

**Town of Brookline  
Advisory Committee Minutes**

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: March 14, 2019

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**Present:** Carla Benka, Ben Birnbaum, Carol Caro, John Doggett, Harry Friedman, Janet Gelbart David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Kelly Hardebeck, Alisa G. Jonas, Janice S. Kahn, Bobbie Knable, David Lescohier, Carol Levin, Sean Lynn-Jones, Mariah Nobrega, Kim Smith, Charles Swartz, John VanScoyoc, Christine Westphal

**Absent:** Cliff Brown, Dennis Doughty, Amy Hummel, Pam Lodish, Steve Kanes, Michael Sandman, Lee L. Selwyn, Stanley L. Spiegel, Claire Stampfer

**Also attending:** Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; William Wong, COA member; Sonia Wong, COA staff; Yolanda Rodriguez, COA chair; Ruthann Dobek, COA Director; Judy Chasen, COA member; John Mulhane, COA member; Dr. Lloyd Gellineau, DICR Office Director; Fire Chief John Sullivan, Kevin Mascoll, Public Safety Business Office

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

**Announcements**

Harry Friedman mentioned that the Police Open House event was very interesting. Members of the Advisory Committee and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations participated. They will be holding another event open to the public and he encouraged people to attend.

**MEETING AGENDA**

1. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget - Council on Aging

Ben Birnbaum offered a few highlights from the Human Services Subcommittee deliberations on the COA budget, details of which are contained in their report.

COA programs are partially but generously funded through grants and private fund-raising, including \$254,000 in the current year from the Brookline Multi-Service Senior Center Corporation and \$34,000 in other grants and gifts. It also bears noting that more than 400 volunteers have been trained and are active in work with seniors, contributing an estimated 45,000 work-hours per year.

Ruthann Dobek, COA Director, offered an anecdote about a 100 year old resident who made use of the treadmill at the center. While we are planning for new generations, we also need to be mindful increasing aging population who are also living longer. Brookline has a long and honored tradition of taking care of their elders. We are the oldest council in the Commonwealth. Issues like Alzheimer's, dementia, and isolation are specific challenges for this group.

The services they provide are many – a social worker assisting homeless seniors find housing; transportation services are covered by our fundraising; taxi discount program is Federally funded (CDBG) that may be cut; since the taxi industry is in difficulty, the COA is positioning its

members to use Uber and Lyft and will ask to receive some of the funds that come back to the Town for Uber and Lyft uses. The Senior Center cannot expand its size but the COA can expand its hours so the days of seniors are filled, with lots of programs, extended weekend and evening offerings.

## **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

Q: Where will the funds come from for the House Worker? A: We haven't made a recommendation for the GIC for the Town side – looking at many options. Considering how building department and library may support the Council. You will need to recover costs of benefits as well.

Q: Concern about a \$10,000 CDBG cut for transportation. A: A situation where I was discussing the taxi cab decline in the town and we were positioning ourselves for using Uber and Lyft. Perhaps misunderstood by CDBG that we wouldn't have such a need for taxis and the funds were cut. It does pose a problem for us.

Q: Wages for the House Worker position appear to be \$15 per hour. Are these based on Town guidelines and is it an appropriate wage for the work? A: House Worker is actually \$21 per hour.

Q: How do you evaluate benefits vs total personnel costs? A: Look at pension deductions, group health and allocate across departments what the benefits are. These are estimates. The formula is not perfect.

Q: Number of volunteers: is there capacity to take on more and if so is there a plan to do that? A: Always recruiting volunteers and couldn't function without their skills and support. We have a Volunteer Coordinator and we value our relationship with the High School and property tax work off program – seniors working in the libraries at some of the public schools. Work with local colleges and our older adult population as well to keep things going.

Q: Possible use of Newbury establishing a satellite site there? A: We are saying that older adult activity should be on the radar and agenda of any project that is happening in the Town. If the Town were to develop something at Newbury we would say there needs to be programming for older adults.

Q: Recreation Department doing specific programming for older adults have you heard anything about this? A: Waiting for their consultant to do some focus groups. Citizens were unhappy with lack of programming in the department for older adults.

