

**Town of Brookline  
Advisory Committee Minutes**

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: March 21, 2019

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**Present:** Carla Benka, Ben Birnbaum, Cliff Brown, Carol Caro, Harry Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Kelly Hardebeck, Amy Hummel, Alisa G. Jonas, Janice S. Kahn, Steve Kanes, Bobbie Knable, Carol Levin, David Leschier, Pamela Lodish, Sean Lynn-Jones, Mariah Nobrega, Michael Sandman, Lee L. Selwyn, Kim Smith, Claire Stampfer, Charles Swartz, John VanScoyoc, Christine Westphal

**Absent:** Stanley L. Spiegel, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty

**Also attending:** Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; Patricia Correa, First Assistant Town Counsel; Charlie Simmons, Director of Public Buildings; Dan Bennett, Building Commissioner; Sara Slymon, Library Director; William McGroarty, Director of Veterans' Services.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**MEETING AGENDA**

7:00 PM OPEN SESSION

1. Question of whether the Advisory Committee shall enter into Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing and possibly taking remedial action regarding an Open Meeting Law Complaint received on or about March 11, 2019, pursuant to the exemption to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member of individual (G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(1)).

7:15 PM

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION- TO DISCUSS THE REPUTATION, CHARACTER, PHYSICAL CONDITION OR MENTAL HEALTH, RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF AN INDIVIDUAL, OR TO DISCUSS THE DISCIPLINE OR DISMISSAL OF, OR COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST, A PUBLIC OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, STAFF MEMBER OF INDIVIDUAL (G.L. c. 30A, S. 21(a)(1))

For the purpose of reviewing and discussing possible remedial action regarding an Open Meeting Law Complaint received on or about March 11, 2019.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to entering Executive Session for the purpose indicated above.

On a roll call **VOTE**, the Advisory Committee voted (25-0-1) to enter Executive Session.

BENKA YES	GOLDSTEIN ABSTAIN	KNABLE YES	SPIEGEL ABSENT
BIRNBAUM YES	GORDON YES	LEVIN YES	STAMPFER YES
BROWN YES	GRANOFF YES	LESCOHIER YES	SWARTZ YES
CARO YES	HARDEBECK YES	LODISH YES	VANSCOYOC YES
DOGGETT ABSENT	HUMMEL YES	NOBREGA YES	WESTPHAL YES
DOUGHTY ABSENT	JONAS YES	SANDMAN YES	
FRIEDMAN YES	KAHN YES	SELWYN YES	
GELBART YES	KANES YES	SMITH YES	

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]



A **MOTION** was made and seconded to leave Executive Session. By a roll call **VOTE** (26-0-0) the meeting reconvened in open session.

BENKA YES	GOLDSTEIN YES	KNABLE YES	SPIEGEL ABSENT
BIRNBAUM YES	GORDON YES	LEVIN YES	STAMPFER YES
BROWN YES	GRANOFF YES	LESCOHIER YES	SWARTZ YES
CARO ABSTAIN	HARDEBECK YES	LODISH YES	VANSCOYOC YES
DOGGETT ABSENT	HUMMEL YES	NOBREGA YES	WESTPHAL YES
DOUGHTY ABSENT	JONAS YES	SANDMAN YES	
FRIEDMAN YES	KAHN YES	SELWYN YES	
GELBART YES	KANES YES	SMITH YES	

8:00 PM OPEN SESSION

2. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Veterans’ Services

Kim Smith gave an overview of their discussions regarding the Veterans’ Services budget, the details of which can be found in their report.

William McGroarty, Veterans’ Services Department Head, thanked Kim for her thorough presentation.

Can now get VA Primary Care appointments faster – we help with the form, walk them through the system. Government has put a cap on who can get VA healthcare based on savings but we find other inroads.

A Brookline vet living in low income housing, never sought treatment, used pension to get her into treatment almost 70 years and first time in 50 years felt a burden lifted.

We have had great success with internship program. Match to a department closest to their degree field. Puts money in their pocket while still looking for full time employment – gives them credentials they need, references they need.

We had five people looking at our paperwork and setting new criteria – Assistant Claudia gets huge props getting through all of that.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

Q: Do you help people get VA housing loans? A: It isn't a loan but a guarantee and we work with some veteran-friendly realtors.

