TOWN MEETING HANDBOOK

A GUIDE FOR BROOKLINE TOWN MEETING MEMBERS

2020 EDITION
### Parliamentary Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Motions</th>
<th>Second Required</th>
<th>Debatable</th>
<th>Amendable</th>
<th>Vote Required</th>
<th>May Reconsider</th>
<th>May Interrupt</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dissolve (adjourn sine die)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Adjourn to a fixed time</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>2/3</td>
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<td>The previous question</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Limit or extend debate</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>2/3</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Same rank as motion out of which it arises</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Point of order</td>
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<td>Withdraw or modify motion</td>
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<td>Majority</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Main motion</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Varies</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Advance an article</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Debatable at the discretion of the Moderator


**COVER ART:** Caroline Barnes, [www.brooklineturkeys.com](http://www.brooklineturkeys.com)
Dear Town Meeting Member:

Welcome to Town Meeting. The traditional New England Town Meeting is the embodiment of "grass roots" democracy. Brookline's Town Meeting has been in place for over three hundred years. It provides the residents of Brookline with access to their municipal government and allows a high level of citizen participation. Our Town Meeting is a model of the best in local democracy.

This handbook has been produced and edited by the current and past Town Moderators with the assistance of the Brookline Town Meeting Members Association (TMMA). It is designed to be used by Town Meeting Members as a guide to the procedures of our Town Meeting.

The purpose of the TMMA is to serve all Town Meeting Members as a non-partisan, non-advocacy association. Its goals are:

- To foster open, efficient and effective participatory and democratic governance in the Town of Brookline and to increase the understanding of Town Meeting Members and their constituents of issues facing Brookline that may come before Town Meeting;

- To gather, develop and disseminate relevant information about Town issues to Town Meeting Members and their constituents for the purpose of providing an informed discussion of issues at Town Meeting; and

- To consider ways to improve the structure and process of Town Meeting, its efficiency, collegiality and effectiveness, and to encourage broad participation of Town Meeting Members.

The TMMA also maintains an internet listserv at BrooklineTMMA@groups.IO on which Town Meeting Members and a limited number of others post comments and information relating to Town issues and events.

Additional copies of this Town Meeting Handbook may be obtained from the offices of the Select Board or the Town Clerk, and the entire Handbook is also posted on the Town's website at www.brooklinema.gov/townmeeting/handbook.

This edition of the Handbook has been completely reorganized and modernized by TMM Jennifer Goldsmith in order to provide TMMs and others with a vastly more comprehensible and user-friendly document. We gratefully acknowledge her invaluable assistance in accomplishing this.

The 2020 Annual Town Meeting will be held remotely due to the current COVID-19 crisis, and will be subject to many special rules and procedures that are not covered in this Handbook.

Sincerely yours,

Edward (Sandy) Gadsby, Town Moderator, and
the Town Meeting Members Association
June 2020
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HISTORY & FUNCTIONS

Brookline's Town Meeting has been in place for over three hundred years, with the ideal of providing the citizens of Brookline clear access to our municipal government and allowing inclusion and participation among all residents.

- Brookline was settled in 1638 and incorporated in 1705, the same year its first town meeting was held. At that Town Meeting, only male property owners were eligible to participate.

- In 1910 town finance committees were established by state statute. In Brookline, the finance committee is called the Advisory Committee.

- In 1915, Brookline became the first town in Massachusetts to adopt a Representative Town Meeting, allowing all citizens to be heard when recognized by the Moderator but only elected Town Meeting Members to vote.

- The conduct of Town Meeting is managed by the Moderator in the exercise of his or her discretion, subject always to state law, the Town by-laws, and Town Meeting votes and traditions.

________________________________________________________

“There are aspirations behind the town-meeting conception of democracy which must be recognized as indelible parts of the democratic creed.”

The town-meeting conception of democracy is an idealized way of expressing the democratic hope that those who are governed will be able to reach those who govern them, that they will be able to make their voices heard where it counts and will be recognized as persons and not as faceless cogs in an efficient machine.

It speaks for a belief that a society is safer and freer when the bulk of its citizens understand the programs and goals that their government has chosen and when they have achieved this understanding because these programs and goals have been honestly debated in public.”

TOWN MEETING FAQs

Q | What are the functions and responsibilities of Town Meeting?
A | As the legislative body of Town government, Town Meeting is responsible for:
   - Approving the Town budget, including both operating and capital appropriations and allocations,
   - Considering and voting on changes to the Town's zoning and general by-laws,
   - Accepting or rejecting state laws that are subject to local option,
   - Requesting special state legislation for the Town, and
   - Approving any significant changes in Town administrative structure and procedures.

Q | How often, when and where does Town Meeting meet?
A | Town Meetings are typically held twice annually, once each in the spring and fall.
   An Annual Town Meeting is held each spring, in late May. A regular Special Town Meeting is held each
   November, typically during the week before Thanksgiving week. Special Town Meetings may be called at
   other times by the Select Board to deal with Town business. Special Town Meetings may also be called by
   written petition signed by 200 voters. Town Meetings are held in the Brookline High School Auditorium, 155
   Greenough Street. They begin at 7:00 pm and typically last two or three evenings depending on the length
   and complexity of the meeting agenda, although in recent years Town Meetings have begun to last four or
   more sessions.

Q | What process initiates a Town Meeting?
A | A Town Meetings is initiated when the Select Board issues a warrant containing the
   meeting agenda, which serves as notice to all citizens.
   The Town by-laws require that notice of Town Meetings be given by “posting copies of the Warrant in ten
   public places in the Town and by publication of the Warrant in a newspaper of general circulation in the
   Town.” Posting and publication of these materials must occur at least seven days in advance of the Annual
   Town Meeting and at least 14 days in advance of a Special Town Meeting. Typically, the Warrant is approved
   by the Select Board more than two months before the Town Meeting to which it applies, and legal postings
   take place shortly thereafter. A copy of the Warrant is also mailed to all Town Meeting Members at that time
   and is simultaneously posted on the Town website.
**Q** | What is a Warrant?
---|---
**A** | A warrant is a notice to all residents of the Town that a Town Meeting will be held. The warrant is issued by the Select Board and must state the time and place where the meeting will be held and the subject matter to be acted on.

**Q** | What is a Warrant Article?
---|---
**A** | Each item of business within the warrant is called a warrant article. Essentially, the warrant sets forth the agenda for the Town Meeting. The agenda items are referred to as warrant articles.

**Q** | How are warrant articles developed and brought to town meeting?
---|---
**A** | The Select Board may adopt warrant articles or residents may initiate a petition for a warrant article.

Residents may have an article placed on the warrant by obtaining the signatures of at least ten registered Brookline voters and submitting the proposed article to the Select Board before the closing of the warrant for the meeting, 75 days prior to the meeting date.

A warrant article initiated by citizens is referred to as a petition article. The [Warrant Process](#) section of this handbook provides a detailed description of this process.

**Q** | How do Town Meeting members learn about the contents of a warrant?
---|---
**A** | The Office of the Select Board and the Town Clerk distribute warrant materials in advance of Town Meeting. The Town Clerk is required to send a document called [The Combined Reports](#) to Town Meeting Members at least seven days prior to the Annual Town Meeting and at least 14 days prior to a Special Town Meeting. The Office of the Select Board compiles the Combined Reports, which includes:

- the text of each article in the warrant,
- the explanations of petition articles submitted by citizen petitioners,
- the reports of the Select Board and the Advisory Committee on each article,
- and every report submitted in time for publication by a board or committee with jurisdiction over the subject matter of any article.

A second distribution is typically provided to Town Meeting Members in the week prior to a scheduled Town Meeting. Referred to as the Supplemental Reports, this distribution includes reports of the Select Board and Advisory Committee that were not available at the time of distribution of the Combined Reports as well as all amendments and motions proposed to be made under the articles in the warrant submitted after the deadline for mailing of the Combined Reports. Periodically updates may be distributed during the course of Town Meeting sessions. The [Town Meeting Files](#) section of the Town's website contains these files.
Who presides over a Town Meeting?

Town Meeting is presided over by a moderator who is elected every three years in an annual Town election. The Moderator runs Town Meeting in his or her discretion, subject to state law, the Town by-laws and Town Meeting traditions. The Moderator section of this Handbook provides a detailed description of this role.

How is the agenda for Town Meeting set?

Town Meeting agendas are based on the articles in the warrant. All topics discussed at Town Meeting must be within the scope of the subject described in an article as it appears in the warrant. The Moderator interprets how broad that scope may be. Since the purpose of the warrant is to inform voters about a subject to be considered by Town Meeting and not to set forth the exact action sought, the courts have supported liberal interpretations of scope as defined by Moderators.

What parliamentary rules govern Town Meeting?

Town Meeting sessions are governed by parliamentary rules set forth in this Handbook and in Town Meeting Time, a publication of the Massachusetts Moderators Association. The rules governing the priority and requirements of specific motions, from Town Meeting Time, are set forth on the inside front cover of this Handbook.

How can Town Meeting be viewed remotely?

Town Meeting sessions are livestreamed and aired by Brookline Interactive Group (BIG), on Comcast Channel 23 and RCN Channel 15. Archives of Town Meeting proceedings are available on-line at BIG.

How does voting on warrant articles happen at Town Meeting?

Voting happens either by voice vote, by hand or by an electronic vote. The Moderator will initially call for either a voice or hand vote. Recorded votes are initiated by a motion for a recorded vote that is seconded and approved by at least 35 Town Meeting Members. Votes are recorded through the use of handheld devices and are displayed on the projection screen during Town Meeting. Results of recorded votes are included in the minutes of Town Meeting, published on the Town website and retained by the Town Clerk for at least three years. The Voting on the Main Motion section of this Handbook provides a detailed description of this process.
What's the difference between Annual Town Meeting and a Special Town Meeting?

Town Meeting is the generic term applied to any Town Meeting gathering. The Annual Town Meeting by statute consists of two parts: the annual Town election, typically held on the first Tuesday in May, and a business meeting of Town Meeting Members held in late May or occasionally early June. The annual business meeting is referred to in this handbook, as the "Annual Town Meeting." A Special Town Meeting is often called to be held "within" the Annual Town Meeting or within another Special Town Meeting. In this event the Moderator conducts each meeting separately, although they occur in immediate succession. A Special Town Meeting is also required to be called by the Select Board within 90 days of receiving a petition signed by at least 200 registered voters requesting a meeting.

Where are copies of Town Meeting materials available?

In addition to the Town website, the Main Library has a file of Town Meeting material.

The Main Library on Washington Street maintains a file of Town Meeting documents, including the Financial Plan, the Combined Reports, and plans and other supporting documents relating to projects that come before Town Meeting. The Brookline Interactive Group YouTube government channel also archives past Town Meeting video files. All warrants, reports and other material relating to each Town Meeting are posted on the Town website and remain so posted for a period of three years.
**Q |** What is the amount of Brookline’s total budget?

**A |** Brookline’s FY ’20 Budget balances $335 million of revenues and expenses. A balanced budget means that revenues are equal to expenses.

**Q |** What are the sources of Brookline’s revenue and expense budgets?

**A |** FY ‘20 Town Revenue and Expense Budget detail is below. Brookline Budget Central provides documentation on each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY20 Budget $</th>
<th>FY20 Budget %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Property Taxes</td>
<td>239,499</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Receipts</td>
<td>29,943</td>
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<td>State Aid</td>
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<td>Free Cash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other available funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprises (net)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY20 Budget $</th>
<th>FY20 Budget %</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>School Department</td>
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<td>Non-Departmental</td>
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<td>Municipal Departments</td>
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<td>Special Appropriations</td>
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<td>Non-Appropriated</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprises (net)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>304,019</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q |** What is the role of Town Government in Budget development and approval?