Q: Seniors over the age of 80 represent over 20% of our population and are the fastest growing segment. I find it remarkable that you can provide all of the services to this group especially because of diversity of health needs and interests. Is there some sort of five year plan so we can start advocating for the growing needs that will exist in our community – 85 and above who may need even more special services? What can we do now to make sure there is sufficient money in our budget to cover these costs? A: That is why I am using that 2030 year and will probably put improvements to the Senior Center in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Ruthann invited the Advisory Committee to their Celebration of our Trips Program on March 28 at 3pm at the Senior Center and you will hear about our successes and plans for the future.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$977,355 which includes the approved FY 20 budget and a provision of \$15,750 for hiring of part time House Worker for the Council on Aging.

An **AMENDMENT** was made and seconded to add \$10,000 to make up funds that were cut from CDBG for transportation, for a total of \$987,355.

**COMMENT:** Have sympathy for this position however concern that this would give the CDBG system a way out if we always foot the bill and also set a precedent for other similarly challenged.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to table discussion of the AMENDMENT until we have more information from the Planning Department, CDBG, and others who can address this question.

By a **VOTE** of 13 in favor, 5 opposed and 1 opposed the motion is tabled.

By a **VOTE** in 17 in favor, none opposed with 2 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$977,355, which includes the approved budget and a provision of \$15,750 for a part-time House Worker, at 20 hours per week the Council on Aging FY 20 budget.

2. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget - Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations

Kim Smith gave an overview of the subcommittee's deliberations on the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, the details of which are in their report.

The proposed budget is about \$4,500 more than the FY19 budget in the area for personnel for steps increases and in services for a \$600 cell phone modification for a staff member.

Dr. Gellineau – clarify a statement made at Select Board meeting about a project – we like collaborating with other departments. Planning and Development and looking at Brookline Village and brick and mortar stores to determine how accessible the stores are. The Façade Program, \$10,000 interest free loan to get store up to code. Planning made us aware of this program.

Caitlin Starr and Sara Kaplan are staff and having Sara aboard has been a godsend. Looking at ways we can have programming age friendly but universally designed. Caitlin worked with MLK Committee including a video that we used for staff training. Well received and we will open it to the community.

For Fair Housing we have created another video about people in the region who have experienced discrimination in housing. Discrimination that does occur is more subtle, offer an array of services to one, limited services to others.

GARE rely on staff input in multifunctional groups. Series of folks from different areas and review policies and procedures, make recommendations for improvements. Building up capacity and working with HR to see if we can have these groups working during staff time and keep them up and running.

## QUESTIONS

Q: The video: can you film an introduction to it and then have BIG show it so it can be seen more broadly? A: That would be partly the decision of the producer of the film.

Q: Tell us a little about your plans working with the Fire Department? A: Have met with the Fire Chief. We discussed persistence of message, not just one training, but an ongoing series of trainings specific to departments. Periodic meetings by station, affinity groups not be just a one shot deal (not specific to Fire but all departments).

Q: How involved are you in HR with hiring process? A: I do pick the ones I am involved with to make sure we have people coming in through the pipeline. Currently, I'm very involved in the HR Director hiring process.

Q: Any way to create incentives for people to attend trainings and becoming aware? A: If people are not attending, I will go to Town Administrator and he will make an emphatic statement. When new HR Director starts we have a training session to recommend two trainings at the outset.

We have been seeing a positive trend in the past three years. We are meeting our goals. (see attached Presentation for more information).

We conducted a Race Equity Evaluation in the IT Department – they were doing their modifications while we were doing this process. Things that came up in the analysis were actually addressed by the IT process.

Q: Significant wheel chair traffic in certain areas where sidewalks have not been properly plowed and accessible. What is the process for having this addressed and prioritized? A: It hasn't been addressed by this office.

There was a brief discussion about DPW and what areas they clear, when, how and why.

Q: Do you do salary analysis to make sure they are equitable? A: Our employee diversity committee will be looking into that.

Q: How do you judge what the GARE program accomplishes? A: The process is just looking at policies and procedures and creating goals to change them. We are looking at HR policies and procedures and some school stuff and came up with goals. We will be able to determine interventions and measure results. With HR in the Town, turnover rate is slow so it may be a few years until we get these measurements.

Q: Do you look into groups that are competitive with GARE? A: Vetted a number some time ago but this particular program (GARE) has been around for years and is used widely in other cities and towns.

Q: Why is the Town using Metropolitan area numbers as a benchmark when they don't seem to represent the Town? A: Regional numbers would be probably better for us because we draw from the market in the Metropolitan area.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$276,642 for the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations FY 20 budget.

