 - \$21.5K
  - FY 20 - \$21.5K
  - FY 21 - \$21.5K (just awarded)
- LHMPPP – Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Pilot Program – update CEMP and LEPC - \$ tbd
- CCP (Citizen’s Corp Program) – \$5K – Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) training
- MACP (Metro Are Planning Council) / ACR (Accelerating Climate Resiliency) - \$28K – Tech Buddies

8. I am curious about dispatch for the BFD. About how many calls do you respond to? Do you know how the E911 system is working for Brookline? You can talk about response times and how EMT training of firefighters is used in medical responses? What enhancements and changes would you like to see for the Town?

- BrFD responded to 8753 calls in calendar year 2021 – our call volume (pre-COVID) has been expanding between 200-400 calls/yr and is expected to exceed 10K by 2030.
- The organizational structure of our Communication division is fundamentally flawed and leads to high attrition, low-morale and multiple disciplinary issue due to lack of full-time supervision. Despite these challenges, the long-time dedicated staff of our 911 dispatch center does an excellent job providing our public safety members with professional service. Serious consideration should be given to conducting an organizational review of the division.
- BrfD response times continue to generally meet or exceed professional standards. Traffic and street-scape projects have hampered our ability to respond effectively in many areas of Town, and continue to chip-away at our response times.
- Our EMT program is a tremendous benefit to our members as well as our community. This enhanced level of training provides our citizens with the high levels of capability among staff, and will be the foundation for future EMS expansion within the Town.

- See question #10

9. If you had to choose the three most important measurable objectives for the BFD, what would they be? What do you see as key successes for the Department?

1. Injury reduction
2. Reduced overtime costs
3. Turnout and response time.

Key successes:

- No serious COVID related injuries or deaths among department staff
- Continuing positive relationship between the Department administration and Local 950 IAFF
  - Including the establishment and integration of the union Human Relations Committee
- Building unilateral support for our building renovation/replacement project
- Increased awareness of fighter health and safety issues

10. Aspirations. What do you see as needs that you would like addressed in the FY23 operating budget and in operating budgets in the next couple of years. The need to renovate the fire houses, is one example.

- CIP - Debt exclusion initiative to rehabilitate or replace all BrFD fire stations.
- Secure funding (current ARPA request) for Lexipol policy and training IT package
- Formalize a consistent line-item in the operating budget for professional development training.
- Apply for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant
  - Four (4) Command Technicians – chief's aides responsible for accountability and communication safety on the fireground.
- Initiate and staff for fire department accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) process
- Replace the antiquated and unreliable Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.
- Provide annual NFPA 1582 or similar medical examinations and fitness-for-duty evaluations for all members.
- Validate and pursue funding for a third ladder company in South Brookline in sequence with the station renovations schedule.

