

**Town of Brookline**  
**Advisory Committee Minutes**

April 7, 2020

**Present Remotely:** Vice-Chair Carla Benka, Ben Birnbaum, Harry Bohrs, Clifford Brown, Carol Caro, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, Harry Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Amy Hummel, Alisa Jonas, Janice Kahn, Steve Kanes, David Lescohier, Carol Levin, Fred Levitan, Pam Lodish, Carlos Ridruejo, Chair Michael Sandman, Lee Selwyn, Kim Smith, Claire Stampfer, Charles Swartz, Paul Warren, Christine Westphal, Neil Wishinsky

**Also present:** Assistant Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis, Director of Public Buildings Charlie Simmons, Acting Director Information Technology - IT Applications Feng Yang, Chief Procurement Officer David Geanakakis, Director of Highway & Sanitation Kevin Johnson, and various members of the public.

**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.

**AGENDA**

**1) Discussion and possible vote on \$207,500 COVID-19-related Reserve Fund Transfer Request**

Kevin Johnson, Director of Highway & Sanitation presented a spreadsheet showing expenditures through May 31 for materials and services related to COVID-19 – products, staffing, and vendors. Current request is for \$207,500.00. Still discussing procedures from May 31 onward and that will determine additional requests.

**Questions & Comments**

**Q:** What are you running a month in cleaning? **A:** High was about \$36,000 a month – negotiated down about \$12K so now about \$24K and we may get them lower.

**Q:** Are you increasing your line item for the FY21 budget? **A:** No I haven't put anything in the budget for this type of thing but actually taking money out of the FY21 budget.

Assistant Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis confirmed that the Town has been making some reductions in department budgets for FY21. Not looking at adding anything to the budgets at this time.

**Q:** Are there costs that you are avoiding because of buildings being shut down? **A:** There are some utilities savings but there has been talk about possibly running HVAC systems all the time to clean the air. These savings could evaporate if we do this.

Paul: We will be up to \$488,000 in cleaning supplies from all the RFT requests to date.. Do we have a central source or does each department have its own inventory? **A:** Director of Public Buildings Charlie Simmons responded that his office will probably be the central depository for large supply deliveries and he will be the person people come to if they run short. They have been ordering in advance to keep us going 3-6 months. Coordinating with large departments and identifying common orders. Accessing supplies from Emergency Management – NEMA and FEMA – have been getting supplies from many sources. Cost of some materials were originally sky high but have gone down; chemicals it depends on type; equipment it is a matter of availability.

They are trying to plan when buildings come back on line because they will have to clean them more often than they are doing now.

Other communities have not put a plan in place for return to work, so they are trying to get ahead of the demand curve for supplies. Anticipating needs before everyone is purchasing again and things become in short supply or prices go up.

Next week Kevin will present the snow account – there is a surplus in fuel line – they are seeing \$14,000-16,000 a month difference in fuel consumption. Factors include mild winter in March and reduced staff so trucks are not going out as much.

They have locked in fuel prices for around and under \$2.00/gallon. Lower for next fiscal year than current fiscal year.

**Q:** Is there any further savings by consolidating purchase orders? **A:** They are making sure they place orders for multiple departments – instead for each department but they bundle the orders. This includes Schools.

**Q:** What types of masks are purchased and how much do they cost? **A:** Public Safety and Health have higher end masks because of different needs, cost around \$2.95; for others, blue masks at around 40 cents each. Haven't bought the ones yet that have been reserved for health care and hospitals.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer request **\$105,602 into the DPW account** to be used for COVID19 purposes. By a unanimous roll call **VOTE** of 28 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the RFT is approved.

Director of Public Buildings Charlie Simmons presented a spreadsheet showing expenditures for materials and services related to COVID-19 – products, staffing, and vendors. Current request is \$90,000. Current focus is on setting up voting areas.

**Q:** Will there be Plexiglas shields for poll workers? **A:** Yes.

**Q:** Regarding soap and paper towels instead of blow dryers, will we be putting towels back in? **A:** Police Station has stopped using blow dryers. In Town Hall seeking guidance from Health Department and may just add paper towels without disabling air dryers.

**Comment:** Even before the virus blow dryers were an issue because of reports about dryers blowing bacteria around. This is something that should be explored even outside of the virus.