Q: Other than the library, are there other departments to which people leave money and can they use it how they please? A: Donations and gifts made to the Town all the time. All listed in the budget book.

Q: Part time jobs for veterans – if you have more slots could you use them? A: Supply and demand is fairly easy and steady.

COMMENT: We all should be very honored to have Mr. McGroarty in our Town and lucky to have someone like him and all he does for our veterans.

Mr. McGroarty responded that he is very honored to be in this community and to serve our veterans.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$342,585 Veteran's Services FY 20 budget.

By a **VOTE** of 25 in favor, none opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$342,585 for Veteran's Services FY 20 budget.

### 3. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Library

Claire Stampfer gave an overview of the Human Services subcommittee review of the Library budget, the substance of which is in its report.

Library Director Sara Slymon introduced the Library Trustees in attendance – Regina Healy, Carol Troyen Lohe, and Karen Livingston, and member of the public, Bob Sloan.

Grateful to be beneficiaries of other people's hand me down technology but always behind – bar code scanners.

Across multiple departments managed to come up with some solutions and proposals that will be allow us to put this problem to bed. Anticipate having sustainable means for our RFID technologies with expected lifespan of 3-5 years per component in coming years.

### QUESTIONS

Q: To implement strategic plan – headlines? A: A number of initiatives - Borrow an Expert – say you want to learn to knit and you check out a staff person (expert) and they teach you how to knit; a variety of things across all different age groups; engaging in a new cataloging program; finishing by launching super users and non-users of the library and services and host events to engage people and inform them of all services (circulating portable projectors, for example).

Q: Insurance for these things? A: Get a release to sign so all are on the same page about responsibilities.

Q: Coolidge Corner branch is really quite a transformation – noticed a plaque by the elevator “Gift of Brookline Library Foundation” – what was the total cost of project? A: There were 2 elevators – Foundation covered one and Town money spent on another. Last checked there may be \$22,280 left from Town funds and may perhaps use the money for window shades in the program room, which we forgot to order and may need some re-venting because of noise levels.

Q: Digital movies, Criterion collection, PBS offerings? A: Kanopy and Hoopla are apps that you can access by logging in with your library.

Q: Digital books – how much does it cost a library to get a copy and how does usage compare to usage of regular books? A: Paper books still our bread and butter, lion’s share of our circulation (CDs, Books, Papers, and Magazines); all have flat or declining circulation. But digital circulation is up month by month in double digits. Very heavily used. We could be here to next year talking about pricing models – quite rapacious business. Different models from different publishing houses. Buy one time and many can use it. Some limited use. Purchase and use forever but only one person at a time. E book vendor has a system called Advantage that prioritized Brookline residents over other Minuteman libraries.

Q: How do you decide how many to purchase? A: Just experience. Procurement report reviews also help inform purchases. What happens when circulation drops off – we flip a switch on those in the Advantage system and they all go out into the system.

We also share across networks OCLN and SALES which expands our holdings.

Laptops are loanable but to be used within the library only. Ipad can be loaned and taken home.

Encourage everyone to go to catalog and look up Library of Things where you can borrow all sorts of things.

Houston Library partnered with Girls Rock Camp and can borrow electric guitars. We are going to start a tool take-out program.

Other languages beyond \$40,000 for an opening day collection and in addition Russian books needed to be replaced, tripled size of Spanish collection, incrementally upgraded Chinese collection; do have Hebrew language collections for adults; in children’s room Japanese and Korean volumes and Japanese story time.

We respond to requests from our community.

Q: Tick education program at the library? A: We have a robust collaboration with Department of Public Health.

We work hard to be a good partner with the community. Thank everyone for their support of the Coolidge Corner project.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$4,266,111 for the Library FY 20 budget.

By a **VOTE** of 25 in favor, none opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$4,266,111 for the Library FY 20 budget.

#### 4. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Building Department

Amy Hummel gave an overview of the subcommittee’s review of the Building Department budget request, the substance of which is contained in their report.

### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

Q: Regulation of AirBnB, will that fall under your department? A: Having conversations and looking at it over a longer period of time. Is a violation of our zoning bylaw and we respond to them when we get complaints. We get very few complaints and haven't had any life safety issues. Hopeful over the next year that we can get something in our bylaw to regulate the use and to collect taxes (on a use that is now technically not permitted).

Q: How many housing units being used for these types of rentals? A: Approximately 400-500 based on some Planning documents. Condominiums have their own regulations that prohibit this already.

\$2.5-\$3.5 million estimate for fossil free design for Driscoll doesn't include the solar. Updated to \$6.6 million.

Want to make sure we are getting people who are experienced with these fossil fuel designs. Using the project in Cambridge as an example.

Q: Letters being issued threatening fines for illegal use? A: We will if we get a complaint, investigate, and find it to be true but we haven't fined anyone yet.

Q: Would like to address upcoming Capital projects and the role of the Building Department - sounds like no additional staffing planned for the oversight of these projects. A: Ray is key person on the high school (OPM), and will bring someone in if trouble arises.

Object that you would bring the right person in only when a problem arises. Penny wise pound foolish to do this. How can you do it well?

The Commissioner, Tony Guigli, Ray Masek, Russ and even Charlie Simmons – discuss this and everyone is comfortable with how the process is going. OPM for Driscoll are identified and came to the Committee meeting yesterday.

Q: What is status of Fire Department and easement issue? A: We will proceed with getting a license for the gas supply line and install it that way.

The Town has ongoing smaller projects and those take time as well. Fire station projects to finish, other library projects and this division is responsible for all of these projects, along with the very large School projects.

Q: How do we compare to other communities – is there a benchmark for staffing based on size of project, cost of project? A: I don't know of any factor to compare that to. We are reaching out to some colleges to find out it works – linking OPM to the owner.

Q: Lighting? A: We have been putting in LEDs at lower levels for years now. Using 27 kelvin level.

Q: Article 21 what has the building department done to educate people about the new requirements? A: We verify conditions have been met (various departments involved – health, planning, etc.); applicant submits plans approved by other departments (Water and Sewer, curb cuts and water plans, health department if restaurant of day care center, etc.), check the box verify conditions are met; inspector has to verify it meets all required building code. Holistic approach is taken.

Utility costs – Schools and Town Hall are held in the Building Department; Police, Health and other departments pay their own utilities.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating \$8,606,282 for the Building Department FY 20 budget.

By a **VOTE** of 25 in favor, none opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating \$8,606,282 for Building Department FY 20 budget.

#### 5. Review and possibly vote on FY 20 CIP Requests - Building Department

Carla Benka gave an overview of the subcommittee's discussion of Building Department CIP requests, the substance of which appears in their report.

### 5. TOWN REHAB/UPGRADES

This program, instituted in 2017, uses CIP funds for the repair and upgrade of Town facilities in between major renovation projects. Items funded under the program include large-scale painting programs, new flooring, ceilings, window treatments and toilet upgrades. There is currently an estimated \$300,000 backlog of work to be done. In FY 20, projects include new carpeting in various rooms in Town Hall and new flooring or carpeting in various spaces in the Municipal Services Garage on Hammond Street.

Q: How much is additional rehab gets added every year –are we chipping away at the backlog? How much does it grow each year? A: We are chipping away with Town Buildings – the present list for the School is over \$16,000,000.

Look at report from last year and some supporting documents you will see how large the list from last year.

Q: If you had all the money today, would you have enough people? Constrained by money or human resources?  
A: Both

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$55,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

### 56. HVAC EQUIPMENT

The replacement and/or upgrading of HVAC equipment or equipment parts currently does not take place on a predictable schedule. Instead, such work occurs when an air conditioning or heating system fails, usually due to overload of the former during the summer months and demands on the latter during cold weather. The cost to address the problem is borne by the Building Department's Operations and Maintenance budget. The purpose of the HVAC Equipment program is to undertake proactively, rather than reactively, the replacement of the larger and more expensive parts of boilers, burners, air conditioners, including compressors, and other HVAC equipment before an emergency situation arises.

There are currently 199 permanent air conditioning systems in both Town and School buildings. Their sizes range from two to 100+ tons and many are 10 years or older. Typically, air conditioning compressors last between five and 10 years; replacement costs can range from \$3,500 to \$150,000, depending on the size of the system. Given the increase in installations of AC equipment over the years, the Operations and Maintenance budget can no longer absorb this potential level of expense.