**A |** The Town Administrator prepares the initial budget, which is then reviewed and revised by the Advisory Committee serving as the Town finance committee. The Advisory Committee’s budget is then presented to and approved at the Annual Town Meeting, subject to adjustments at the Fall Special Town Meeting. The Advisory Committee section of this Handbook provides a detailed description of this process.

**Q |** What is the timeline of the Town’s budget process?

**A |** The budget process starts each late fall and ends in May. The Budget Process section of this Handbook provides a detailed description of this process.
ROLE IN TOWN GOVERNMENT

Moderator
The Moderator is elected by the voters of the Town for an unsalaried three-year term. The Moderator is the presiding officer of the Town Meeting with the principal duty of advancing the transaction of the Town's business in an orderly manner and carrying out the will of the Town Meeting. The Moderator sets guidelines for the length of presentations and determines the preliminary order of speakers at Town Meeting to assure that all sides of an issue are presented. The Moderator also appoints the Advisory Committee, the Committee on Town Organization and Structure, and three members of the Audit Committee, as well as any temporary Moderator's committees mandated by Town Meeting.

The Moderator is available by phone or e-mail for consultation by Town Meeting Members and residents of Brookline to assist them on procedural issues or in preparing articles or motions for Town Meeting. In addition, prior to the Annual Town Meeting the Moderator conducts an annual instruction session on Town Meeting procedures that is especially geared for new Town Meeting Members. The Appendix of this Handbook provides Key Contacts including the Moderator's contact information.

Town Meeting Members
Town Meeting is comprised of 240 elected members. Fifteen registered voters are elected from each of 16 precincts. One third of Town Meeting Members are elected each year for a three-year term, with the exception that all 15 positions in a precinct must be elected to staggered terms at the Town election subsequent to any redistricting of that precinct. In addition to the 240 elected members, the Moderator, Town Clerk, five Select Board members, and any state legislator residing in Brookline serve as Town Meeting Members-at-Large. Only Town Meeting Members have the right to vote on matters that come before Town Meeting.

Town Clerk
The Town Clerk is a full-time paid official elected by Brookline voters for a three-year term. The Town Clerk records the minutes of each Town Meeting and maintains the official record of all votes taken. The Town Clerk administers the oath of office to Town Meeting Members, the Moderator and other elected and appointed officials. The office of Town Clerk has many other statutory duties relating to Town elections and the Town census, among other responsibilities, and maintains a vast array of Town records.

Select Board
The Select Board is a five-member body in which each member is elected for a three-year term, with one or two members elected in each year. The members of the Select Board receive modest annual stipends for their roles. The Select Board serves as the Town's executive authority, with overall responsibility for supervising Town affairs. Its role is defined by state law and the Town charter and by-laws. Among the duties of the Select Board are:

- to appoint the Town Administrator and other department heads,
- to appoint boards and commissions,
- to execute policies voted by Town Meeting,
- to review and make recommendations on the annual budget and all other warrant articles,
- to supervise the expenditure of funds appropriated by Town Meeting,
- to sign all bonds and notes for borrowings,
- to serve as Police and Fire Commissioners, and
- to serve as the Town's licensing board.
With regard to Town Meeting, the Select Board has the power, and in the case of citizens' petitions is required, to insert articles in the warrant; however, only Town Meeting has the final authority to accept, reject or modify the action sought by any article.

**Town Administrator**

The Town Administrator works under the direction of the Select Board as Chief Operating Officer of the Town, supervises department heads and is responsible for developing the Town’s annual financial plan.

**Deputy Town Administrator**

Under the auspices of the Town Administrator, the Deputy Town Administrator facilitates Town Meeting by overseeing the development and production of the warrant and Combined Reports, and by processing and distributing motions, amendments and other documents to be considered at Town Meetings.

**Town Counsel**

The Town has its own internal law firm under the direction of Town Counsel, who is appointed by the Select Board. Town Counsel provides legal representation for the Town in matters in which the Town is involved or by which it is or may be affected. With respect to Town Meeting, Town Counsel aids citizen petitioners in drafting warrant articles and provides legal advice relating to Town Meeting matters to the Moderator and to Town Meeting Members. Town Counsel provides guidance and training in the State Conflict of Interest and Open Meeting laws to committee and board appointees and elected officials.

**Advisory Committee and Subcommittees**

In Brookline, the finance committee, which is comprised of 20-30 residents appointed by the Moderator, is called the Advisory Committee. Under the Town by-laws the Advisory Committee should to the extent practicable include at least one Town Meeting Member from each precinct. No more than four members may reside in the same precinct and no more than eight members may be at-large (non-Town Meeting Members). New members of the Advisory Committee are appointed to one-year terms and members are usually reappointed for three-year terms, but sometimes reappointments are for two years to adjust membership so that approximately one-third of the terms expire each year. In appointing members of the Advisory Committee, the Moderator applies a number of criteria, including but not limited to the following (in no particular order): special expertise important to the Committee’s mission, such as financial, architectural, engineering and legal; maintenance of gender, age and ethnic diversity; a high potential for working collegially with colleagues; and experience in Town affairs.

The Advisory Committee’s roles are defined by state law and the Town charter and by-laws. The principal duty of the Committee is to study and make recommendations on warrant articles for every Town Meeting, with particular emphasis on articles with financial consequences. The major focus of the Committee in connection with the Annual Town Meeting is the annual budget article, which contains the proposed operating and capital budgets for the coming year. In carrying out its duties, the Advisory Committee may examine the finances and records of any board, committee or officer of the Town to the extent permitted by law. The Advisory Committee is the only authority that may approve transfers from the Town’s Reserve Fund for unforeseen or emergency expenditures between Town Meetings. The Committee may on occasion decline to study or take a position on certain articles or resolutions with no financial implications.

The work of the full Advisory Committee is complemented by a subcommittee structure, including both ad hoc and standing subcommittees, assigned to undertake comprehensive review and to make recommendations on warrant articles to the full Committee.
The deliberations of the Advisory Committee and its subcommittees take place in meetings held principally during the three- to four-month period prior to a Town Meeting. The Committee often meets immediately prior to a Town Meeting session to consider amendments and other matters that have arisen since its most recent meeting or published report. The Committee, through its subcommittees and occasionally via the full Committee, holds at least one public hearing on each article that comes before it, during which all Town Meeting Members and Town residents may offer comments. Non-members may also address other meetings of the full Committee with the permission of the Chairperson, and anyone may submit written commentary to any meeting.

The subcommittees report their recommendations to the full Advisory Committee, which votes on each article. These votes become the basis for written recommendations, which are included in the Combined Reports, and often supplemented thereafter. The Advisory Committee’s recommendations are advisory only and may be accepted or rejected by Town Meeting in whole or in part.

The annual budget is presented to Town Meeting by the Advisory Committee, although amendments to the budget may be offered by the Select Board or other Town Meeting Members. The Advisory Committee begins its review of the budget as soon as the Town Administrator’s Financial Plan is released, typically in mid-February. The various elements of the proposed budget are assigned to subcommittees and are reviewed in much the same manner as warrant articles.

A schedule of proposed meetings and public hearings is developed at the beginning of each meeting cycle and is published on the Town’s website under the “Calendar” link. A notice of each public hearing or meeting of the Advisory Committee and its subcommittees is posted outside the Town Clerk’s office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting, and is also published on the Town website and, if possible, in local media. Notices are also sent to an e-mail list of Town Meeting Members maintained by the Town Meeting Members Association. In addition, the Committee uses its best efforts to provide the principal proponent(s) and other interested parties of whom the Committee is aware with special notice when an article of interest to them is to be considered or reconsidered by the Committee or any subcommittee.

The Advisory Committee maintains a page on the Town website containing a current list of members, the composition of subcommittees, contact information and a link to its meeting schedule. Individuals who wish to be notified about the schedule for deliberation of a specific warrant article or departmental budget should inform the Advisory Committee’s Executive Assistant using the contact information on that website. See Appendix, “Websites and Links.”

**Town Boards, Commissions and Committees**

Oversight for many Town activities is exercised by appointed and elected boards, commissions and committees. These entities have jurisdiction over or responsibilities in connection with the subject matter of articles that come before Town Meeting. Members of the School Committee and Board of Library Trustees are elected to staggered three-year terms in annual Town elections. The Select Board appoints the members of nearly one hundred current boards, committees and commissions. The Moderator occasionally appoints special committees when and as requested by Town Meeting vote, and on rare occasions appoints ad hoc study committees on his or her own motion. Representatives of these entities periodically take positions and sometimes speak at Town Meetings on relevant articles. The Appendix of this Handbook includes a list of current boards, commissions and committees and their current chairpersons.

Residents interested in participating in Town boards, commissions and committees can find information on vacancies and opportunities at the [Brookline Board and Commission website](#) and can apply for a position by contacting the Select Board Office. Residents interested in appointment to Moderator-appointed committees should contact the Moderator for information concerning application criteria and the appointment process.
SERVING IN TOWN MEETING

Running for Election as a Town Meeting Member

- Any registered Brookline voter may run for election to Town Meeting from the precinct in which his or her legal voting residence is located.
- A new candidate must obtain nomination papers from the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall. At least ten registered voters who live in the candidate's precinct must sign these papers for nomination. Nomination papers must have valid signatures; that is, signatures must correspond exactly to the names on the voting list and correct addresses must be listed. Candidates should obtain at least 15 signatures to account for possible errors.
- Candidates must submit nomination papers to the Town Clerk's office at least 49 days before the election in order to appear on the printed ballot.
- A candidate may run as a "sticker" or "write-in" candidate. While this would bypass traditional nomination procedures, it is less likely to be successful in a contested election.
- An incumbent Town Meeting Member may become a candidate for re-election by providing written notice to the Town Clerk at least 56 days before Election Day.
- As a courtesy, the Town Clerk mails forms to incumbent Town Meeting Members for them to complete and return, indicating their intent to run (or not to run) for re-election.
- Incumbents are not required to file new nomination papers if they return the Town Clerk's form indicating their intention to run for office prior to the 56-day deadline.

Running a Town Meeting Campaign

Campaign approaches vary by precinct, number of candidates and competitiveness of an election. Some effective practices include:

- Door-to-door canvassing within a precinct to meet voters and make a case for one's candidacy.
- Obtaining voting lists from the Town Clerk's office in order to identify frequent Town Election voters, which will enable the candidate to narrow the scope of his efforts and reduce the cost of campaign literature.
- Creating flyers or campaign postcards to share a candidate's message or platform. Campaign literature should include the name and address of a citizen, usually the candidate, and campaign literature may be distributed by hand in public places or door-to-door.
- Using social media including Facebook communities or school groups, which is likely to reach more people than door to door canvassing.
- Reaching out to community groups or school groups, holding a house party to introduce a candidate and sending informed detailed emails to neighbors, which can serve to enhance the visibility of a campaign.
- The League of Women Voters (LWV), Brookline PAX and sometimes other advocacy groups in Brookline offer candidates the opportunity to introduce themselves, their platforms and their responses to questions relevant to their campaigns. These are published in the Brookline Tab and distributed electronically and by mail by the LWV and Brookline PAX, respectively. LWV and PAX usually solicit all candidates, but candidates may contact them through their websites.
- The LWV holds a Candidates' Night one or two weeks in advance of the election. Candidates involved in local or Town-wide contested races have the opportunity in this forum to present their views to attendees.
- Other organizations including neighborhood associations periodically hold similar meetings.
- Candidates should stand at their polling place on Election Day and greet voters, which is a good way to obtain additional votes. However, any campaigning, including standing the polls or holding signs must by law not be conducted within 150 ft. of the entrance to a polling place.
Town Meeting Members or candidates in some precincts sometimes organize a slate of candidates for the office and focus their campaigns on the election of all those named on the slate. Some consider this tactic undemocratic, but it has been effectively used on many occasions.