FIRE OVERTIME

ORIGINAL OT BUDGET 725,477

ADJUSTED OT BUDGET 725,477

| #                               | DATE      | THIS PERIOD |       | CUMULATIVE |        | VACANT # | SALARY SAVINGS |         | NET EXPENDITURES (OT EXP-SAVINGS) |           | NET OT BGT BALANCE |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|------------|--------|----------|----------------|---------|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
|                                 |           | AMT         | %     | AMT        | %      |          | WEEKLY         | CUMML   | WEEKLY                            | CUMM      |                    |
| 1                               | 08-Jul-21 | 21,859.88   | 3.0%  | 21,860     | 3.0%   | 10       | 13,126         | 13,126  | 8,734                             | 8,734     | 716,743            |
| 2                               | 15-Jul-21 | 58,075.14   | 8.0%  | 79,935     | 11.0%  | 10       | 13,126         | 26,251  | 44,950                            | 53,684    | 671,793            |
| 3                               | 22-Jul-21 | 64,202.91   | 8.8%  | 144,138    | 19.9%  | 10       | 13,126         | 39,377  | 51,077                            | 104,761   | 620,716            |
| 4                               | 29-Jul-21 | 56,028.59   | 7.7%  | 200,167    | 27.6%  | 10       | 13,126         | 52,502  | 42,903                            | 147,664   | 577,813            |
| 5                               | 05-Aug-21 | 65,724.72   | 9.1%  | 265,891    | 36.7%  | 10       | 13,126         | 65,628  | 52,599                            | 200,263   | 525,214            |
| 6                               | 12-Aug-21 | 74,376.35   | 10.3% | 340,268    | 46.9%  | 10       | 13,126         | 78,754  | 61,251                            | 261,514   | 463,963            |
| 7                               | 19-Aug-21 | 62,617.49   | 8.6%  | 402,885    | 55.5%  | 10       | 13,126         | 91,879  | 49,492                            | 311,006   | 414,471            |
| 8                               | 26-Aug-21 | 72,287.23   | 10.0% | 475,172    | 65.5%  | 10       | 13,126         | 105,005 | 59,162                            | 370,168   | 355,309            |
| 9                               | 02-Sep-21 | 74,188.23   | 10.2% | 549,361    | 75.7%  | 10       | 13,126         | 118,130 | 61,063                            | 431,230   | 294,247            |
| 10                              | 09-Sep-21 | 60,718.04   | 8.4%  | 610,079    | 84.1%  | 10       | 13,126         | 131,256 | 47,592                            | 478,823   | 246,654            |
| 11                              | 16-Sep-21 | 48,968.44   | 6.7%  | 659,045    | 90.8%  | 10       | 13,126         | 144,382 | 35,841                            | 514,663   | 210,814            |
| 12                              | 23-Sep-21 | 53,182.95   | 7.3%  | 712,228    | 98.2%  | 10       | 13,126         | 157,507 | 40,057                            | 554,721   | 170,756            |
| 13                              | 30-Sep-21 | 44,508.46   | 6.1%  | 756,736    | 104.3% | 10       | 13,126         | 170,633 | 31,383                            | 586,104   | 139,373            |
| 14                              | 07-Oct-21 | 54,495.70   | 7.5%  | 811,232    | 111.8% | 10       | 13,126         | 183,758 | 41,370                            | 627,474   | 98,003             |
| 15                              | 14-Oct-21 | 44,348.73   | 6.1%  | 855,581    | 117.9% | 10       | 13,126         | 196,884 | 31,223                            | 658,697   | 66,780             |
| 16                              | 21-Oct-21 | 85,295.68   | 11.8% | 940,877    | 129.7% | 10       | 13,126         | 210,010 | 72,170                            | 730,867   | (5,390)            |
| 17                              | 28-Oct-21 | 58,228.58   | 8.0%  | 999,105    | 137.7% | 11       | 14,438         | 224,448 | 43,790                            | 774,657   | (40,180)           |
| 18                              | 04-Nov-21 | 61,598.58   | 8.5%  | 1,060,704  | 146.2% | 11       | 14,438         | 238,886 | 47,160                            | 821,818   | (96,341)           |
| 19                              | 11-Nov-21 | 40,211.46   | 5.5%  | 1,100,915  | 151.8% | 11       | 14,438         | 253,324 | 25,773                            | 847,591   | (122,114)          |
| 20                              | 18-Nov-21 | 43,965.96   | 6.1%  | 1,144,881  | 157.8% | 11       | 14,438         | 267,762 | 29,528                            | 877,119   | (151,642)          |
| 21                              | 25-Nov-21 | 48,482.13   | 6.7%  | 1,193,363  | 164.5% | 11       | 14,438         | 282,200 | 34,044                            | 911,163   | (185,686)          |
| 22                              | 02-Dec-21 | 51,379.24   | 7.1%  | 1,244,742  | 171.6% | 11       | 14,438         | 296,639 | 36,941                            | 948,104   | (222,627)          |
| 23                              | 09-Dec-21 | 38,122.52   | 5.3%  | 1,282,865  | 176.8% | 11       | 14,438         | 311,077 | 23,684                            | 971,788   | (246,311)          |
| 24                              | 16-Dec-21 | 65,111.85   | 9.0%  | 1,347,977  | 185.8% | 11       | 14,438         | 325,515 | 50,674                            | 1,022,462 | (296,985)          |
| 25                              | 23-Dec-21 | 68,360.45   | 9.4%  | 1,416,337  | 195.2% | 11       | 14,438         | 339,953 | 53,922                            | 1,076,384 | (350,907)          |
| 26                              | 30-Dec-21 | 81,569.10   | 11.2% | 1,497,906  | 206.5% | 11       | 14,438         | 354,391 | 67,131                            | 1,143,515 | (418,038)          |
| 27                              | 06-Jan-22 | 108,213.22  | 14.9% | 1,606,120  | 221.4% | 11       | 14,438         | 368,829 | 93,775                            | 1,237,290 | (511,813)          |
| 28                              | 13-Jan-22 | 87,976.42   | 12.1% | 1,694,096  | 233.5% | 11       | 14,438         | 383,268 | 73,538                            | 1,310,829 | (585,352)          |
| 29                              | 20-Jan-22 | 55,494.92   | 7.6%  | 1,749,591  | 241.2% | 11       | 14,438         | 397,706 | 41,057                            | 1,351,885 | (626,408)          |
| 30                              | 27-Jan-22 | 45,611.62   | 6.3%  | 1,795,203  | 247.5% | 11       | 14,438         | 412,144 | 31,173                            | 1,383,059 | (657,582)          |
| 31                              | 03-Feb-22 | 72,637.40   | 10.0% | 1,867,840  | 257.5% | 11       | 14,438         | 426,582 | 58,199                            | 1,441,258 | (715,781)          |
| 32                              | 10-Feb-22 | 42,090.30   | 5.8%  | 1,909,930  | 263.3% | 11       | 14,438         | 441,020 | 27,652                            | 1,468,910 | (743,433)          |
| 33                              | 17-Feb-22 | 37,820.29   | 5.2%  | 1,947,751  | 268.5% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 37,820                            | 1,506,730 | (781,253)          |
| 34                              | 24-Feb-22 | 40,896.71   | 5.6%  | 1,988,647  | 274.1% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 40,897                            | 1,547,627 | (822,150)          |
| 35                              | 03-Mar-22 | 53,482.00   | 7.4%  | 2,042,129  | 281.5% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 53,482                            | 1,601,109 | (875,632)          |
| 36                              | 10-Mar-22 | 31,479.00   | 4.3%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 31,479                            | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 37                              | 17-Mar-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 38                              | 24-Mar-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 39                              | 31-Mar-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 40                              | 07-Apr-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 41                              | 14-Apr-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 42                              | 21-Apr-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 43                              | 28-Apr-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 44                              | 05-May-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 45                              | 12-May-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 46                              | 19-May-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 47                              | 26-May-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 48                              | 02-Jun-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 49                              | 09-Jun-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 50                              | 16-Jun-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 51                              | 23-Jun-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| 52                              | 30-Jun-22 | -           | 0.0%  | 2,073,608  | 285.8% | 0        | 0              | 441,020 | 0                                 | 1,632,588 | (907,111)          |
| OT Budget                       |           |             |       |            |        |          |                |         |                                   |           | 725,477            |
| Net Adjustments (reimb./grants) |           |             |       |            |        |          |                |         |                                   |           | 0                  |
| CB Adjustment                   |           |             |       |            |        |          |                |         |                                   |           | 0                  |
| Total                           |           |             |       |            |        |          |                |         |                                   |           | 725,477            |
| Weekly                          |           |             |       |            |        |          |                |         |                                   |           | 725,477            |