Carla offered the committee's thanks to Charlie and his staff for being proactive getting materials and appreciate them being on top of things.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve a **Reserve Fund Transfer request \$90,000 into the Building Department account** to be used for COVID19 purposes. By a unanimous roll call **VOTE** of 28 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the RFT is approved.

Michael gave an overview of the request to transition from WebEx to Zoom. The costs to convert to Zoom are part of our Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund this evening. The Town is seeking \$40,000 for the annual licensing of Zoom based on governmental pricing and subscription models. This is approximately \$21,000 greater than the annualized cost of Cisco WebEx, for which the Town received favorable pricing due to its use of Cisco system infrastructure and products. However, the decision to transition to Zoom takes into

consideration many factors in addition to cost including, but not limited to, user interface and comfort, accessibility for persons with disabilities and functional performance.

**Q:** Why don't we have a firm price or quote from Zoom? **A:** We do, now. Earlier this week we did not have a firm price and that is why you may have an estimate.

Dave G.: The actual cost for licenses for Zoom meetings and Zoom webinars is \$39,962.

Feng Yang gave an overview of some of the security features. The Government platform is the one that we need, it has enhanced security and privacy; Zoom for government is run in the data center US and managed and controlled by US employees. It is a government cloud, GDPR compliant and has other controls that a commercial account does not have. Still some work to be done about encryption.

**Q:** When will it be implemented in the Town? **A:** Submit a purchase order and we have a representative so perhaps first Select Board meeting right after Memorial Day - but possibly sooner.

Cisco – quoted us prices based on benefits of our experience with them.

**Q:** Are we leaving any money behind with Cisco? **A:** WebEx is free until the end of June so we haven't paid anything for it.

**Q:** Did you budget for WebEx for FY21? **A:** No because video conferencing has been on radar but there hasn't been momentum to get it going. COVID-19 accelerated remote technologies so there was no budget for it.

**Q:** We would need a RFT whether we stayed with WebEx or went to Zoom anyway, is that correct? **A:** Yes.

**Q:** Why aren't we adjusting FY21 budget? **A:** It is an annual cost.

There were general questions and discussion about where, when, how this Zoom subscription cost should be budgeted.

**Q:** Can you explain the price – almost double the cost of Enterprise package – isn't clear is encryption level greater with Government package? **A:** On the security side yes. Government entities are only eligible to buy this and Federal Government Public Safety Committee was comfortable with this based on procedures.

**Comment:** In favor but someone refused to use Zoom because all of their data is routed through China. Yes they do and now have a policy that if you are in the US you are only routed through US servers. University of Toronto did a test – keys for encryption were coming in from a Beijing server. No concerns unless we were holding an executive session. Request that IT will look into these claims.

What is the great security risk in Brookline?

**Comment:** We shouldn't make light of this as it has been a serious problem and may be catastrophic again.

This is being purchased through FEDRAMP program offering through the Federal Government so it gives me a level of assurance.

The School has a separate agreement with Zoom and this is not affecting that. We will work with the School around their next steps. City of Cambridge with Brookline and other cities and towns put together a package for

educational institutions – not Zoom for Education – but a free account with extra security and no time limit. Will this continue to serve their needs for the fall – IT will be working with them.

**Q:** Are there limits to this Government Zoom? **A:** It is 100 Zoom meeting host licenses for up to 500, 15 webinars for 100 participants, and unlimited length of time.

**Q:** How will AC create and run a meeting? **A:** You can make a request to have an account created. Probably would not need more than 2 host licenses for the AC.

**Q:** Do Zoom basic licenses in this package go through the cloud? **A:** Part of the whole package we are buying so will go through the Government cloud.

Let's remember as we work on budgets, that we budget for the hardware needed in Room 103 so we can do hybrid versions of these meetings. Questions were raised about speakers and microphones. Calling in: can the audio output go to the speakers? Feng will look into the speakers' capabilities.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer of **\$40,000 into the IT Department account** to be used for purchase of Zoom Government. By a unanimous roll call **VOTE** of 28 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the RFT is approved.

Justin gave some background and rationale for the final piece of the RFT request.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer request \$17,500 for School Department and Health Department. By a unanimous roll call **VOTE** of 28 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the RFT is approved.