Becoming Informed About Town Meeting and Town Issues

At the Precinct Level
- Many precincts hold warrant review sessions in advance of each Town Meeting. Typically, the 15 precinct representatives will gather as a group, assign leadership on specific warrant articles and have discussions of these topics in the home of a member of their precinct delegation. Some precincts invite their communities to these meetings and hold them in public spaces.

Through the Town Meeting Members Association
- Becoming active in the Town Meeting Members Association (TMMA) is an excellent way for Town Meeting Member to become informed about and involved in Town issues. Once elected, Town Meeting Members have access to the TMMA listserv (brooklinetmma@groups.io) in which Town Meeting Members communicate their views about pertinent issues.
- The TMMA holds a series of well-publicized meetings throughout the year to which all citizens are invited. A meeting held soon after the conclusion of each Town Meeting includes a session with the Moderator during which procedural and other issues that arose during the Town Meeting are discussed.
- The TMMA also typically holds public information meetings prior to the first deliberative session of Town Meeting, at which sponsors of contested or pivotal articles make presentations.
- The TMMA periodically sponsors visits to sites that would be affected by capital expenditures contained in the warrant for the meeting. These are usually scheduled on Sundays.

Accessing Town-Wide Resources
- The official Town website (www.brooklinema.gov) contains considerable information about the Town and current activities of its boards, commissions and committees.
- The Annual Report of the Town also contains that information, and includes a detailed narrative and fiscal year summary and projections for each Town and School department. Annual Reports are available from the Town Clerk or Select Board's office and are posted online on the Town website.
- Meetings of Town boards, commissions and committees are open to the public, and notices of meetings are included in the calendar contained in the Town website, posted on the Town Clerk's bulletin board, and often set forth in the local media and in emails to Town Meeting Members. The meetings of the full Advisory Committee and its subcommittees offer in depth discussion on issues to come before Town Meeting. In addition, meetings of the Select Board and School Committee are televised by Brookline Interactive Group (local access television).
- The Town's general by-laws describe the structure of Town government and current Town regulations, including some of the rules under which Town Meeting is conducted. The current version of these by-laws is posted on the Town website.
- The Town's annual financial plan, as compiled by the Town Administrator, is published early each calendar year and is available in the offices of the Town Clerk and Select Board.

Engaging as a Town Meeting Member

Town Meeting may be difficult to navigate for new Town Meeting Members. Several strategies can assist with the transition from candidate to elected Town Meeting Member.

- Find a mentor: Mentoring that pairs new members with experienced Town Meeting Members can provide support and clarity. New members can seek out willing and experienced mentors from among their precinct delegations.
- Elect a precinct captain: By electing a precinct captain, new Town Meeting Members have a clear contact to whom to bring questions. A precinct captain can also take the lead in scheduling precinct warrant review sessions.
- Attend formal and informal training meetings: The Town Meeting Members Association facilitates training sessions each spring to orient newly elected members. These formal sessions can be complemented by panels and video training sessions led by current Town Meeting Members.
- **Attend the Moderator’s training meeting:** The Moderator conducts an annual instruction session on Town Meeting procedures shortly before each Annual Town Meeting. This session is especially directed at new Town Meeting Members.
- View videos of past Town Meetings: Videos of Town Meeting are available on the Brookline Interactive Group website. These films demonstrate the specific practices and procedures applied in Town Meetings.
- Sit with precinct delegations at Town Meeting: It can be educational to sit with a mentor or precinct delegation members since these individuals can assist in understanding the activities underway during a Town Meeting.

**Resignation or Termination**

A Town Meeting Member may resign by filing a written notice of resignation with the Town Clerk. The resignation is effective as of the filing date. The term of a Town Meeting Member who moves outside of Brookline will end on the move date. A Town Meeting Member who moves from one precinct to another within the Town continues to hold office as a Town Meeting Member from his or her original precinct, but only until the next Town election.
THE WARRANT PROCESS

Warrant articles are developed by individuals, groups or elected officials, often in response to a concept or opportunity they identify primarily to improve Town functions. The following guidelines are intended to provide practical instructions on preparing and processing a warrant article by citizens' petition. Questions about developing a warrant article can be directed to the Moderator. In additional Town Meeting Members with experience in developing warrant articles are excellent guides and resources for the petitioner.

The warrant process can take several months from beginning to end and involves interactions with Town Meeting colleagues throughout. This is a collaborative process and works best if petitioners seek guidance from experienced Town Meeting Members. Note that steps 1-5 below all take place prior to filing the article. The process following the filing of a petition includes attendance at a series of sub-committee and committee meetings of the Advisory Committee and Select Board and often at meetings of other Town committees, commissions or boards with jurisdiction over the subject matter of an article.

Timing of Warrant Petitions

Petitions must be filed by Noon on the announced date for the closing of the warrant. By law, that date is 75 days before the scheduled date of the opening session of the Town Meeting. The Office of the Select Board can provide the exact date for the submission deadline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate Town Meeting Date</th>
<th>Approximate Filing Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late May</td>
<td>Late March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late November</td>
<td>Late August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps in the Warrant Development Process

1. Develop and Clear the Concept

The petitioner(s) should begin the warrant process by discussing their idea for an article with the constituencies involved. They should review existing regulations, laws and relevant Town by-laws, and see if other towns have similar measures that may serve as models and inform their process.

If Massachusetts law covers the subject matter of the proposed article, the petitioner should consult with Town Counsel to confirm that the article would be permissible. There are six areas in which, under the State Constitution, a Town Meeting may either not act or may only petition for action by the State legislature:

(1) regulation of elections;
(2) levy, assessment and collection of taxes;
(3) borrowing of money or pledging of credit;
(4) disposition of park land;
(5) governance of civil relationships; and
(6) punishment of felonies.

Note that, in most if not all of these areas, existing general legislation provides towns with the authority to act within the limits of the authority provided in such legislation. The advice of Town Counsel is nevertheless especially pertinent to articles related to any of these subjects.

2. Prepare a Draft Article

The wording of warrant articles follows a formal and consistent style. A Town Meeting article should begin with the words: "To see if the Town will..." and end with the words "...or act on anything relative thereto," although deviation from or the absence of these words is does not present an insuperable problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Warrant Article</th>
<th>Syntax, Phrasing and Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed amendments to Town by-laws</td>
<td>&quot;To see if the Town will amend the Town by-laws by [general description of the amendment proposed or a marked version of the by-law provision showing the proposed changes, in each case with specific reference to the article and section numbers to be amended], or act on anything relative thereto.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed appropriation of funds</td>
<td>&quot;To see if the Town will appropriate [estimated amount], or any other sum, for [purpose of the appropriation], or act on anything relative thereto.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriation articles should specify the source of the appropriation, whether from the tax levy, by transfer from an existing appropriation, by borrowing, or any combination of these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The petitioner should consult with both the Deputy Town Administrator and Town Counsel prior to submitting an appropriation article, to obtain the proper language for the source of the appropriation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed penalty for failure to comply with an existing or proposed by-law</td>
<td>The petitioner should refer to the appropriate penalty section of the Town by-laws to make sure that the penalty is properly provided for and referenced. Here again, the petitioner should consult with both the Deputy Town Administrator and Town Counsel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed adoption of a non-binding resolution</td>
<td>The article should contain &quot;Whereas&quot; clauses setting forth the background of the proposed resolution and a &quot;Now, therefore, be it hereby Resolved&quot; section setting forth the operative language for the resolution to be adopted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Submit the Draft Article for Review
Though not a legal requirement, the Moderator strongly recommends that all citizens' petitions be submitted to either Town Counsel or the Moderator for review prior to the remaining steps in its development. Proposed changes in the zoning by-law should be reviewed by the Director of Planning.

While it is up to the petitioner(s) to prepare the initial draft of an article, these officials can assist in the proper wording of the article, conforming proposed amendments of existing zoning or general by-laws to the current wording of the by-laws and, in certain cases, addressing legal issues that might be raised by the proposed article.

4. Prepare an Explanation

An explanation of the purposes and intent of an article is required as a component of the development process. This explanation will appear in the Combined Reports and is the petitioner's first opportunity to inform Town Meeting Members of the purpose of the petition article. The petitioner should write a clear and concise explanation of what the warrant article aims to accomplish and why it is needed.

5. Prepare a Petition and Obtaining Signatures

Each citizen's petition must include signatures of at least ten registered Brookline voters, with their voting addresses. The petition form may be obtained from the Town Clerk. As with seeking signatures as a Town Meeting candidate, it is a good practice to obtain at least five additional signatures in case some are deemed invalid.

The primary sponsors of an article should be identified in the petition form as the principal petitioners. The Office of the Select Board will notify the principal petitioners when the article is scheduled to be discussed by the Select Board, and the Executive Assistant of the Advisory Committee will also provide such notification when the article is to be heard by the full Advisory Committee or one of its subcommittees, as more fully discussed below. The principal petitioners should include their telephone numbers and e-mail addresses in the petition, so that they can be contacted easily.

6. File the Petition with the Select Board's Office

To be included in a warrant, the petitioner must file the petition, with the form of the article accompanied by at least ten valid signatures and the petitioner's explanation of the article, with the Office of the Select Board, located on the sixth floor of Town Hall.

The filing deadline is always at Noon on the date that has been announced for the closing of the warrant. By law that date is 75 days before the scheduled date of the opening session of the Town Meeting. If in doubt, the petitioner should check with the Office of the Select Board for the submission deadline.

7. Post-Filing Process

The principal petitioner(s) will be notified of various meetings at which they are invited to present their article, but it is the responsibility of the petitioners to attend these meetings. This is a relatively time-consuming process for most petitioners.

Advisory Committee
A subcommittee of the Advisory Committee will be assigned to review the article based on the relevance to that subcommittee. The subcommittee will schedule at least one public hearing to consider the article and receive comments from the public. The principal petitioner will be invited to attend and answer questions at all meetings of the subcommittee at which the petitioner's article will be considered. The subcommittee will vote to make a recommendation on the article to the full Advisory Committee.
Following the subcommittee review, the article will be discussed before the full Advisory Committee, and the petitioner(s) will again be asked to attend and present his or her position. The Advisory Committee will vote to make a recommendation to Town Meeting on the article.

Select Board and other Town Bodies
The Select Board will invite the principal petitioner(s) to present the article and will vote to make a recommendation on the article. The petitioner(s) may also be invited to appear before various Town committees that hold meetings to discuss warrant articles in advance of scheduled Town Meetings.

Building Support for a Warrant Article
Petitioners may organize a campaign among Town Meeting Members and other town residents to support the article. The petitioners may also wish to prepare a mailing to Town Meeting Members or use social media to obtain broad support for a warrant article.