| FF Salary Calc |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Max base       | 68,516 |
| Total          | 68,516 |
| Weekly         | 1,311  |

6.46153846

# PROPOSED AC BUDGET RECONCILIATION PROCESS

**Rationale:** The AC must submit a balanced budget to TM and it cannot do so if it approves increases to department budgets without knowing/including the specifics of the offsetting budget reductions.

**Framing:** The Advisory Committee budget process results in two outputs: an omnibus budget motion, and a set of reports on the budget. Our current process is one means to the goal, but there's no procedural reason why AC deliberation on aspects of the budget needs to exactly mirror the process Town Meeting uses to debate and approve the final omnibus budget motion. Any process that yields the same outputs can be used.

## **Proposed process:**

- Rather than directly amending the staff budget, it is proposed that the Advisory Committee maintain a "Budget Modifications List" (BML) with prioritized increases/decreases to department budgets. These may be proposed as part of the subcommittee recommendation or by any individual AC member. The usual majority vote is required for a proposed increase/decrease to be added to the BML.
- The Budget Modification list should be closed 5 weeks prior to TM. At that point the Town Administrator should provide the AC a list of potential budget reductions which includes the maximum funds available through each reduction.
- The Budget Oversight Committee, consisting of the Advisory Committee chair, vice chairs, and the subcommittee chairs, is responsible for combining the final approved Budget Modification list with the potential budget reductions provided by the Town Administrator and creating a recommended motion for a balanced budget. To the extent possible this budget will include all the items in the budget modification list at the priorities expressed by the AC.
- Using this recommended motion as a starting point, the AC will debate and pass a balanced budget. AC members can amend the initial recommendation of the Budget Oversight Committee.
- The budget as presented in the report to Town Meeting will clearly show the staff budget as well as the increases and decreases to all impacted department budgets, so that TM members (as well as AC members) understand the trade-offs made in these spending decisions.

## **Notes:**

- Assume that changes to the allocation of funds among a department's budget line items will continue to follow current Town policies—meaning if the overall departmental budget is unchanged the department

head will continue to follow existing procedures to shift the use of funds within his/her department (and hopefully the AC will stay out of those decisions).