- School Department: Cleaning Products/Supplies/Services \$10,000
- Health Department: Medical Waste Containers \$7,500

## 2) Further Discussion of FY 21 budget

### Discussion

What are the revenue assumptions the budgets will be based on? Funding schedule for the pensions and how we handle the CIPs.

Mike suggested there may be a revenue drop of \$9-\$12M.

Carol L: We have uncertainty of information and whether assumptions are correct. What has to happen in the future for us to take certain action? If revenue drops by X, what are the cuts do we need to make; under what scenarios would we put a brakes on all capital projects. This allows us to plan for an uncertain future instead of being reactive. We need to have "what ifs" that are not associated to our models. Reach an understanding that if certain benchmarks happen, we have agreed upon response.

Mike shared email thread with Mel requesting meeting of Town School partnership to discuss budget.

Cliff: I think when we talk about major capital projects they are financed separately from the rest of the budget. Under what circumstances are we going to tell the voters that we are not going to do a project?

You told us we could do it in a different world – but now circumstances have changed...

If you are going to pause, is it smart? If you reduce or kill, continue to the capital expenditures we need but reduce the operating side and cut the tax rate? We may not have such an impact because of our real estate tax base. Under what circumstances would we say to people we are not increasing your taxes this year?

Strategy coming out of the 6<sup>th</sup> floor – what are they looking at in terms of cuts? I am in the dark and we haven't a clue and neither does the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. Will there be deep cuts to CIP? Personnel? No numbers but a framework for how they are approaching this.

Items in CIP have different revenue stream and if we say we are pausing, you can't shift CIP funds to operating.

We will get this picture sometime next week.

Carlos: Even though Capital projects are in different revenue stream, need to rethink how those buildings will be maintained and final finishes and surfaces are, the maintenance will add to operating costs – so if we are creating buildings that are delicate we are increasing our operating costs so we should take this opportunity to revisit it.

We are at the 50% design stage at Driscoll and this is the time to make changes.

Carla: One of the reasons to hit the pause button with Driscoll is to see if we can reduce the cost of the project, to gain some political capital to show voters we understand the cost of the projects to their pocketbooks, even though authorized to spend, we don't have the license to do it nonchalantly.

Also, has there been discussion in architectural community about post COVID-19 building design? Designing schools like you design hospitals related to health impact – spaces for distancing, surfaces, and air flow. It is certainly a possibility to do this with Driscoll and Pierce. Don't want to spend money on an HVAC that will not be useful or healthful. There is a conflict between green and healthy buildings.

We should be thinking about our budget in a three year term – if I did anything with CIP, I would look at projects we don't need to do now, but identify those coming on line the funding of which could save capital or operating expenses going forward.

Amy: Operating in panic mode but don't want to get so far ahead of ourselves with too many wrong assumptions and do an end run around decisions already made. Make sure we are doing something based on facts and what is best in the long-term – be measured and think calmly.

Carla: This may not last forever but it isn't necessarily a one and done.

Fred: Concern that we take capital funds and move to operating. We have a capital plan that goes over a number of years. We will need to continue to do Capital projects – we need to pick the right projects, maximize bang for our buck, and choose wisely.

Kim: I feel we paid more attention to Departmental budgets and we haven't heard from the Schools. I am concerned about the School budget.

School Subcommittee told the School Finance Committee we didn't want to speak to them until they got new numbers. Information Monday morning will be passed on to the School Committee Monday night and they will have some tough choices ahead.

Post COVID-19 Operating Budget when is the public comment opportunity? We are not having hearings on the revised department budgets (with cuts). Good question.

Len's comments (see attached) were referenced. Len Weiss, a former AC Member, has communicated with the Select Board and Mel Kleckner about the need for open communications with the Public concerning the coming Budget, especially in light of COVID-19. Len spoke during Public Comment last evening with the Select Board. Len has also written and sent a commentary to the TAB. His written comments were shared with the full AC.

Janet: Starting from the core these are the things we have to have – and we know we have gotten by with fewer things – DPW, fire department – then do concentric circles. Don't know how to construct those. Focus on subcommittee chairs and bring forward for public comment where there are choices that can be made. Schools will have biggest impact. Narrow down areas that we should focus on and have public hearings as a committee as a whole. Get input where input is doable. Remind TMM that whatever they propose they have to find somewhere else to take it from. Get the word out that it is a work in progress.