Presenting at Town Meeting
Eventually the article will come before Town Meeting, at which point the principal petitioner or a designee, who is typically, but not necessarily, a Town Meeting Member, delivers a presentation in support of the article. The Participating in Debate at Town Meeting section of this Handbook provides a detailed description of the presentation process.
## THE BUDGET PROCESS

### Annual Budget Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Fall</td>
<td>Department Heads prepare budgets for forthcoming fiscal year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late November/Early December</td>
<td>Select Board review and public hearings on operating and capital budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-February</td>
<td>Financial Plan Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Town Administrator submits Financial Plan to Select Board and Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February – May</td>
<td>Advisory Subcommittee and Committee review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late May</td>
<td>Annual Appropriations Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget presentation and vote at Annual Town Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A detailed budget timeline is included in the Appendix.

### Departmental Budget Preparation

Each year, the Town's budget process begins early in the fall when each Town department head prepares an estimate of expenditures for the forthcoming fiscal year. If the department is presided over by a board or commission, that body will review the budget in advance of submission to the Town Administrator.

### Budget Review

The Select Board holds public hearings on both operating and capital budgets annually in late November or early December. The Town's long-range financial forecast is presented by the Deputy Town Administrator and Finance Director at these meetings. Following Select Board review, the Town Administrator develops the Financial Plan, which includes:

- the Town Administrator's proposed operating and unclassified budgets and capital expenditures for the forthcoming fiscal year,
- a description of costs, goals and objectives for each department,
- estimates of state, county, MBTA and other assessments,
- collective bargaining objectives,
- proposals for various reserves, and
- comments about other fiscal matters.

### Financial Plan Review

The Town Administrator submits the recommended Financial Plan to the Select Board and Advisory Committee in mid-February for detailed study. Subcommittees of the Advisory Committee hold public hearings on each department's budget request, on all proposed capital appropriations and on all non-departmental appropriations. The subcommittees then make recommendations to the full Advisory Committee, which takes a final vote on the entire fiscal year budget and presents it to Town Meeting.
The Town Administrator or Deputy Town Administrator periodically appear at these meetings to explain the proposals contained in the Financial Plan and to comment on any third-party proposals for changes in the budget. Town Meeting Members and other parties interested in the budget generally or in specific capital or non-capital appropriations are encouraged to become engaged in the budget process at as early a stage as possible. While the budget schedule follows a consistent sequence, timing may vary based on circumstances. For example, years during which there is a proposal for an override result in less predictable budget schedules.

By statute, the budget presented to the Annual Town Meeting for consideration is the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and is contained in the Advisory Committee's report in the Combined Reports. The Select Board's separate comments and recommendations are also included in the Combined Reports.

The Select Board's Office provides copies of the Town Administrator's Financial Plan and initial budget recommendations to all Town Meeting Members. These are provided at the time of their submission to the Select Board and Advisory Committee and are also available on the Town's website.

Adoption of the Budget

The final budget as approved by the Advisory Committee is moved by the Committee under the budget article on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. The Committee will present a "balanced" budget in which total proposed appropriations equal projected revenues for the fiscal year. After a debate, Town Meeting will adopt a budget that may or may not be in balance. The budget will be reconsidered at the November Special Town Meeting and adjustments made to various budget items based on events or circumstances arising after the Annual Town Meeting. If the budget passed by Town Meeting at the Annual Town Meeting was not in balance, appropriate adjustments will be adopted so that a balanced budget is achieved.

See “Annual Appropriations Vote” below for a more detailed description of the procedures applicable to the adoption of the budget at the Annual Town Meeting.
TOWN MEETING PROCEDURES

Arriving at Town Meeting - Preliminary Matters

Annual and Special Town Meetings begin at 7:00 pm. Town Meetings are held in the Brookline High School Auditorium, 155 Greenough Street.

On arrival, Town Meeting Members sign in with Town staff and receive nametags and their individually programmed voting device used for recorded electronic votes. Check-in tables are labeled by precinct in the vestibule immediately outside the auditorium. The Select Board and other at-large members check in with precincts 13 through 16.

The auditorium is partitioned to seat Town Meeting Members toward the front and guests to the rear of the orange dividers in each seating section. The Moderator may announce special seating arrangements or exceptions at the beginning of a Town Meeting.

In the auditorium, the Select Board and members of the Advisory Committee sit at the front of the auditorium. From the perspective of Town Meeting Members, the Select Board sits to the left of the Moderator and the Advisory Committee to the right. The Moderator stands on stage at a podium with the Town Clerk to his or her right and the Town information technology staff members who manage audio/visual presentations and electronic votes on his or her right, also from the perspective of the meeting.

Approximately ten minutes prior to the commencement of the first session of each Town Meeting, the Moderator leads a voluntary Pledge of Allegiance, pursuant to a Town by-law. By tradition, after the call to order of the first session of each Town Meeting and before conducting any business, the National Anthem is sung.

Although not legally required, prior to the conduct of business at each Annual Town Meeting the Town Clerk swears in newly elected and re-elected Town Meeting Members. The Town Clerk also reads the roll of former Town Meeting Members who have passed away since the previous Annual Town Meeting, after which Town Meeting observes a moment of silence.

Prior or subsequent to the start of each Town Meeting, the Moderator may appoint tellers to count any standing votes and, if appointed, swear them to the faithful and impartial performance of their duties. The need for tellers has been obviated in recent years by the advent of electronic voting.

A screen is positioned behind the Moderator prior to the beginning of each session of a Town Meeting. The screen is used prior to Town Meetings to display special instructions, and during Town Meetings to display speaker visual presentations and the results of electronic votes. When not being utilized for one of these purposes, the screen displays the Town seal.

Call to Order

When the Town Clerk determines that a majority of Town Meeting Members have checked in to the meeting, the Moderator will declare a quorum present and will call the meeting to order. Once a session of the meeting is called to order, the session will continue until adjourned, although the Moderator may call for short recesses from time to
time in appropriate circumstances. The Moderator assumes that a quorum remains present throughout the meeting, but any Town Meeting Member may question the presence of a quorum at any time. Thereupon all business comes to a halt while the Moderator determines if a quorum is present. If a counted quorum is not present and a quorum cannot be attained promptly, for example by calling back Members in the vicinity of the auditorium, Town Meeting may either vote to adjourn to a later date or, if the Moderator considers it appropriate, vote to dissolve the meeting.

General Conduct and Conventions of Town Meeting

- Town Meeting reviews all articles in the warrant, which are explained in presentations by the Select Board, the Advisory Committee, citizen petitioners, interested Town Meeting Members and, at times, members of the public.
- The meeting is conducted by the Moderator, who has control over the meeting’s proceedings subject to and within the limits of relevant Massachusetts law and the Town by-laws.
- The Moderator is also guided by Town Meeting's traditions and common sense.
- The parliamentary handbook for the proceedings of Brookline's Town Meetings is “Town Meeting Time,” by which the Moderator is also guided to the extent applicable.\(^1\)

The following are long-standing traditions of Town Meeting. While not statutory, they are strongly encouraged by the Moderator:

- Town Meeting Members are expected to pay full attention to the Meeting proceedings.
- All cell phones should be silenced, and cell phone use is permitted in the auditorium during Town Meeting only to provide access to electronic records relevant to Town Meeting.
- No political demonstrations or activities may take place within or immediately outside of the auditorium.
- No political signs, banners, flags or oversized badges are permitted within the auditorium, whether or not related to matters that may or will come before Town Meeting.
- Applause is permitted after a speaker has concluded his or her remarks, but not during a presentation.
- Overt expressions of opposition, particularly booing or hissing, will not be tolerated by the Moderator.

The principal purpose of these rules and traditions is to promote unprejudiced discussion and respectful decorum at Town Meetings. While the Moderator has the statutory power to have removed from the meeting any person who materially interferes with its proper decorum and good order, the Moderator exercises this power with great care and only on very rare occasions and after a suitable warning.

In the interest of fairness, the Moderator may permit the suspension of an established rule of the meeting in a particular instance. However, a motion from the floor for a "suspension of the rules" is not permissible in Brookline's Town Meeting. Nor in our Town Meeting is there any appeal of the Moderator's rulings on questions of order and procedure. Points of order may be made, but the Moderator's ruling on a point of order is also not appealable.

\(^1\) Town Meeting Time was originally written and has been re-edited by groups of eminent Massachusetts moderators. It is presently in its third edition, and copies are available at the main Town library and at the Coolidge Corner and Putterham branches. Copies may also be purchased from the publisher, the Massachusetts Moderators Association, by request to the Moderator.
Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Elected Town Meeting Members are exempt from the provisions of the Massachusetts conflict of interest law, Chapter 268A of the General Laws, which covers other municipal employees and elected officials. This exemption exists because of the special status of Town Meeting Members as elected representatives. However, under well-recognized principles of ethics, prior to addressing Town Meeting, speakers should disclose any material economic interest that he or she or any member of his or her immediate family or any close business associate has in the particular matter under consideration.

Similarly, any speaker who is employed in any capacity, (such as attorney, architect, broker, etc.), by another party interested in an article under discussion should disclose that relationship before speaking. Any Town Meeting Member who is party to a potential conflict of interest should consider voluntarily abstaining from voting on the article in question. The Moderator will on request announce any such abstention before or after the vote on the main motion under the article.

While Town Meeting Members are exempt from the state conflict of interest law, they may be or become subject to the law if they serve on an elected or appointed committee, board or commission. Town by-laws require periodic training, provided by the Office of Town Counsel, in this statute and in the requirements of the state Open Meeting Law, for persons subject to these laws. The training required in the state conflict of interest law may alternatively be obtained online from a program administered by the State Ethics Commission.2

Etiquette of Speaking at Town Meeting

Request to Speak

Under Massachusetts law, no one may speak at a Town Meeting without having been recognized by the Moderator. Any Town Meeting Member wishing to speak on any article should contact the Moderator by email or phone with as much advanced notice as possible, providing the following information:

- Name and telephone number,
- Article number or subject matter,
- Whether speaking in support or opposition,
- Whether representing any specific group or organization, and
- A description of any proposed visual presentations.

Speakers will be recognized in substantially the order in which their requests are received, subject to time limitations, preferences accorded to Town Meeting Members and the Moderator's discretion.

When the Moderator recognizes a speaker, he or she should address Town Meeting from the podium at the front of the auditorium or from one of the four microphones at the foot of the aisles in the auditorium, as directed by the Moderator. Microphones should be adjusted so that there is approximately one to two inches of space between the microphone and the speaker.

A Town Meeting Member's desire to speak cannot always be anticipated and may arise only during the debate. Town Meeting Members who have not arranged in advance to speak may proceed during the debate to one of the microphones at the foot of the aisles of the auditorium and will be recognized by the Moderator from time to time.

2 Questions regarding the applicability of the state conflict of interest law in a particular case may be directed to Town Counsel or the State Ethics Commission.
If a speaker cannot communicate a request to speak to the Moderator, the request may be made to the Town Clerk. The Participating in Debate in Town Meeting section of this handbook provides an explanation of the Moderator’s process in creating speakers’ lists, reserved time blocks and alterations of the order of speakers on these lists.

**Time Limits**

Ordinarily speakers are limited to five minutes speaking blocks. However, the Moderator may reduce this limit to three minutes or less if many speakers wish to be heard on a specific issue or if there is an exceptionally long or difficult warrant for the meeting. The Moderator may also grant speakers time in excess of the meeting standard, but arrangements for this must be made ahead of time.

The Moderator may provide the principal proponent(s) of complicated or unusually important articles with additional time to present these articles and, after advance consultation with the interested parties, the Moderator may structure the debate on a major Town project or issue in time blocks of specified length. When the proponents of a controversial article have been allowed extra time to present, the Moderator will inform opponents and grant them a similar block of time for their rebuttal.