By a **VOTE** of 18 in favor, 1 opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$276,642 for the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations FY 20 budget.

### 3. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget - Fire Department

Janice Kahn gave a brief summary of the subcommittee's review of the Fire Department budget, the details of which are available in their report.

Funding expansion requests The Chair noted that the Advisory Committee can vote additional funds for departmental budgets as we review budgets or we can wait until we vote on the total Town budget. Either way, if we vote increases, we have to identify the source(s) for those increases.

Chief Sullivan noted the increase in safety of firefighters and members of the Town are priority.

Lieutenant Position in Fire Prevention - recommended as an expansion request from the Town Administrator. It is one that is a priority in order to better utilize operational folks to do things they should be doing. 7500 hours worth of work fire prevention office is not doing or doing at the level below what they should be, handled by the operations staff. Town Survey fire prevention got lowest scores – Emergencies take precedence over fire detector checks.

Person and car and benefits are \$90,000.

Maintenance and Training Facility - seasonal burns – state of the art training facility proud to be able to move in. Burn Building is ready for recruit class but will need to use the basement of Station 6 to do classroom portion because there is no heat or hot water in the new facility. Heat issue is ongoing with the gas company. Can't take occupancy until we have heat and hot water.

Melissa noted that there are many expansion requests all compelling but you can't fund it all.

Q: How many minorities? A: Above consent decree. New class has 1/3 minority and female representation.

Q: Do you have a sense of how fire fighters feel about their environment? A: A place that is inclusive and a safe environment regardless of ethnicity or status. No systemic problems.

The Chief explained how a burn building works.

Q: Are there any fees charged for inspections of smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors? A: Yes the fee is \$50 and we get to all of them in due course.

Q: How many inspections can be done by the new position so the full four man rig would not need to go out? A: 6 or more units will still be done by a company but buildings with less than 6 units would be inspected by one person in a car.

Q: Call boxes electricians shifted to DPW. As a result of the failure of 911 has there been any discussion about bringing those people back to the fire department so they could fix the call boxes? A: Wired street boxes will be eliminated. A few (80) would go solar and are located in strategic areas of the Town. The 911 system would not affect the boxes wire or solar and will be independent.

Q: Financial arrangements when training people in other towns? A: No fee but pay for materials, provide trainers and offer in-kind services. Checking into whether we can get some funding from the state for what we do because we take some pressure off of the state testing academy.

Q: How many structure fires in 2018? A: 5 large losses, 13 medium losses.

Q: Any noticeable trends? A: The National Fire Incident reporting system does this. Typically usual causes in our cases – overloading circuits, cooking fires, incorrect disposal of hazardous materials, etc.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$15,703,922 for the Fire Department FY 20 budget.

We will revisit add back / expansion amounts.

By a **VOTE** 18 in favor, none opposed and 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$15,703,922 for the Fire Department FY 20 budget.

#### 4. Review and possibly vote on FY20 CIP Requests - Fire Department

##### 12. FIRE STATION RENOVATIONS

In FY 12, after the completion of a study of the conditions of the Town's fire stations, work was undertaken to ensure that their structural elements, such as flooring, shoring, beams, and columns, had the ability to support larger and heavier pieces of fire equipment. The same study also addressed life safety and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems.

All recommended structural work was addressed first, followed by upgrading life safety systems in each station, as prioritized by the Fire Chief (FY13 – FY15), and finally MEP work, which was started in FY 17.

In FY 19, Town Meeting approved combining \$60,000 in FY 18 CIP funds with \$385,000 in FY 19 CIP funds to undertake renovations at Station 4, on the corner of Reservoir Road and Route 9. The funds were directed to support the installation of a new HVAC system, a new generator, and upgrades to the exhaust and electrical systems.

Brookline's five fire stations are now being studied for the purpose of developing plans to address potentially hazardous environmental factors while taking into consideration the age and physical limitations of each building. Boston, among other cities, has completed such a study, prompted in part by the recognition that firefighters spend significant portions of their shifts in the station during which time there is the potential of being exposed to pollutants and off-gassing and particle re-suspension from contaminated post-fire gear.