- It is expected that the AC will take about 2 weeks for the reconciliation process, including the time required for the Budget Oversight Committee to make a recommended reconciliation motion based on the BML as well as the time required for the AC to debate and ultimately pass a reconciliation motion.
- Although the norm will be to use the staff budget as a starting point and for the initial subcommittee motions on the departmental budgets to consist only of additions to the BML, in the unusual case where the staff budget was unsuitable for use as a basis the subcommittee (or individual AC members) could of course propose a clean-slate alternative departmental budget: the ownership of the budget still lies with the AC. This process is intended to handle the usual case where the AC affirms that the staff budget is a reasonable basis for work, and we'd expect the burden of proof to be high for an AC member or subcommittee who proposed a clean-slate departmental budget.
- It is expected that items placed on the Budget Modification List will receive further study by Town Staff and may be further revised; if an item for \$X is placed on the Budget Modification List there's no guarantee that exactly \$X will be added/removed from the Budget in the Budget Oversight Committee's recommended reconciliation motion. The subcommittee will make their best good-faith effort to achieve all of the approved increases/decreases given the available cuts supplied by Town Staff. However, if an individual AC member disagrees with the way the budget was balanced in the recommended reconciliation motion, they are free to propose an amendment when the AC debates the motion.
- The procedure for the Advisory Committee to debate the reconciliation motion will be determined by the chair to best facilitate the discussion while ensuring a balanced budget. Requiring that every amendment made to the reconciliation motion also result in a balanced budget may be unnecessarily strict and ultimately add to confusion, since debate on those amendments will inevitably conflate the merits of some increase with the merits of some decrease. It may be preferable to alternate motions between decreases and increases until balance is achieved, or organize the debate in some other way. The ability of AC members to propose increases will not be abridged, but the debate will be structured so that the AC collectively is responsible for ultimately passing a balanced budget.

### **Worked Example of Previous Process**

In the FY22 budget, the AC made individual departmental motions such as this one (March 24, on the budget for the Council on Aging):

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend funding (1) approval of the Council on Aging FY22 budget request of \$988,656 plus (2) restoring \$22,000 to the COA FY22 budget to cover the salary of a part-time geriatric social worker position that had been cut from the COA's FY21 budget and (3) adding

\$17,000 to expand a part-time custodial position to a full-time position. Therefore, the Human Services Subcommittee recommends approval of a total FY22 Council on Aging budget of \$1,027,656. By a roll call **VOTE** of 21-0-3 the motion passes.

As a result of this motion, and many other similar motions, the final output of the AC process was the following omnibus motion, including two tables by reference, voted on by the AC on April 20.

[extremely lengthy motion, starting at the bottom of page 97 in the PDF at <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24610/Combined-Reports-May-2021-Annual-Town-Meeting-with-supplements> ]

That March 25 vote on the Council on Aging budget was boiled down into a single line in "Table 2" on page 111, listing the same \$1,027,656 bottom line.

So from a purely procedural perspective, what we're talking about is the process by which a number of fine-grained votes on aspects of the budget, such as the March 25 vote, are boiled down into a final "omnibus" motion such as the April 20th one which can be brought to Town Meeting.

#### **Worked example of new process**

So in the new process, that March 25 vote would instead read:

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend approval of the Council of Aging FY22 budget presented by staff and the addition of the following items to the Budget Modification List:

- (1) restoring \$22,000 to the COA FY22 budget to cover the salary of a part-time geriatric social worker position that had been cut from the COA's FY21 budget and
- (2) adding \$17,000 to expand a part-time custodial position to a full-time position.

And then the reconciliation motion made by the Budget Oversight Committee would be something like:

**MOVED:** to amend the approved FY22 budget as follows:

1. an increase in Personnel Services/Budgets for the Council on Aging departmental budget of \$39,000 to restore \$22,000 to cover the salary of ... and \$17,000 to expand a part-time ... position.
2. ...other increases in other budgets ....
3. ...other decreases in budgets, to balance the \$39,000 added....

This motion would be a reflection of the items added to the Budget Modification List (although some refinement may have taken place since items were initially added to that list), and AC members could have moved to add or remove items from this reconciliation motion to reflect different priorities or preferences for increases or cuts.

The result after reconciliation would be the final AC budget motion, identical to the original motion on page 97, but the report would also show how the Budget Modification List was reconciled and readers would be able to see where the cuts were made in order to free up the \$39,000 for the Council on Aging (among other increases and cuts).

### **Proposed motions for FY23 budget**

If the Advisory Committee elects to switch to this process for the FY23 budget, these are the motions that would replace the motions previously made on the Planning & Community Development and Information Technology departmental budgets.

**MOVED:** to approve the staff Planning & Community Development FY23 Budget of \$1,311,484, and add the following item(s) to the AC Budget Modification List:

- An increase to Personnel Services/Benefits for the Planning and Community Development department of \$71,000 for a full time T-6 staff person or contract services to support the comprehensive planning process study committee and other activities as the department considers necessary.

**MOVED:** to approve the staff Information Technology Department FY23 Budget of \$2,206,095 and add the following item(s) to the AC Budget Modification List:

- An increase to Personnel Services/Benefits for the Information Technology Department of \$110,000 for a new cyber security specialist position, to the extent not funded by an ARPA grant.

**END**