**Preparation**

Town Meeting Members who plan to speak on articles should organize their thoughts and arguments so that they can be presented effectively in not more than the applicable time limit as described above.

The Moderator provides prior approval of PowerPoint presentations and other visual tools but does not review content. Visual presentations should be carefully prepared for clarity and consistency with the accompanying verbal presentation. Presentations should be submitted at least a day in advance to tm@brooklinema.gov. Presenters should also consult on the day of presentation with the IT professionals on stage or the person manning the audio-visual system booth in the rear of the auditorium.

Speakers often benefit from practicing their presentations aloud with a timer. It can also be helpful to speakers to bring a timer to the podium monitor time during presentations, although the Moderator will provide each speaker with a one-minute warning of the end of his or her time block and a request to terminate the presentation at the end of the allotted time.

**Adjournment and Dissolution**

The Moderator will not allow an article to be considered if the debate is likely to last significantly beyond 10:30 PM. When the article under debate at that hour is resolved but other articles remain to be considered, the Moderator will entertain a motion to adjourn to the next reserved evening, subject to Town Meeting’s right to adjourn to any other date.

When all the articles in the warrant have been acted upon or otherwise resolved, the Moderator will take a motion to dissolve the meeting and, after a second and vote on that motion will announce the adjournment of the meeting sine die.
THE ORDER OF TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting follows a generally predictable sequence of activities described in detail below.

Order of Articles
Warrant articles are typically considered in the order in which they appear in the warrant.

The Moderator may change the order of articles based on the belief that such a change would be equitable or clarifying to the course of the meeting. If there is substantial interest in a particular article by citizens other than Town Meeting Members, the Moderator may designate a specific time and evening when that article will be considered. If there are guests, such as students, who will speak on an article, the Moderator may designate a day and time for their convenience. Any change from the order in which articles appear on the warrant, whether initiated by the Moderator or on the motion of a Town Meeting Member (which may be made at any appropriate time) is subject to the approval of Town Meeting.

When the subject matter of two or more articles is substantially the same, the Moderator may rule that these articles be debated together, a ruling that is ordinarily not put to a vote of Town Meeting. However, Town Meeting has the right to propose “dividing the question” so that the articles are debated separately. During and after a combined debate, the Moderator must make sure that Town Meeting Members understand exactly what motions are being debated and the order in which votes will be taken on such motions.

Making Motions
A motion is the text of a proposal under a warrant article.

Town Meeting Members must make and second a motion for an article to be debated. An article itself is not a motion, but only notice of a general subject matter to be discussed. Any motion may be offered if the Moderator deems it to be germane and within the scope of the article. Since the motions to be made under an article will have been published in advance of the session at which they will be made, the Moderator will always preface the debate on an article by summarizing all such motions or referring to their location in the Combined Reports or a supplement. In most cases, the Moderator will also state the name of the moving and seconding parties.

The Main Motion
The principal substantive motion made under an article is known as the main motion.

- Typically, the main motion is the motion proposed under the article by either the Select Board or the Advisory Committee and printed in the Combined Reports or a supplement.
- In case of a petition article, the main motion will always be proposed or at least approved by the principal petitioner, although it may appear in the Combined Reports as the motion of the Select Board or Advisory Committee.
Once the main motion is presented at Town Meeting, and debate follows, and several outcomes may result. An article may be:

- passed,
- substituted for or amended,
- referred to a Select Board or Moderator’s committee,
- referred to a Town board, commission or committee,
- postponed,
- defeated by the approval of a No Action motion, or
- defeated by a counted vote on the motion’s merits.

**Debate**

After a motion has been made and seconded, the debate begins. In addition to the petitioners, the Moderator puts together a list of interested speakers based on those who have directly contacted him. Key contacts are included in the Appendix.

- For articles other than citizens’ petitions, the Moderator will first call of whichever of the Advisory Committee and the Select Board is putting forth the motion in the Combined Reports.
- In case of a citizen petition article, the first speaker will usually be the principal petitioner or his or her designee, whether or not the Advisory Committee or Select Board is in favor of the petitioner’s position.
- Thereafter, to the extent feasible, the Moderator will usually alternate between proponents and opponents of the motion.
- All Town residents are entitled to speak at Town Meeting when recognized by the Moderator. However, the Moderator ordinarily will not invite non-Town Meeting Members to speak until every Town Meeting Member requesting the opportunity to speak has been heard.
- The Moderator may make exceptions for non-Town Meeting Members who are directly and substantially affected by the motion and, on rare occasions, for outside experts or officials of non-Brookline entities who may be interested in the subject matter of an article before the meeting.
- The Moderator also typically permits students from Brookline schools to speak without observing many of the usual formalities.
- Because debate may be curtailed, the process described above may result in limiting participation in the debate principally to Town Meeting Members. (see "Motion to Close Debate," below).

**Participating in Debate at Town Meeting**

The Moderator regulates Town Meeting debates and determines the order of the speakers.

- The Moderator typically sends a letter to Town Meeting Members with the Combined Reports, describing special procedures related to speaking that will apply during that Town Meeting. The Moderator may follow up on this written communication with email guidance related to specific warrant articles.
- The Moderator prepares a speakers’ list for each article prior to Town Meeting, based on the Moderator’s criteria for the order of speakers.
- The Moderator establishes the order of speakers so that debates are informative and provide ample opportunity for all sides of an issue to be presented and discussed.
- The Moderator establishes time limits for speakers. Limits are usually no more than five minutes unless prior arrangements have been made to exceed that limit.
For articles for which a large number of Town Meeting Member have signed up to speak, or for entire meetings for which there is a complicated or extensive warrant, the Moderator is likely to impose a standard time limit of three minutes per speaker.

The Moderator may provide equal blocks of time for presentations by proponents and opponents of complex or controversial proposals, in the interest of providing information to Town Meeting in as complete and useful a manner as possible.

The Moderator will disclose to any requesting speaker the names of others who have signed up to speak on the same side of the issue and will permit two or more speakers to establish the order of their presentations so long as anyone whose priority on the list would thereby be lowered consents to this change.

The Moderator may interrupt the speaker schedule during debate for a question-and-answer period, during which Town Meeting Members may come to a microphone and ask questions regardless of whether they have signed up in advance to speak.

The Moderator will ordinarily attempt to limit these sessions to questions, as opposed to orations.

In recognition that the need to speak cannot always be anticipated and may grow out of specific actions or discussion at the meeting, the Moderator will often recognize Town Meeting Members who wish to speak even though they have not advised the Moderator in advance of their intention to do so.

Audiovisual Presentations

Arrangements for using PowerPoint presentations or other audio-visual presentations must be approved by the Moderator in advance of Town Meeting, although the moderator will not review content of presentations. To promote an orderly audio-visual presentation, presenters must submit their presentations to tm@brooklinema.gov at least a day before the presentation and coordinate with one of the Town IT professionals on the stage or the Town staff person operating the A/V resources at the rear of the auditorium prior to the start of the session at which the presentation will be made.

Who May Address Town Meeting

As described above, Town Meeting Members and petitioners and Town residents may address Town Meeting based on prior arrangement with the Moderator.

Non-Residents

Non-residents may address Town Meeting if prior arrangements have been made with the Moderator. The Moderator will introduce the non-resident, may summarize his or her qualifications and reasons for wishing to speak, and will call for any objections. If 15 or more Town Meeting Members stand in opposition to the proposed speaker, the Moderator will not permit that individual to address the body. The Moderator may also limit the number of outside representatives of an advocacy group who may speak on an article of interest to them.

Town Department Heads and Other Town Employees

A Town Department Head will be available to speak at Town Meeting for the purpose of providing information and answering questions posed by Town Meeting Members when matters within his or her jurisdiction are debated. By long-standing tradition, Town Department Heads and other Town employees do not advocate positions before Town Meeting. The Moderator may in his or her discretion make exceptions to this general proposition.

Actions on the Main Motion - Coordination of Motions

A comprehensive list of possible motions, together with their priority, is set forth in the table entitled Parliamentary Guide, from Town Meeting Time, on the inside front cover of this Handbook.
• Amendments and other motions to be offered under an article must be submitted in sufficient time to be printed and distributed to Town Meeting Members at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the session at which the article is to be considered. However, the Moderator may allow exceptions to the advance filing requirement in case of motions that are non-substantive or easy to understand, and may also allow exceptions in the interest of justice or an orderly Town Meeting process so long as such motions can be delivered electronically to Town Meeting Members prior to the Town Meeting at which they will be presented. These exceptions are relatively rare and are made strictly at the discretion of the Moderator.
• Amendments and other motions should be submitted in writing, or by e-mail, to either the Town Clerk or the Office of the Select Board.
• Subject to the discretion of the Moderator as described above, motions to be presented at the first session of any Town Meeting must be included in the Supplemental mailing and a motion to be presented at a subsequent session should be submitted no later than mid-day on the day of the Town Meeting session prior to the session at which it will be presented.
• If the Select Board and Advisory Committee have a previously scheduled meeting prior to the session at which the motion will be considered, each will typically consider and take a position on the proposal.

Amendments and Substitute Motions

Amendments and Substitute Motions may seek to insert, strike out or substitute words in the main motion.
• Motions to amend require a second and must be within the scope of the article.
• A motion to amend must be acted upon before the main motion is voted on.
• Only a majority vote is required to pass an amendment, even if the main motion requires a greater-than-majority vote.
• Approval of an amendment must be followed by a vote on the pending motion, as amended or not.
• A motion to amend may itself be amended, but only one amendment of a motion to amend is allowed at a time. In other words, a motion to "amend the amendment of the amendment" is not permitted.
• A motion to substitute a completely different version of the motion on the floor is treated as a motion to amend; that is, if the motion to substitute (amend in its entirety) succeeds, Town Meeting must still vote on the amended language even though it is voting twice on exactly the same wording.

Motions to Refer

A Motion to Refer moves the subject matter of a warrant article to a committee or board for further review.
• A motion to refer takes priority over the main motion and amendments.
• The referral may be to the Select Board, to a Moderator’s committee or to a Town department, and should specify the scope of the referral and the point at which the referred subject matter should be reported back to Town Meeting.
• If the referral is to a Moderator’s committee, the Moderator will appoint such a committee after the Town Meeting ends, using criteria that will vary widely depending on the subject matter of the referral.
• A motion to refer should comply with the notice requirements described above, in order to give the Select Board and Advisory Committee an opportunity to consider it, although the Moderator may make an exception to this general proposition in his or her discretion.
• The Moderator will usually require that the entire subject matter of the article in question, including the motion to refer, be dealt with in a single debate.
• At the conclusion of the debate, the motion to refer is voted on first, before any other motions.
• If such a motion is defeated, debate resumes on the other motion(s) on the floor.
• If the motion to refer is approved, all debate under the article in question will terminate forthwith.
• Since a Town Meeting cannot bind future Town Meetings, postponement of a matter for future consideration is ordinarily accomplished by referring the matter to the Select Board or other Town board or commission with the (non-binding) request that it be brought back to a future Town Meeting.
Motions for Postponement

A Motion for Postponement of Action may only postpone an article to a later time or session within the Town Meeting at which it is being considered.

- A Town Meeting does not have the power to bind a future Town Meeting to consider specific subject matter or take a specific action. This is because no subject matter or action may be considered other than articles on the warrant for a future Town Meeting.
- In effect, voting to refer a matter to the Select Board with a request that it be brought back to a future Town Meeting results in postponement.
- While the Select Board is not legally required to comply with such a request, it will ordinarily do so.