In sum, need to consider what happens with OPEBs and capital expenses – we will have to look at what we get before we can do very much with it. We need to spend time on this and give the public an opportunity to offer comment.

**Q:** Is the School Town Partnership up for adjustment as part of this process since it was created pre-COVID?

**A:** The School Town Partnership was looked at by BFAC. Offered broad ideas and suggested the principles – Mel and Ben Lummis to work it out, Select Board and School Committee, Mary Ellen and Melissa. Formula is confusing but worthwhile to remember it was put in place to avoid food fights on the floor of Town Meeting. The way it works ends up with essentially the same allocation between School and Town before the partnership was put in place – 2/3 and 1/3. There are aspects of allocations that should be formulaic but are not and need to be fixed. Any decline in revenue should be split 50/50. Built to share increases in revenue and doesn't work both ways.

One additional complication – this is to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the override plan – the bulk of the increase was going to be non- property tax revenue, mainly marijuana revenue, which may be below what we hoped for. If we play it straight the decrease in non-property tax revenues should disproportionately affect the School budget.

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A **MOTION** to adjourn was made, seconded and voted unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm.

**Documents Presented:**

- Reserve Fund Transfer Memo from Justin Casanova-Davis, Assistant Town Administrator
- FY20 Reserve Fund Transfer Spreadsheet
- Building CV-19 Spreadsheet
- DPW CV-19 Spreadsheet
- Memo from Mel Kleckner, Town Administrator regarding transition from WebEx to Zoom
- Questions and Responses related to Zoom Licenses
- Reviewing the FY 21 Revised Budget
- Len Weiss Letter to Advisory Committee, Remarks to Select Board, Letter to Brookline Tab

	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Vote 1</b>	<b>Vote 2</b>	<b>Vote 3</b>	<b>Vote 4</b>
<b># Votes Yes</b>	28	28	28	28	28
<b># Votes No</b>		0	0	0	0
<b># Votes Abstain</b>		0	0	0	0
<b>Vote Description:</b>		\$105,602	\$90,000	\$40,000	\$17,500
	<i>Enter P for Present</i>	<i>DPW RFT</i>	<i>BUILDING RFT</i>	<i>ZOOM LICENSES RFT</i>	<i>SCHOOL/HEALTH RFT</i>
Carla Benka	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ben Birnbaum	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Harry Bohrs	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cliff Brown	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Carol Caro	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
John Doggett	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dennis Doughty	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Harry Friedman	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Janet Gelbart	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
David-Marc Goldstein	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Neil Gordon	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Susan Granoff	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Amy Hummel	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alisa Jonas	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Janice Kahn	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Steve Kanes	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
David Lescohier	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Carol Levin	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fred Levitan	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pam Lodish	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Carlos Ridruejo	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lee Selwyn	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kim Smith	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Claire Stampfer	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Charles Swartz	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Paul Warren	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Christine Westphal	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Neil Wishinsky	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mike Sandman					

OFFICE OF SELECT BOARD

MEMORANDUM

TO: Advisory Committee  
FROM: Justin Casanova-Davis, Assistant Town Administrator  
RE: **CV19 – 4 Reserve Fund Transfer**  
DATE: May 5, 2020

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As part of the Town’s coordinating effort to manage the Coronavirus outbreak, more funds are required to pay for additional supplies and services. This request follows the CV19 – 3 request of \$188,000 on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The total amount of this reserve fund transfer (RFT) request is \$207,500, which includes further anticipated departmental expenditures. These further funds should be adequate to allow the Town to deal with this crisis through the remaining Fiscal year. There will be an additional RFT request for the Town Clerk Department for costs associated with the election.