Brookline's Fire Chief has requested funds for industrial cleaning and reconfiguration of interior spaces to mitigate potential hazards in the stations. The scope of such an undertaking would include industrial cleaning of all non-porous surfaces and all duct work, painting of all walls and ceilings (hard surfaces), and replacement of all acoustic/porous ceiling tiles, window treatments, (soft) furniture in living areas, beds and mattresses, and any fabric partitions.

The FY 20 CIP request, as currently planned, would fund HVAC and lighting/communication system improvements for Station 4 (Reservoir Road and Route 9) and Station 1 (Brookline Village) but depending on the recommendations of the Fire Station Study currently underway, the funds may need to be redirected. The study is expected to be completed in the near future.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend **\$600,000** for the currently proposed upgrades at Stations 4 and 1, with the understanding that these funds may need to be redirected for other purposes before Town Meeting convenes. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends **\$600,000** for the currently proposed upgrades at Stations 4 and 1, with the understanding that these funds may need to be redirected for other purposes before Town Meeting convenes. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

### 13. RADIO INFRASTRUCTURE

The upgrading of the radio infrastructure for the police and fire radio channels is overdue. Replacement parts do not readily exist for current equipment, and the infrastructure as a whole, including the radio copper circuit connections that will no longer be supported by Verizon, is considered to be at its "end of service" phase. Police channel 1, and Fire channel 1 have not been upgraded for the last 20 to 25 years, and Police channel 2 was built out about 13 years ago. No work has been permitted for over 10 years due to T-Band frequency freeze imposed by Congress and the restrictions of the FCC license under which the departments operate.

This project, as currently contemplated, will consist of replacing a) Police radio channels 1 and 2; b) Fire radio channel 1; and c) the subscriber radios (portable, hand-held radios and mobile radios that are installed in the departments' vehicles) for both departments. The estimated cost to rebuild the infrastructure for the three radio channels along with the subscriber costs is \$3,944,577.30

The break down provided by Motorola is:

Police: Infrastructure- 2 radio channels -\$672,225.75; Police Subscribers- \$1,018,211.70)

Fire: Infrastructure- \$388,486.35; Fire Subscribers - \$549,466.90)

Shared Costs (point-to-point microwave transport back-up, racks, antenna systems, site improvements, uninterruptible power sources, etc.): \$1,316,166.60

The Town plans to lease-finance the cost of this project over a 5-year period. Since the cost of financing the project is based on a (conservative) estimate, a total of \$4,500,000 is requested, resulting in a (conservative) estimated lease payment of \$900,000 per year. Once the finance costs are known and if they are lower than the rates quoted last October, the costs in the out years will be reduced. After five years, the Town will own the equipment.

Currently, the cost of maintaining the equipment in the Police Department is approximately \$42,000; the estimated cost of maintaining the equipment after the five-year lease is approximately \$52,000

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend **\$900,000** for the first year of the 5-year lease for the upgrading of the radio infrastructure. (Property Tax / Free Cash).

By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends **\$900,000** for the first year of the 5-year lease for the upgrading of the radio infrastructure. (Property Tax / Free Cash).

#### 14. REFURBISH DRAFTING PIT

Brookline's ISO (Insurance Services Office) Class 1 rating, reflecting the Fire Department's superior ability to protect property, directly impacts the insurance rates of all property owners. Part of the process of achieving and maintaining this Class 1 rating rests on the department's ability to meet certain benchmarks, including those with regard to water supply, fire service personnel and training, and age and condition of apparatus.

One important aspect of this standard is the ability to maintain the department's fire engines at their peak capacity. Every year pump testing requires an engine to "draft" or draw water from a static source to be able to maintain the internal pump pressure necessary to pump at maximum capacity.

The department's "drafting pit," a reservoir of water with which to perform such tests, is located on the property of Station 6 on Hammond St. It is decades old, has been out of service for about seven years, and needs refurbishment before it can be put back into operation. Once it is again functional, the Fire Chief believes that it, along with the new training facility, will contribute to the promotion of the entire complex as a regional facility, making the Department eligible for federal grants.

In order to make the drafting pit operative, the following steps should be taken: 1) removing the stagnant water currently in the reservoir; 2) pressuring cleaning the interior surfaces so that an epoxy waterproofing can be applied to the walls and flooring; and 3) installing a new pipe to replace the current dysfunctional one.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend **\$50,000** for this project-refurbishing the drafting pit (Property Tax/Free Cash)

By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends **\$50,000** for this project-refurbishing the drafting pit (Property Tax/Free Cash)

#### QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Lease to buy belongs in a Capital budget.

Schools each have a few radios connected in to Police and Fire if phone lines don't work? Yes.