A Recommendation or vote of No Action on a proposal is the equivalent of a vote against the proposal.

Sometimes the recommendation of the Select Board or the Advisory Committee is that no action be taken on an article. If both the Select Board and the Advisory Committee recommend No Action, the proponents of the article are nevertheless entitled to make a motion for affirmative action under the article despite the opposition. The Moderator will typically accept such a motion as the main motion under the article. A vote of No Action on a proposal is the equivalent of a vote against the proposal.

Motions of Doubtful Legality

When a motion comes before a Town Meeting that is, in the opinion of the Moderator, of doubtful legality, the Moderator will nevertheless permit the motion to be debated and voted on, but will express his doubts to Town Meeting before the vote. This procedure will be followed even if Town Counsel has rendered an opinion that the motion is illegal. However, the Moderator may not permit a motion to be considered when and if a legal condition precedent to the article or motion has not been met, as for example when the Planning Board has not held the hearing on zoning proposal that is required by statute before it can be considered by Town Meeting.

Motions to Close Debate

A motion to close debate, often called "moving the previous question," or "moving the question." is not itself debatable, and a two-thirds vote is necessary for the motion to pass.

- A motion to close debate may by tradition be made from the floor without the need for the moving party to be formally recognized by the Moderator.
- If a motion for the question is made and if, in the Moderator's judgment, adequate debate has been heard on both sides of the question, the Moderator will allow this motion to come before the meeting.
- Prior to the vote, the Moderator usually reads the names of those who have signed up in advance to speak but have not yet been heard and points out or calls out the names of those who are standing at microphones waiting to be recognized.
- If the motion to close debate passes, all debate ceases and the meeting immediately votes, without further comment, on the pending motion. However, in the case of extremely complicated issues, the Moderator may call for a brief summary of the issues from a representative of each side of the question before proceeding to a vote.
- If the motion fails, debate will continue as if the motion had not been made.

Voting Process

- After all who wish to be heard on the question have spoken, or if the question has been successfully called, the Moderator repeats the pending motions or refers to their location in the Combined Reports or a supplement, and voting then commences.
For each motion on the floor, the Moderator will say "All those in favor..." and the response is "Aye." Then "All those opposed..." and the response is "Nay" or "No." If the result is clear, the Moderator will declare the motion to have been adopted or defeated.

If in doubt, the Moderator may ask for a show of hands and then announce the result. In this case, the Moderator may by tradition announce a specific tally of votes when there is no electronic count, particularly when the vote is close to unanimous, so that the official record of the meeting will provide a reasonably accurate description of the strength of the winning vote.

The Town by-laws provide that, on matters that require a two-thirds vote, the Moderator may simply declare the motion to have been adopted by a two-thirds vote without actually counting the vote; provided that, if the announced result is immediately questioned by at least seven Town Meeting Members, a counted vote will be taken.

**Counted and Recorded Votes**

- A counted vote may be called for by the Moderator on his own motion and must be held if seven Town Meeting Members immediately rise and doubt a vote declared by the Moderator without a count. The verification vote will be taken electronically and, unless there is a call for a recorded vote, the results will be announced by the Moderator but not recorded.

- A vote that records the position of each voting Town Meeting Member may be requested prior to voting on any motion and, if at least 35 Town Meeting Members support that request, a recorded vote will be conducted. Since the advent of electronic voting in 2012, other than the few instances in which electronic voting was unavailable, all recorded votes have been taken electronically.

- In the rare instance in which electronic voting is unavailable, a recorded vote will be taken either by roll call or by ballot. If the former, the Moderator will read through an alphabetical list of Town Meeting Members, record their responses and announce the result. A ballot vote will be taken by written ballot distributed to each Town Meeting Member present, completed by those voting, and turned in and counted by tellers. The tellers return the ballots to the Town Clerk and announce the results of the vote to the Moderator, who then announces the result to the meeting and for the record.

- Once voting in another form is underway, the Moderator will not allow a request for a recorded vote.

- Except as otherwise provided in this section, the Moderator’s declaration of the result of a vote may not be doubted.

- Recorded votes are published on the Town website as soon as practicable after they are taken, are preserved by the Town Clerk for at least three years and are available for inspection as public records. The results of recorded votes are also published in the Town's Annual Report.

**Electronic Voting**

As noted above in Town Meeting Procedures, upon arrival at a Town Meeting, Town Meeting Members sign in with Town staff and receive their individually programmed voting device used for recorded votes. These devices are pre-tested to assure operability, but an inoperative device may be exchanged at any time for a replacement. As part of the preliminaries for the first session of every Town Meeting, the Moderator conducts a practice vote to familiarize Town Meeting Members with the procedures that will be followed in voting electronically. These procedures are as follows.

- A vote may be taken electronically under any of the following circumstances:
  - If the Moderator doubts the results of a hand vote;
- If seven Town Meeting Members immediately rise to doubt the declaration by the Moderator of the results of a vote taken without a count; or
- Upon the request of not less than 35 Town Meeting Members calling for a recorded electronic vote.

- Once an electronic vote has been declared or properly requested, the Moderator will make sure that Town Meeting Members understand what vote is being taken. When the on-site IT manager is ready to proceed, the Moderator will declare voting open and a countdown, usually 30 or 40 seconds, will be displayed on the screen.

- At the beginning of the voting period, the Moderator will:
  - first call for those in favor of the motion to press number 1 on their hand-held devices;
  - then call those opposing the motion to press number 2;
  - then for those abstaining to press number 3.

- Town Meeting Members may change their votes at any time until the expiration of the voting period, but not thereafter, and only their last votes will be recorded. The electronic voting system sometimes does not record vote changes within the last few seconds of a voting period, so Town Meeting Members should not wait until the very end of the voting countdown to vote.

- During the voting period, the results of the vote will be displayed on the projection screen through a series of panels, by precinct (with one panel for at-large Town Meeting Members), in which the recorded votes of all Town Meeting Members who have voted will be displayed.

- The complete presentation of votes will be scrolled through at least twice during and after the voting period, so that Town Meeting Members may verify the accurate recording of their votes.

- At the conclusion of the projected voting, the Moderator will declare the results of the vote.

- The result may not be challenged or changed with the exception that, if a Town Meeting Member's vote was improperly recorded, he or she may make correct such vote.

- The Moderator and Town Clerk will accept vote changes on faith, provided that, in the event of a very close vote, the Moderator may require a Town Meeting Member to explain publicly the circumstances requiring the change of his or her vote.

- Town Meeting Members may at any time prior to the dissolution of a Town Meeting correct their recorded votes by contacting the Town Clerk, and such changes will be made in the records of the meeting so long as the Moderator has announced the resulting change in the vote tally during a Town Meeting session.

As soon as feasible after a recorded vote is taken electronically, the results of that vote will be posted on the Town website and will remain so posted for a period of at least three years. Electronic votes taken solely for the purpose of obtaining an accurate tally or resulting from a vote challenge by Town Meeting Members will not be posted publicly.

Town Meeting members with visual impairments who need assistance with electronic votes should contact the Town Clerk or the Moderator prior to Town Meeting, and such assistance will be arranged.

When Town Meeting Members leave a Town Meeting session, whether during or at the end of the session, or upon dissolution of the Meeting, they should deposit their hand-held devices in the appropriate bin at the rear of the auditorium. Town Meeting Members who fail to return their devices will be contacted the next day by the Town Clerk's office.
Annual Appropriations Vote

The main annual budget motion is offered by the Advisory Committee under an article in the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting each year. Because of the complexity of the budget motions, special procedures apply to the process of considering the budget.

There are sometimes differences between the budget proposed by the Advisory Committee and that proposed by the Select Board. However, negotiations between the two bodies that may continue up to the start of Town Meeting ordinarily eliminate most, if not all, of these differences. As a result, Town Meeting Members may receive one or more revisions to the budget as originally set forth in the Combined Reports.

The budget debate commences with a presentation of the budget by the Chair of the Advisory Committee, followed by a statement by the Chair of the Select Board and the presentation of the School budget by the Superintendent of Schools.

The meeting then considers the "Conditions of Appropriations," as set forth in the Advisory Committee's main motion, and any amendments to the Conditions of Appropriations proposed by the Select Board or by any Town Meeting Member.

Next, capital expenditure items are considered individually, before any other budgetary appropriations. These items constitute "special appropriations" for purposes of the state referendum law. See Referenda and Overrides in the Appendix. The Moderator will state the purpose and amount of each capital item, and Town Meeting Members may come to a microphone to comment or ask questions about particular capital items.

The Moderator then usually reads through each remaining line item in the budget, Town and School departmental appropriations, non-departmental expenditures and non-appropriated expenditures, together with the amount of the proposed appropriation. As is the case with capital expenditures, Town Meeting Members may comment or ask questions about any specific budget item.

Each budget item is subject to properly-noticed amendments as it comes up for consideration at Town Meeting. Since there is no legal requirement that a budget adopted by Town Meeting be in balance, an amendment that changes the amount of an appropriation does not require a motion for corresponding increases or decreases in other appropriation items.

During the budget debate, department heads are available for questions about their departmental budgets as they are brought before Town Meeting. The Moderator usually permits Town Meeting Members to question department heads or their designees not only about their departmental appropriations but also about any other matter relating to the operation or management of their departments. This is the sole opportunity available to a Town Meeting Member to question a department head on the floor of Town Meeting on matters unrelated to a specific budget item or warrant article.

No votes are taken during the budget debate except in two instances: when an amendment of a budget item is properly before the meeting, a vote will be taken on that amendment; and separate two-thirds votes are taken on each capital appropriation that is to be financed in whole or in part by the issuance of Town bonds.

At the end of the budget debate, an omnibus vote is taken which incorporates all majority or two-thirds votes taken during the debate. This vote usually passes unanimously or nearly unanimously.

Amendments of appropriation items should be submitted in advance, as described under Amendments and Substitute Motions, in order to permit the Advisory Committee and Select Board to consider the financial impact of the proposed amendments prior to Town Meeting. The Moderator has the discretion to permit exceptions to the notice requirement. This would likely occur in the event that amendments are proposed to balance appropriations.
and revenues or if waiving the notice requirement would in the view of the Moderator serve the interests of fairness and equity.

It is possible that the budget will be out of balance at the end of the budget debate as a result of amendments. If that were to occur, the Moderator would encourage Town Meeting to consider further amendments in order to balance the budget.

If the budget as adopted is not balanced, the Select Board or Advisory Committee may propose amendments at a later session of the Annual Town Meeting. If a balancing amendment is not approved, a new Town Meeting will have to be called to adjust budget appropriations to bring the budget into balance. Alternatively, balancing the budget would have to be accomplished at the Fall Town Meeting. Notably, this has not been necessary in the past several decades.

While the above process describes the procedures currently followed for the annual appropriations vote, the Moderator has discretion to change these procedures in general or in a particular instance.

Secret Ballots

There is a strong public policy to the effect that elected representatives should be held accountable to their constituents for their actions in office. Accordingly, secret ballot voting, which is relatively common in open town meetings, is not encouraged in representative town meetings. Massachusetts law, however, permits secret ballots to be held in representative meetings if two-thirds of those present approve such a vote.

A secret ballot has not been held in Brookline’s Town Meeting in recent history, but there may be factors in connection with an issue that would suggest to some that a secret ballot might be in order.