The list below details the request for funds:

IT Department	
Zoom Licenses	\$40,000
Building Department	
Cleaning Products/Supplies/Services	\$90,000
School Department	
Cleaning Products/Supplies/Services	\$10,000
Health Department	
Medical Waste Containers	\$7,500
DPW	
Cleaning Products/Supplies/Services	\$60,000

Paid CV19 invoices ON OUR ACCOUNT

ORG	OBJECT	EFF DATE	REF1	PO/REF2	AMOUNT	VDR NAME/ITEM DESC	COMMENTS
25002510	5224RM	04/22/2020	022194	20207315	25.84	AMAZON.COM LLC	TH-SU10-LAPTOP CHARGER-CV19
25002510	5224RM	04/20/2020	007545	20208484	500.00	CLEANCO MAINTENANCE CORP	CV19 F5-CL11-DISINFECT SANITIZ
25002510	5224RM	04/20/2020	007545	20208484	500.00	CLEANCO MAINTENANCE CORP	CV19 F5-CL11-DISINFECT SANITIZ
25002510	5224RM	04/20/2020	007545	20208484	500.00	CLEANCO MAINTENANCE CORP	CV19 F5-CL11-DISINFECT SANITIZ
25002510	5224RM	04/20/2020	001872	20207310	7,500.00	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	04/15/2020	022194	20205062	249.99	AMAZON.COM LLC	TH-SU10-LOCKING MAIL BOX
25002510	5224RM	04/01/2020	001872	20207310	2,700.00	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	04/01/2020	001872	20207310	852.72	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	04/01/2020	001872	20207310	658.92	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	03/23/2020	001872	20207310	2,936.50	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	03/23/2020	001872	20207310	2,936.50	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	03/23/2020	001872	20207310	474.23	W B MASON CO INC	TW-SU10-CLEANING SUPPLIES-CORO
25002510	5224RM	03/17/2020	014108	20209433	683.52	EDWARD P MOORES	TH-SU10-SPEAK THROUGH PLATES-C
Total:					20,518.22		
25003430	5224RM	04/20/2020	056323	20209485	411.56	HOMES STAMP COMPANY	CV19-SL-SU10-BUILDINGS CLOSED

OPEN CV19 PO LIST ENCUMBERED TO OUR ACCOUNT

Org Code	Object Co PO #	Vendor N	Ordered	Amount	Open	Amour	Vendor Name	PO Date	Item Description
25002510	5224RM	20207312	2081	110.00	110.00		MOORE MEDICAL LLC		04/06/2020 TH/HL/PO-SU10-SHOE COVERS-CV19
25002510	5224RM	20207315	22194	26.00	0.16		AMAZON.COM LLC		04/08/2020 TH-SU10-LAPTOP CHARGER-CV19
25002510	5224RM	20207319	44511	160.45	160.45		AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL RELAT		04/17/2020 CV19-TH-SU10-NANO HANDLE WRAPS
25002510	5224RM	20207321	1872	1,245.00	1,245.00		W B MASON CO INC		04/21/2020 CV19-SU10-COUNTERTOP PLEXIGLASS
25002510	5224RM	20207323	3489	2,344.70	2,344.70		HOME DEPOT USA, INC		04/21/2020 CV19-TH-SU10-PLEXIGLASS
25002510	5224RM	20207324	22194	600.00	600.00		AMAZON.COM LLC		04/21/2020 CV19-TH-SU10-PURELL HAND WIPES
25002510	5224RM	20207331	45020	500.00	500.00		LAN-TEL COMMUNICATIONS INC		04/23/2020 CV19-TH-REPROGRAM KEYCARDS ELEVAT
25002510	5224RM	20207333	1872	2,359.48	2,359.48		W B MASON CO INC		04/24/2020 CV19-TH-SU10-CROWD CONTROL POSTS
25002510	5224RM	20208473	45020	500.00	500.00		LAN-TEL COMMUNICATIONS INC		03/26/2020 CV19 - HL-SC10-PROGRAM NURSES CAR
25002510	5224RM	20209414	7545	500.00	500.00		CLEANCO MAINTENANCE CORP		03/12/2020 TH-CL11-CLEANCO BLEACHING-CORONA-
				8,319.79					