In terms of heating, a cast iron boiler will last at least 50 and in some cases, 100 years. However, the town no longer installs cast iron boilers, opting instead for efficient condensing boilers, which have a life span of 20-25 years.

Current plans call for replacing air conditioning compressors and upgrading equipment, starting with the oldest equipment and working in the off-season. Last summer 27 new air conditioning units were installed with FY 19 CIP dollars. FY 20 CIP funds would be directed to replacing one unit in the main office at the Heath School, two units in the main office of New Lincoln, and those in the shared Social Studies and Computer room in the basement of New Lincoln.

Q: Do we have outside service questions for our HVAC? A: We have multiple contracts.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$150,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

#### **59. TOWN/SCHOOL BUILDING - ADA RENOVATIONS**

Support for this annual program of improvements is requested to bring Town and School buildings into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that the Town make public buildings accessible to all.

In FY 19, funds were appropriated to improve ADA access in buildings used by the Recreation Department and in the libraries, and for partial ADA modifications in the bathrooms of the Pierce Café. In FY 20, funds will be directed to install automatic door openers at the rear of the Health Department and other buildings and to modify public restrooms, as needed.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$80,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

#### **61. TOWN/SCHOOL BUILDING - ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Efforts to decrease energy consumption in Town and School buildings include, but are not limited to, lighting retrofit and controls, energy efficient motors, insulation, and heating and cooling equipment. In addition, water conservation efforts are explored. The Town/School Energy Conservation Program augments existing gas and electric utility conservation programs. A continued area of focus is building commissioning. Many years ago, a building's HVAC system was set up by multiple contractors and then signed off by the design engineer. Sometimes there would be control issues, leading to complaints or high energy use. The Building Department, for all new projects, hires a Commissioning Agent. Recommissioning of certain buildings is suggested in order to confirm that the equipment was designed, installed and set up properly.

In FY 19 funds were directed to the installation of LED lights at all fire stations, the Public Safety Building and at the new Lincoln School (Phase 1). They were also used to install destratification fans in school gyms and auditoriums to reduce hot and cold spots in large spaces through the mixing of air, resulting in reduced energy costs. FY 20 funds would be used to fund the installation of LED lights at the new Lincoln School (Phase 2) and the Health Department and to install destratification fans the Baker School auditorium, gym, cafeteria, and multi-purpose room.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$185,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

#### **62. TOWN/SCHOOL BUILDING - ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

This project is to upgrade the energy management systems in Town and School buildings. A few of the larger buildings have older (30 years) energy management systems that have exceeded their life expectancy and replacement parts are no longer available. These systems will be replaced and upgraded with new web-based systems integrated into the Town's existing computer network. Other systems will be upgraded with

newer software or firmware. The Building Department will continue to work with the Information Technology Department on these projects.

FY 19 funds were directed to the replacement and upgrading of field controllers at the Lawrence School, to the upgrading of upgrade the Johnson Energy Management System, and to the replacement of batteries in all the Johnson main panels to address potential power outages and to provide a constant flow of power in the system.

Plans for FY 20 include building automation support in all buildings that have an Energy Management System. Such support would cover software upgrades and patches. Remote service access, allowing systems to be monitored with a Cloud application, would also be funded, along with the components necessary to submit room schedules to School Dude, which would subsequently program the Energy Management System to regulate the heating of classrooms.

COMMENT: Sensor will turn the heat on when you enter the room and shut off after 15 minutes of inaction.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$125,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

### **63. TOWN/SCHOOL BUILDING - ENVELOPE /FENESTRATION REPAIRS**

In FY12-13, a consultant undertook a visual inspection of the exterior of all Town and School buildings and developed cost estimates for needed repairs to the buildings' outside envelope, including masonry, bricks and mortar, flashing, dental work, coping stones, metal shelves, and tower work as well as window and door openings and windows themselves, and developed a priority list and schedule.