Consistent with all ballot requests, a motion for a secret ballot must be requested prior to voting on the motion in question and will not be allowed after voting in another form has commenced. If two-thirds of the Town Meeting Members present vote in favor, a ballot will be distributed, completed, and collected and counted by the tellers. Secret ballots will simply record “yes” or “no” votes and abstentions and will not record the name of the voting Town Meeting Member, and appropriate actions will be taken by the tellers so that voting Members need not identify themselves publicly at the meeting.

Voting Requirements

Most motions require a simple majority vote to be adopted. The Parliamentary Guide on the inside of the front cover of this Handbook sets forth certain other exceptions that are imposed by statute, including the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstance</th>
<th>Requirement for adoption</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To pay unpaid bills of previous years</td>
<td>four-fifths vote at an Annual Town Meeting or a nine-tenths vote at a Special Town Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To authorize the Town to purchase or take land or easements</td>
<td>a two-thirds vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To transfer Town land (except land acquired for park purposes) to another board or for another municipal purpose</td>
<td>a two-thirds vote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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To amend the Town's zoning by-law a two-thirds vote

To borrow money a two-thirds vote

Additional Motions at Town Meeting

Points of Order
- A question as to the legality or propriety of the proceedings.
- If a Town Meeting Member feels that someone has the floor improperly, or that a motion or discussion is not within the purview of an article, he or she may rise, interrupt whoever is speaking, and say, "Mr. Moderator, I rise to a point of order." After being recognized, the Town Meeting Member states the point of order.
- The Moderator rules upon it and such ruling is final.
- A point of order must be raised promptly when the problem arises, and the Moderator will not, except under extraordinary circumstances, permit such a motion as a means of altering an announced vote.

Questions of Privilege
- A question of privilege relates to the rights and privileges of the meeting collectively, its safety or dignity, or the integrity of its proceedings.
- For example, a question of privilege would be in order if the windows are open and admitting rain, if the sound system is not functioning properly or if one or more Town Meeting Members are engaged in disruptive or derogatory conduct.
- A question of privilege may also relate to the rights, reputation and conduct of a particular Town Meeting Member individually or in his or her capacity as such. For example, if a speaker speaks in derogatory terms of another person, the person attacked, or any other person, may raise a question of privilege.
- Such a question is initiated by a Town Meeting Member's rising, interrupting the speaker if necessary, and saying, "Mr. Moderator, I rise to a question of privilege." The Town Meeting Member waits for recognition and then states the matter.
- A question of privilege is not a motion and does not require a second. In virtually no instance will the Moderator permit it to be debated.

Reconsideration
The strict rules described below regarding reconsideration are intended to discourage its use, owing to the abuse to which this tactic has been subjected in many town meetings. As a result, motions for reconsideration are made very infrequently in Brookline's Town Meeting.

Reconsideration within a Town Meeting Session
- A motion to reconsider a vote already taken permits the Town Meeting to undo a previous action.
- Such a motion may be made only by a person who was on the prevailing side of the earlier vote. Proof of how one voted is only available when there has been a roll
call or a ballot or recorded electronic vote on the action in question. In the absence of such proof, the Moderator ordinarily accepts on faith one's qualification to move reconsideration.

- If the motion to reconsider passes, the earlier vote is without any force or effect. It is then necessary for a proponent of the earlier vote to move the action again, and the main motion may be amended in the usual manner, except that compliance with the notice rules about amendments will not be required.

- On occasion, the Moderator may permit a motion to reconsider a vote within the same session of Town Meeting at which the vote was passed. For example, this may occur if an attempt to balance the annual budget require amending an item on which there has already been a vote or, in general, if the Moderator is persuaded that confusion or a similar factor contaminated the prior vote.

- In rare instances, the Moderator may call for reconsideration on his or her own motion, but only if convinced that the prior vote was for some reason invalid or contaminated.

**Reconsideration after a Town Meeting Session has adjourned**

- Any Town Meeting Member desiring reconsideration of a vote taken under an article at a Town Meeting session that has adjourned must file a request with the Town Clerk on or before noon on the day following such session.

- The request must be accompanied by a statement of not more than 200 words stating the reasons for requesting reconsideration, which shall be limited to the following:
  - New information not available to the Town Meeting at the time the article was considered; or
  - Substantial evidence that Town Meeting Members were confused as to the basis or nature of the action that they took.

- If persuaded that such reasons cast reasonable doubt on the validity of the action previously taken, the Moderator will permit the motion for reconsideration to be put to the Town Meeting at the next adjourned session of the meeting.

- The Moderator will read the statement of the petitioner and may, but need not, permit the reconsideration motion itself to be debated. A majority vote is required for the reconsideration motion to pass.

**Reconsideration after dissolution**

A request for reconsideration filed after a Town Meeting has been dissolved will not be effective.

**Effective Date of Town Meeting Actions**

All actions taken by Town Meeting are final when the Meeting has ended and is officially dissolved, except that (a) votes that are subject to a referendum become final seven days after the dissolution of the meeting (excluding Sundays and holidays) unless a referendum is called,
(b) amendments of the Town’s general by-laws must be submitted to the State Attorney General for approval and are effective upon the earlier of:

(i) the posting by the Town Clerk after such approval, or

(ii) the date of such posting after the lapse of 90 days without action by the Attorney General; and

(c) zoning by-law amendments are conditionally effective upon dissolution of a Town Meeting but are subject to the same review by the Attorney General as that applicable to general by-laws and do not become finally effective until the dates specified in (b)(i) or (ii) above.
RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS

Complimentary Resolutions or Statements of Thanks

Complimentary resolutions may be offered when Town Meeting wishes to thank a person or group for a service to the Town or offer other public courtesies. At the discretion of the Moderator, and in rare instances, such a resolution may be put before Town Meeting without a warrant article, but the proponent of such a motion must obtain special permission in advance from the Moderator to do so.

On occasion, a member of the Select Board or other Town Meeting Member may rise to thank a member of the Board or a Town staff member who is retiring from his or her position. The Moderator will allow this to occur without prior clearance.

Resolutions on National and International Issues

Over the course of at least 50 years, Town Meeting has taken positions on domestic and foreign policies despite having no jurisdiction or control over these issues. The Moderator permits warrant articles covering these matters to be considered by Town Meeting. Expressions of Town Meeting's intentions or concerns in these instances are not legally binding.

Resolutions Directing Town Boards or Committees

Town Meeting may vote to give directions to a Town board or committee, or otherwise indicate the concern of Town Meeting, in a matter covered by an article in the warrant but not susceptible to direct action by the Town Meeting.

Town Meeting may also express by resolution its opinion on matters within the statutory authority of the Select Board, the School Committee, the Library Trustees, the Retirement Board or the Transportation Board. Since Town Meeting has no legal authority relating to such matters, it may only request, not require, that the Select Board or such other body take specific actions.

Special Committee Reports

Special committee reports unrelated to a specific article on the warrant are submitted to Town Meeting under an article on every warrant relating to the presentation of reports generally. Examples of reports falling within this category are interim and final reports of Moderator's committees, an annual report of the Housing Advisory Board and reports of special committees created by the Select Board. The Moderator will not permit debate nor permit a motion to accept, adopt, approve or ratify these reports.
# Key Contacts, Resources and Websites

## Contacts (Current as of June 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Administrator</td>
<td>Melvin Kleckner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mkleckner@brooklinema.gov">mkleckner@brooklinema.gov</a></td>
<td>617-730-2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Town Administrator</td>
<td>Melissa Goff</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mgoff@brooklinema.gov">mgoff@brooklinema.gov</a></td>
<td>617-730-2205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Clerk</td>
<td>Patrick J. Ward</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pward@brooklinema.gov">pward@brooklinema.gov</a></td>
<td>617-730-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>Edward (Sandy) Gadsby</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sgadsby@foleyhoag.com">sgadsby@foleyhoag.com</a></td>
<td>617-738-6609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President, Town Meeting Members Association</td>
<td>Arthur W. Conquest, III</td>
<td><a href="mailto:awciii@yahoo.com">awciii@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>617-277-3943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee Chair</td>
<td>Michael Sandman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:msandman@brooklinema.gov">msandman@brooklinema.gov</a></td>
<td>617-513-8908</td>
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## Websites and Links

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town Resources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Brookline Town Website</td>
<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/">https://www.brooklinema.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee</td>
<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/166/Advisory-Committee">https://www.brooklinema.gov/166/Advisory-Committee</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report</td>
<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/349/Annual-Reports">https://www.brooklinema.gov/349/Annual-Reports</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio/Visual Submissions for Town Meeting</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tm@brooklinema.gov">tm@brooklinema.gov</a></td>
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<td>Town Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boards and Commissions including</td>
<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/165/Boards-Commissions">https://www.brooklinema.gov/165/Boards-Commissions</a></td>
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<td>applications</td>
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<td>Budget Central</td>
<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/851/Budget-Central">https://www.brooklinema.gov/851/Budget-Central</a></td>
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<td>Calendar</td>
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<td>Precinct Maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town Meeting Members Association</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brooklinetmma@groups.io">brooklinetmma@groups.io</a></td>
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<td>Listserv</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6574">https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6574</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Town Organizations and Citizen Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>League of Women Voters</td>
<td><a href="https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/brookline">https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/brookline</a></td>
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<td>Brookline Interactive Group You Tube</td>
<td><a href="https://brooklineinteractive.org/town-meeting/">https://brooklineinteractive.org/town-meeting/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Channel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sites relevant to Town governance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of Commonwealth’s Citizen’s</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/Guide_to_Town_Meetings.pdf">https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/Guide_to_Town_Meetings.pdf</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guide to Town Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Budget</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal year begins</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Request forms distributed</td>
<td>July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognizant boards and commissions hold public</td>
<td>August</td>
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<tr>
<td>hearings</td>
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<td>Request forms due</td>
<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee</td>
<td>Sept. / Oct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reviews requests</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP Committee reviews preliminary recommendations</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Board holds public hearing on the CIP</td>
<td>Nov. / Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-Range Financial Forecast is presented</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP Committee submits final recommendations to</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Administrator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Administrator submits recommendations to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Board and Advisory Committee's</td>
<td>Dec. / Jan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Subcommittee review the proposed CIP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Administrator submits Financial Plan to</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Board and Advisory Committee, and</td>
<td>(or next Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distributes it to all Town Meeting Members</td>
<td>business day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Board reviews and votes on capital items</td>
<td>February - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the budget</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee reviews and makes recommendations to Town Meeting</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Meeting votes on capital items in the</td>
<td>May / June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Year ends</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
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</table>
REFERENDA

A referendum is the means by which citizens of the Town who are dissatisfied with certain decisions of Town Meeting may cause a question to be referred to all registered voters of the Town for a vote. There have been few if any referenda in recent years, since the “new” Lincoln School was approved more than thirty years ago after many failed referendum attempts.

The following actions by Town Meeting, and only such actions, are subject to referendum:

1. Authorization of a "special appropriation" (that is, an appropriation outside of the annual Town or School budgets) of $20,000 or more;

2. Establishment of a new Town board or office, abolition of an old board or office or merger of two or more boards or offices;

3. Establishment of the term of office of a Town officer;

4. Increase or reduction of the number of members of a Town board; and

5. Adoption of a new Town by-law (regular or zoning) or the amendment or rescission of an existing by-law.

During the seven-day period after dissolution of a Town Meeting, a petition for referendum relating to any action by Town Meeting subject to a referendum signed by not less than 3% of the registered voters of the Town may be filed with the Select Board. Petition forms are available from the Town Clerk.