20207314	1872	4,500.00	4,500.00	WB MASON	4/6/2020	25 PURELL DISPENSERS AND 75 REFILLS
20207320	22194	1,478.00	1,478.00	AMAZON	4/16/2020	40 REUSABLE FACE MASKS AND 80 FILTERS
20207337	222194	467.50	467.50	AMAZON	4/27/2020	50 BOTTLES OF PURELL
20207338	1872	874.89	874.89	WB MASON	4/27/2020	(\$839.92 OF THIS ORDER IS FOR POSTS) - SIGN POSTS AND OFFICE SUPPLIES
20207339	1872	1,938.00	1,938.00	WB MASON	4/27/2020	50 BOTTLES OF AVISTAT-D DISINFECTANT SPRAY
20207340	49210	2,700.00	2,700.00	BOSTON GLASS GROUP	4/28/2020	PLEXIGLASS
		13,776.00	13,776.00	NESS	4/23/2020	PLEXIGLAS SHIELDS
		25,000.00	25,000.00	CLEANCO		SPRAY VOTING SITES
						ELECTROSTATIC SPRAYER - HAVE NOT RECEIVED QUOTE YET BUT AMOUNT IS ESTIMATE AND IF WE HAVE ENOUGH MONEY IN BUDGET.
						FIRE DEPT - MAIN LIBRARY -REQUEST FOR WASHER/DRY COMBO
		4,000.00	4,000.00	??		
		<u>1,300.00</u>	<u>1,300.00</u>	??		
		56,034.39	56,034.39			

## CV - 19 Expenditures

			\$ spent to date	\$ paid to date	\$ from CV-19 Acct	\$ from P & OS Acct	\$ From W & S Acct	\$ From H & S Acct	Total PO	PO Bal	\$ needed through 5/30/20	Total \$ needed for each PO
	PO #	Disc										
Nappa	20155115	gloves	\$ 1,321.00	\$ 1,321.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 179.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,821.00
Likkar	20155116	soap, hand sanitizers, masks, Disinfectant	\$ 22,781.00	\$ 4,151.35	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 18,760.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,760.00	\$ 979.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,021.00
WB Mason	20144097	Mask	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
One call	20155117	Extra cleaning of MSC and water garage	\$ 54,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00		\$ 40,000.00	\$ (14,000.00)	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 59,000.00
Total \$ from each acct					\$ 36,500.00	\$ 18,760.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -				

<b>Total expenditure CV-19 through 5/31/20</b>	\$	142,102.00
<b>Total \$ needed in next Transfer</b>	\$	105,602.00
	\$	36,500.00

## OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Mel Kleckner, Town Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Request for Transfer for Transition to Zoom

**DATE:** May 7, 2020

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I have previously announced the Town's decision to transition its electronic meeting solution from WebEx to Zoom. This decision is based on much consideration and follows the decision of the Town Moderator's committee to use the Zoom platform for the upcoming remote Annual Town Meeting.

The costs to convert to Zoom are part of our Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund this evening. We are seeking \$40,000 for the annual licensing of Zoom based on governmental pricing and subscription models. This is approximately \$21,000 greater than the annualized cost of Cisco WebEx, which the Town received favorable pricing from due to our use of Cisco system infrastructure and products. However, the decision to transition to Zoom takes into consideration many factors in addition to cost including, but not limited to, user interface and comfort, accessibility for persons with disabilities and functional performance.

The use of a well-established and accepted product for remote public meetings and interactions is crucial to local government democracy and operations. We believe Zoom meets that need and we would appreciate your support to meet these unforeseen expenses in a Reserve Fund transfer.

Administrative and information technology staff will be available to answer your questions this evening. Thank you for your consideration.

(1) The quantities provided for in this license seem excessive for Town-only (i.e., no Schools) needs -- 100 host licenses with up to 500 meeting participants per video conference, 15 webinar licenses, Zoom basic (video calls with up to 40 min limit) On what basis does IT believe that we have a need for anything close to this much capacity?

School staff will also require licenses to run governmental meetings. 500 participants are the lowest tier for the Zoom for Government plan. As of today, we have 153 accounts provisioned. We are getting more account requests from staff every day.

(2) Does this license include conference phone (rather than computer audio) access? If not, how are connections made via phone charged? Are there limits to the number of phone connections per conference?

Yes

(3) The inclusion of "Zoom basic (video calls with up to 40 min limit)" is a bit confusing. Zoom Basic is a free service that anyone can get. With Zoom Basic, the 40-minute limit applies to CONFERENCES with three or more participants. Simple two-party video calls are also free and have no time limit.

The Zoom for Government package comes with unlimited Zoom Basic. This will allow additional users beyond the 100 Zoom Meeting licenses to host internal virtual meetings.