Are they also getting new radios or where are theirs? School Department maintains their own radio system and the one offs to talk to Police and Fire. Those are part of this replacement but question better for Scott Wilder, IT Specialist in Public Safety.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to adjourn; there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

#### **Documents Distributed at Meeting**

- Human Services Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget Council on Aging
- Human Services Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations
- Public Safety Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget Fire Department
- Capital Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Fire Department CIP Requests

# **BROOKLINE PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



**Dr. Swannie Jett, DrPH, MSc  
Health Commissioner**

# **BROOKLINE PUBLIC HEALTH**

## ***Vision***

***Our vision is an inclusive community that is healthy, safe, connected & equitable for all!***

## ***Mission***

***The mission of the Brookline Public Health and Human Services is to preserve, protect & promote the physical, mental, and environmental health of the Brookline Community. We collaborate with partners to reduce health inequities and respond to emerging public health challenges***



# 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

1. *Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems*
  2. *Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.*
  3. *Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.*
  4. *Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems.*
  5. *Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.*
  6. *Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.*
  7. *Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.*
  8. *Assure competent public and personal health care workforce.*
  9. *Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.*
  10. *Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.*
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# **PUBLIC HEALTH IN BROOKLINE**

*Recreational Marijuana*

*Community Health Needs Assessment*

*Accreditation*



# **PUBLIC HEALTH IN BROOKLINE**

## ***Substance Abuse Prevention Program (\$25K)***

- *Brookline Public Health is requesting \$25,000 from the Town of Brookline to continue parent and community education drug prevention programming to safeguard the health and wellness of our youth. Brookline Community Foundation has committed \$25,000 to the substance abuse program over the last three years with the expectation from the town to match this contribution. These funds would support the staff and programming in the school's.*
- *Funding will support the Brookline Parent Education Network (B-PEN) team consisting of three part time positions: the B-PEN Coordinator/Prevention Specialist, (18 hr/wk), the B-PEN Coordinator/Media Specialist, (12.5 hr/wk), and the Parent Educator (6hr/wk). The team's mission is to reduce substance abuse among youth in Brookline through research based parent and community education programming. B-PEN helps parents/guardians and other adults in the community to navigate the social, emotional and developmental challenges affecting today's teens and pre-teens – common challenges that can lead to substance abuse and associated risky behavior.*



# **BUDGET FACTS 2003-2018**

- *Brookline Public Health Budget for personnel increased \$38,000.*
- *One staff (30 hrs.) for Community Health Division*
- *No local collection of statistical data for health status*
- *Population size has increased by 3% with the largest increased in two or more races followed by A-A.*



# **PUBLIC HEALTH IN BROOKLINE**

## ***Epidemiologist \$60k***

*This position is critical to the Public Health Department and the Town of Brookline. I'm requesting a part-time/full-time position to conduct surveys, data collection, and investigation into the health status of the community. This position would establish standards for Public Health performance management system and baseline trends for marijuana before any place opens. Brookline Community Foundation, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and IT Department have conducted limited research on Social Determinants of Health affecting Brookline. This position could be expected to complete the following:*

- Describe population by race; ethnicity; culture; societal, educational, and professional backgrounds; age; gender; religion; disability; and sexual orientation*
- Baseline data for marijuana required before implementation*
- Establish relationships with groups of special concern (e.g., disadvantaged or minority groups, groups subject to health disparities, historically underrepresented groups)*
- Describe surveillance systems that include groups subject to health disparities or other potentially underrepresented groups (using standard categories where available)*



# **PUBLIC HEALTH IN BROOKLINE**

## ***Epidemiologist \$60k (Responsibilities of PH)***

- *Recognize public health problems pertinent to the population*
- *Conduct surveillance activities*
- *Identify acute and chronic conditions or other adverse outcomes in the population*
- *Apply principles of good ethical/legal practice as they relate to study design and data collection, dissemination, and use*
- *Organize data from surveillance, investigations, or other sources*
- *Analyze data from an epidemiologic investigation or study*
- *Summarize results of the analysis of an epidemiologic investigation and draw conclusions*
- *Assist in developing recommended evidence-based interventions and control measures in response to epidemiologic findings with appropriate cultural/social/political framework*
- *Assist in evaluation of programs*





# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