If such a petition is filed, the effectiveness of the related Town Meeting vote is suspended, and the Select Board must issue a call for the referendum “forthwith” after the expiration of five days from the petition filing date.

The polls will be open from 2:00 to 8:00 P.M. on the date set for the Town-wide referendum vote. The question or questions so referred to all registered voters must be worded on the ballot in substantially the same language and form as adopted by Town Meeting. No action of Town Meeting may be reversed by a referendum unless at least 20% of all registered voters in the Town vote to reverse the action.

OVERRIDE VOTES

A Town-wide vote on action of Town Meeting will also be held under four other circumstances. In each case, a majority vote is required for the proposal to pass and there is no requirement that a minimum percentage of registered voters cast votes.

Operating budget override - The voters may be given an opportunity to override the limits of Proposition 2 ½. (See “Glossary of Terms” in this Appendix) to some higher amount. If Town Meeting votes funds for an operating budget or budgets contingent on an override vote and a majority of the Select Board votes to hold such a vote, then an override election is held.
The Select Board may also order an override (or debt or capital outlay exclusion) vote prior to Town Meeting's consideration of the appropriation(s) at issue, in which event the relevant budget or appropriation item(s) presented to Town Meeting thereafter, and the action of Town Meeting itself, must reflect the results of the override vote. The question to be placed on the ballot must state the purpose and dollar amount of the override. The Town's tax levy base will be permanently increased by the override amount, if approved.

Operating budget underride - The voters may also be given an opportunity to "underride" the limits of Proposition 2 1/2 to a lower amount. If a majority of the Select Board votes to hold such a vote, then an underride election is held. The ballot question must state the purpose and dollar amount of the underride and, if adopted by the voters, the Town's tax levy base will be permanently decreased by the underride amount. There have been no operating budget underrides in Brookline since Proposition 2 1/2 was adopted in 1980.

Debt exclusion - A Town-wide debt exclusion vote may also occur to approve a bond authorization with a debt schedule to be funded outside of Proposition 2 1/2 limits. If Town Meeting authorizes borrowing contingent on the debt exclusion vote and two-thirds of the members of the Select Board (four members) vote to put this matter to the voters, then a debt exclusion election is held.

A debt exclusion may also be subject to a Town-wide vote prior to the consideration of the applicable debt items by Town Meeting, in the same manner described above for operating budget overrides. The ballot question must state the purposes for which and the amount in which the proposed bonds are to be issued. The amount of any approved debt exclusion is added to the Town's levy limit for the term of the debt only, and only to the extent of the annual amount of debt payments.

Capital outlay expenditure exclusion - If Town Meeting appropriates funds for capital projects contingent on an exclusion vote and two-thirds of the members of the Select Board vote to put this matter to the voters, then an election is held. The ballot question must state the purpose for which the capital outlay funds are to be spent and the dollar amount of the expenditure. The amount of the capital outlay expenditure exclusion will be added to the Town's tax levy limit only for the year in which the project is undertaken.
Bonds
Municipal bonds are issued by a municipality for large capital expenditures such as schools or other buildings. With certain exceptions, including school bonds approved by the State Finance Office, a municipality's total borrowing may not exceed 5% of its total assessed valuation. The period within which the bonds must be retired varies according to the type of capital project being financed.

Chapter 90
The cost of construction on roads that are approved by the State is eligible for "Chapter 90" reimbursement from the State, which has been at the rate of 90% in recent years.

Cherry Sheet
A report by The Commonwealth of Massachusetts (on cherry-colored paper) containing a statement of monies the Town must pay to the county, MBTA, and Commonwealth, and an estimate of monies to be received from the Commonwealth. These figures must be used when calculating the tax rate.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
The Town's Capital Improvement Program, which is revised each year, sets forth the proposed expenditures for capital projects for the ensuing several years.

Combined Reports
The official title of the document sent to all Town Meeting Members, which contains the reports of the Select Board, the Advisory Committee and other Town bodies on the articles in the warrant. It is not to be confused with the warrant itself, which is simply a listing of the articles.

Conditions of Appropriation
Conditions set forth in the budget vote, which define how particular appropriations are to be spent, whether and how transfers of funds from one category to another can be made, and other conditions which Town Meeting may impose on appropriations. Many of the Conditions of Appropriation in the budget have developed over the years and are carried over verbatim from year to year.

Contingency Fund
A sum of money appropriated by Town Meeting for the Select Board to use for any unforeseen expenses during the fiscal year. Amounts expended from this fund for individual projects do not usually exceed $1,500.

Free Cash
See "Surplus Revenue" below.

Overlay
An amount of money held in reserve for the payment of tax abatements and adjustments.

Proposition 2 1/2
A tax limitation measure adopted by statewide referendum in 1980, which limits the ability of the Town to increase its budget from year to year. The principal operative provision limits total property taxes levied to 2 1/2% of the full cash value of the property in a community and limits any increase in the tax levy not attributable to new growth to 2 1/2% of the prior year's tax levy. To override these tax limitations requires a Town-wide referendum.
Reserve Fund
An amount of money voted by the Town Meeting (not to exceed 5% of the prior year's tax levy) for appropriation by the Advisory Committee for any unforeseen or emergency expenses during the year.

Supplemental Reports
A distribution to Town Meeting Members that includes reports of the Select Board and Advisory Committee that were not available at the time of distribution of the Combined Reports as well as all amendments and motions proposed to be made under the articles in the warrant submitted after the deadline for mailing of the Combined Reports. Supplemental Reports are either mailed to Town Meeting Members, distributed by the checkers, or both.

Surplus Revenue
Funds that derive from (i) the difference between estimates and actual receipts of departmental collections and revenue (for example, licenses and permits) and (ii) any unexpended funds of departmental budgets. When uncollected taxes are subtracted from surplus revenue, the total is called Free Cash, which may be a positive or negative number. Positive Free Cash is available for appropriation by Town Meeting, but only after it has been certified by the State Department of Revenue.

Tax Levy
The amount of money to be raised through real and personal property taxes.
## Town Boards, Commissions and Committees

NOTE: THE INFORMATION SET FORTH IN THIS APPENDIX IS SUBSTANTIALLY CORRECT AS OF JUNE 2020. IT WILL NOT BE UPDATED UNTIL THE NEXT EDITION OF THIS HANDBOOK.

### Standing and Ad Hoc Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Leadership (as of June 2020)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Advisory Committee | Michael Sandman, Chair  
Carla Benka, Vice Chair  
Lisa Portscher, Executive Assistant |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Administration and Finance | Dennis Doughty, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Capital | Carla Benka, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Human Services | Harry Bohrs, Co-Chair  
Kim Smith, Co-Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Long-term Planning and Policies | Michael Sandman, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Personnel | Janet Gelbart, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Planning and Regulation | Steven Kanes, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Public Safety | Janice S. Kahn, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Schools | Clifford Brown, Chair |
| Advisory Sub-Committee: Sustainability | Carlos Ridruejo, Chair |
| Advisory Council of Public Health | Dr. Anthony Schlaff, Chair |
| Age Friendly Cities Committee (Ad Hoc) | Nancy Heller, Co-Chair  
Ruthann Dobek, Co-Chair |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Leadership (as of June 2020)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit Committee</td>
<td>Frank Caro, Co-Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bernard Greene, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Advisory Committee (Ad Hoc)</td>
<td>Todd Kirrane, Transportation Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Assessors</td>
<td>Richard Belhocine, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Examiners</td>
<td>Barnett Berliner, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Selectmen</td>
<td>Bernard Greene, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline Commission for the Arts</td>
<td>Daniel Gostin, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline Commission for Women</td>
<td>Rebecca Stone, Interim Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline Commission on Disability</td>
<td>Saralynn Allaire, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline Housing Authority</td>
<td>Michael Jacobs, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookline Interactive Group</td>
<td>Kathy Bisbee, Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Commission (including Committees of Seven and Project Oversight Committees)</td>
<td>Janet Fierman, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Action Committee</td>
<td>Zoe Lynn, Sustainability Program Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission for Diversity Inclusion &amp; Community Relations</td>
<td>Joan Lancourt, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on Town Organization &amp; Structure</td>
<td>Jean Berg, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Based Development Grant Advisory Committee (Ad Hoc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete Streets Task Force</td>
<td>Neil Wishinsky, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Commission</td>
<td>Marcus Quigley, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council On Aging</td>
<td>Ruthann Dobek, Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entity</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Development Advisory Board</td>
<td>Anne Meyers, Co-Chair</td>
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<td>Paul Saner, Co-Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Advisory Board</td>
<td>Roger Blood, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resources Board</td>
<td>Edward DeAngelo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous People Celebration Committee</td>
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<td>Information Technology Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Library Trustees</td>
<td>Regina Healy, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensing Review Committee</td>
<td>Betsy DeWitt, Co-Chair</td>
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<td>Kenneth Goldstein, Co-Chair</td>
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<td>Bernard Green, Chair</td>
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<td>MLK Celebration Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naming Committee</td>
<td>Ruth Kaplan, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Conservation District</td>
<td>Dick Garver, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park and Recreation Commission (including</td>
<td>John Bain, Chair</td>
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<td>Park Design Review Committees)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Board (including Design Advisory</td>
<td>Steven Heikin, Chair</td>
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<td>Preservation Commission (including</td>
<td>David King, Chair</td>
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<td>Neighborhood Conservation District</td>
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<td>Commissions)</td>
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<td>Public Transportation Advisory Board (Ad</td>
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<td>Hoc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registrars Of Voters</td>
<td>Linda Golburgh, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retirement Board</td>
<td>Gary Altman, Acting Chair</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Small Business Development Committee</td>
<td>Raul Fernandez, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solid Waste Advisory Committee</td>
<td>John Dempsey, Chair</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bernard Greene, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town/School Partnership Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Board</td>
<td>Christopher Dempsey, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Planting Committee</td>
<td>Nadine Gerdts, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Protection Committee</td>
<td>Nancy Heller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustees Of Walnut Hills Cemetery</td>
<td>Joslin Murphy, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning Board of Appeals</td>
<td>Jesse Geller, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning By-law Committee</td>
<td>Bernard Greene, Chair</td>
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<td>School Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Committee</td>
<td>Julie Schreiner-Oldham, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Building Projects Liaisons</td>
<td>Susan Wolf Ditkoff - BHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helen Charlupski - Pierce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Capital Improvements</td>
<td>Helen Charlupski, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Curriculum</td>
<td>Barbara Scotto, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Finance</td>
<td>Susan Wolf Ditkoff, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Negotiations</td>
<td>Michael Glover, Chair</td>
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<td>Sub-Committee: Government Relations</td>
<td>Helen Charlupski, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Committee: Policy Review</td>
<td>Michael Glover, Chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Town Organization Chart

TOWN OF BROOKLINE
Organizational Chart

CITIZENS

Town Clerk
Moderator
Town Meeting
Select Board
School Committee
Library Trustees
Housing Authority

Committee on Town Organization & Structure
Advisory Committee
Appointed Boards & Commissions
Town Administrator
School Department
Library

Administration
Finance
Public Safety
Public Works
Leisure Services
Health and Human Services

Selectmen's Office
Human Resources
Information Technology
Legal Services
Planning and Community Development
Comptroller
Purchasing
Assessors
Treasurer/Collector
Police
Fire
Building
Administration
Engineering/Transportation
Highway/Sanitation
Parks and Open Space
Water and Sewer
Recreation
Health
Veterans
Council on Aging
Diversity, Inclusion And Community Relations