(4) Zoom offers an "Enterprise" package for \$1,999 per month that includes 100 hosts with up to 500 participants per conference. Other than Town Meeting, it's not clear that we would ever need to accommodate as many as 500 participants -- and that might not even be enough for Town Meeting if there are lots of non-TMM observers. If BIG were to broadcast TM for non-TMM observers, it would seem that 300 Zoom participants would be sufficient.

The Enterprise package is for the Zoom for Commercial accounts. The Town requires the security and architecture of the Zoom for Government platform.

(5) If we don't have a need to support anywhere near as many as 100 concurrent hosts, Zoom offers a 10-host 300-participant Zoom Business package for \$199 per month (\$1,998 per year). Several of these packages might be more than sufficient for our needs. Webinars can be added on for \$40/month (\$400/year) per concurrent webinar capacity. Why would we ever need capacity for as many as 15 concurrent webinars?

Again, we have 153 accounts currently provisioned and continue to get requests for account creation. The pricing structure you cite are not applicable to the Zoom for Government model.

(6) These prices are per-month and can be cancelled at any time. Zoom also offers Annual pricing at a 16.3% discount -- \$1,998 for a 10-host 300-participant package.

The annual pricing structure is not applicable to Zoom for Government.

(7) I think that IT should be made to provide a compelling case for an ANNUAL contract. Our need for Zoom could abate substantially if/as/when things reopen. Committing to a \$40K annual plan suggests

that we think the world will be shut down at least until May 2021. While I am nowhere near as optimistic about things returning to normal as the President or the stock market, if things remain as they are until next May, dealing with Town affairs will be the least of our problems.

We believe that virtual streaming and participation in public meetings will continue for some time and possibly become a new option or requirement for local governments even when social distancing may not be a public health issue for in person meetings. It is likely that all workforces will retain some remote staff/access in the future.

## Greetings –

We will meet on May 14 to hear the Planning & Regulation subcommittee's recommendations on the Newbury/Welltower articles (Articles 9-15). We'll add an agenda item to that meeting to discuss the remaining steps we need to take regarding the FY 21 Financial Plan (departmental budgets, CIP, Reserve Funds, Trust Funds, etc.).

The budget is likely to be presented at the virtual Town Meeting on June 23. As currently planned, the Town's revised budget will not be available for our review until June 1, and the revised School budget's natal day is uncertain.

The Advisory Committee completed its reviews and voted on almost all components of the original budget (except for Schools, DICR and the Select Board) – thank you! But there is no way we can review the upcoming revised departmental budgets at the same level of detail. And the budget is also being affected as we speak. For example, new expenses will be incurred due to Covid-19 concerns, while some services have stopped because they involve gatherings that are not permitted – e.g. the non-virtual services of the Senior Center and Library. Similarly there are School expenses that are no longer being incurred.

Given the time constraint, we need to assume that Melissa Goff, Mary Ellen Normen and the department heads will have looked closely at departmental operations to sort out what expenditures can be stopped (or postponed) vs. what services need to continue - for example, public safety and trash collection. And they will have considered how the presumed length of the shutdown affects their planning.

Quoting directly from a procedure suggested by Janet Gelbart, although we don't have time between June 1 and the due date of Combined Reports to look in detail a second time at the operating budgets, we do have time to take a closer look at the CIP and determine what has to happen in the short term to get us through to the longer term. And we have time to consider what programs can we prudently postpone and gradually build back up.

Similarly, we can look at how the revised Town budget uses (or doesn't use) reserves and how it funds OPEBs, pensions and other trust funds that are re-filled in accordance with current policies.

Please give some thought to this approach and bring your comments and questions to our May 7th meeting,

Members of the Advisory Committee,

I spoke last night at the Select Board meeting, a follow-on to my earlier letter (remarks and letter attached); it may appear in tomorrow's Tab. Another occasion where I was disappointed by their underwhelming (no!) interest and response.

Under current circumstances, a singular one-year budget should not be endorsed, voted and appropriated. (I have no idea of the legality of this approach). There are multiple, respected, published public health models forecasting COVID-19 sickness and death. Individually, they vary with current events, and collectively, underlying assumptions differ. And there is no reliability to the reported numbers of sickness and death. That is not criticism; it is the leading indicator that any singular budget for fiscal 2021, beginning in under two months, cannot be reliable. Many publicly-held entities no longer provide revenue and earnings guidance. Uncertain revenues in the non-profit world have them pleading for donations to sustain their missions. States and municipalities face the unknown with limited funding options.