The resultant Master Plan called for the expenditure of \$27,450,000 over a 30-year period, with \$12.65 million called for between FY 17 and FY 22. Also included in the plan are required chimney inspections and repairs, if appropriate, or the installation of new metal liners to connect to the gas burning equipment in the building. The schedule has recently been reassessed by the Building Department, which took into account prior years' savings, and now calls for the expenditure of \$6.45 million for FY 20-FY25.

Some of the FY 20 funds will be used to rebuild windows at the Baker School, repoint the exterior of the Lawrence School, and undertake exterior masonry and trim repairs at the Soule Recreation Center. The remaining money will be used for repointing the exterior of the Public Safety Building and the Main Library.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$1,500,000 for this project. (General Fund Bond)

### **66. TOWN/SCHOOL BUILDING - SECURITY/LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS**

Over the last number of years, several large capital projects have been undertaken that included security improvements in Town and School buildings. This program will extend the effort and improve areas where security may be lacking. These funds would also be used to continue the on-going process of replacement and installation of new and upgraded burglar alarms, sprinkler systems, emergency lighting, and egress signs.

Worked planned to be undertaken with FY 19 funds included installing cameras at the Senior Center, upgrading the cameras at Town Hall from analog to digital, modifying the sprinkler systems for the Pierce

and Town Hall garages, and increasing school security measures via new hardware for doors. In FY 20, funds will be used to replace the keycard system in the Public Safety Building, thus bringing hardware and software in all public buildings up to the same updated level. Funds will also be directed to upgrading additional cameras at Town Hall from analog to digital, fire escape inspections, and in school buildings, the installation of Lock Down buttons to call police, burglar alarms, and other security enhancements.

Q: Who is looking at the cameras? A: Passive systems that record activity to be available to be reviewed. Depends on size of drive – could be one month, one year, or up to two years. Some places do actively monitor – Recreation and Schools.

Q: Is there a policy in the Town about these cameras? A: No policy.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$260,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

## **67. TOWN/SCHOOL TRASH COMPACTOR REPLACEMENTS**

Last year new trash compactors were installed at the Baker, Baldwin, Lynch, Lawrence, Driscoll, Heath, Runkle, New Lincoln, and Pierce Schools as well as at the High School. In FY 20, funds would be used to install new compactors at the Health Department Building, Putterham Golf Course, and the Old Lincoln School.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$50,000 for this project (Property Tax/Free Cash)

## **68. SCHOOL REHAB/UPGRADE**

This is an on-going, school-wide program for the repair and upgrade of school facilities in between major renovation projects. Items funded under this program include large-scale painting programs, new flooring, ceilings, window treatments and toilet upgrades.

Given the amount of funding needed for such work (there was a backlog of approximately \$15.7 million two years ago), a decision was made in 2017 to establish a “mini CIP” program to relieve pressure on the operating budget of the School Department.

In FY 19, \$230,000 was appropriated, with a significant portion of the funds to be spent on painting, shades, and flooring at the Heath School and the Lynch Center. The remaining funds were to be directed to Baker (gym pads, painting, new flooring in the hallways and on the stairs); Driscoll (gym pads); Lawrence (removal of old wallpaper and painting); New Lincoln (new window screens, removal of wallpaper, painting, gym pads, new flooring); and Pierce (new sink in the Art room, and carpeting in various areas).

As of now, the backlog has been reduced to approximately \$15.3 million, and preliminary plans for FY 20 include new flooring for several classrooms at the Baker School; new flooring for the principal’s office at the Heath School; painting, carpeting and new stair treads at the Lawrence School; the replacement of 24 whiteboards system-wide; installation of gym pads at New Lincoln; and carpet replacement at the Pierce School. Final confirmation of the proposed work is needed by the School Department.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$198,000 for this project. (Property Tax/Free Cash)

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on the projects listed above.

By a VOTE of 24 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action all above.

COMMENT: No opportunity to review past accomplishments in view of current budget requests. No correlation between goals and accomplishments.

6. Other business

7. Because the Chair and Vice-Chair will be out of town next Thursday (March 28), Mike Sandman will be the acting Chair.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to adjourn; there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

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

- Human Services Subcommittee Report on Library FY20 Budget
- Human Services Subcommittee Report on Veterans' Services FY20 Budget
- Capital Subcommittee Report on Building Department FY20 Budget
- Capital Subcommittee Report on Building Department FY20 CIP Requests