"Budget" in our town's traditional practice and procedure authorizes financial commitment and spending for an entire fiscal year, with no disciplined means to put on the brakes. There might be foreboding weather forecasts, but the tried-and-true solution, the use of reserves after the horse has left the barn, won't work in fiscal 2021, and likely beyond.

The town has a singular five-year long range financial plan. What's needed for fiscal 2021 (and longer?) is a short range financial plan, with multiple scenarios that have well-defined and understood "services" priorities and assumptions. In executing that plan, the town must have the means, responsiveness and flexibility to implement changes consistent with priorities, as future events reveal reliable information on their impact.

Assurance is needed that the town's systems produce reliable, timely information. But the leadership needed to oversee, manage and communicate is absent.

Our traditional budget review focuses on detailed departmental and project spending. Little tire kicking is given to the certainty of revenue and liquidity. We are fortunate to have a large, fixed real estate tax base supplemented by variable revenue sources. But even a small increase in tax delinquencies can seriously affect liquidity, and the outlook for variable sources is not good.

There should be macro due diligence on the "services" priorities and revenue assumptions that will determine the cash flow to fund spending. The town may have lucked out in fiscal 2020 with eight months of good news, but understanding revenue performance and changes in spending priorities since February should be the starting point as fiscal 2021 approaches. Multiple scenarios, priorities discipline, timely, reliable information, responsiveness, flexibility, communication and leadership will be the internal controls governing responsible financial commitment and spending. It is an open-ended process, reliant on trust and confidence. But it parallels the uncertainty of the leading indicator, COVID-19. As I said above, the legality of this approach is beyond me, but I would make every attempt for a legal alternative or de facto solution. A controlling shadow process!

Leadership is applying to fiscal 2021's finances the town's historic practices and procedures, oblivious to even some modification of approach: Town Administrator presents (understood and endorsed by Select Board????) a single-scenario, full-fiscal year, no brakes budget, but in a terribly condensed timeframe, with virtual discussion and voting culminating a week before Day 1. No communication preceding distribution. No advance statement on the underlying services priorities that will drive the dollars. No public heads-up of what is coming.

What a recipe! I made my plea to the Town Administrator and Select Board. Things have got to start changing as soon as yesterday! Please add to my voice.

Sincerely,

Len Weiss

I believe the Board has received my letter regarding communicating the consequences of COVID-19 on the town's financial health. It anticipates a continuing narrative that should move, in time, from the unknown and uncertain to the more certain and reliable. On a broader basis, it should be viewed as a state of the town address. We're seeing the president, governors and mayors appear before their citizens. There hasn't been a public face for Brookline. The communication should lead with information on the delivery of town services, supported by financial information. The analog would be the management discussion and analysis provided by publicly held entities. It should not take the form of a financial statement.

I would emphasize the need to establish with residents the challenges and limitations presented by the unknown, and the degree of reliability in commenting on the future.

But most importantly we need a public face to deliver this information.

Brookline's COVID-19 Response...Timely Financial Information, Please!

The Select Board and Town Administrator,

Brookline's response informs residents about, most importantly, public health concerns, as well as other relevant content. The glaring omission is the impact on its financial health. There is immediacy to this issue, which began in March, will continue for fiscal 2021, and likely beyond. You have a responsibility and obligation to share timely financial information with us.

Revenues, cash flow and liquidity have been adversely affected, with more bad news to come.

So much of the future is unknown and uncertain. But with over two months gone by, you have no doubt gained knowledge (recognizing its inherent limitations and uncertainties) that would allow you to communicate qualitatively, at least, the initial implications on operating and capital spending and debt service for the last four months of fiscal 2020, and fiscal 2021, which is looming. And your consequential ideas, plans and actions.

A timely, continuing narrative should follow, as your knowledge base expands, and becomes more certain and reliable. Quantitative information should be introduced with appropriate caveats.

Please share this information with us.

Sincerely,  
Len Weiss  
Brookline