

Advisory Committee Questionnaire

2. Goals & Benefits

a. What is the intended policy goal of the proposed Warrant Article?

- The warrant article asks the Town Meeting to approve a Study Committee, that represents a diversity of views, to carefully consider and recommend policy goals and actions designed to achieve those goals, with respect to the new recreational marijuana industry.
- The intent of the warrant article is to ensure that multiple priorities such as lawful access to recreational marijuana, community health, protection of our underaged population and other reasonable concerns are balanced as a new industry is established and grows.

b. Why is this important for the Town?

- The industry is new, and it has the potential to cause disproportionate damage to our underaged and marginalized population and, according to the CDC, the health consequences of long-term use are not yet known with certainty.

c. Is this something that the Town should do, especially if there are State or Federal resources dedicated to the issue?

- This is something only this Town can do.

d. How does the policy goal and the proposed action solve a problem? Does it provide a new benefit, or extend some existing benefit?

- It is important for all voices in Town to be heard when determining our approach to licensing Marijuana Establishments. Having a full conversation will reduce future political tension with respect to this issue.

e. Could Town staff or a Town Board or Committee address the issue effectively without action by Town Meeting?

- The Select Board could take the policy position to not issue licenses beyond the existing ones to any Marijuana Establishment.

3. Does the petitioner, now or in the future, have an equity interest or realize a direct or indirect financial benefit from positive action by Town Meeting? Please disclose any potential conflict of interest.

- There is no monetary gain or other conflict of interest.

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4. General questions:

a. Why is the proposed solution workable and effective?

- The Town has successfully used a Moderator’s committee approach in the past to consider and recommend action on specific topics. In this case, we are advocating for a Study Committee that reports directly back to Town Meeting and is not under the purview of the Moderator.
- If the committee has diverse representation, this may ensure that the committee considers different views that balance multiple interests such as pursuit of tax revenue, protection of underaged populations, continued access to recreational marijuana for those who are not underaged and community health.

b. Is there a financial benefit from the proposed solution?

- Participants on the committee would be volunteers. There would be representation from the Department of Health, and the mandate falls within the scope of DoH activity, especially with respect to recreational marijuana.

c. Who will benefit and who might not benefit from the proposed action?

- The overall health of our community and our underaged populations may benefit. There is no impact to current marijuana establishments in Brookline or landlords. If the recommendations include limiting future licensing, then there may be foregone tax revenue.

d. What are the perceived pros and cons, both in the short and long term?

- The pros of a diverse committee considering and articulating policy goals with respect to the new recreational marijuana industry are 1) delivering on our stated objective to be inclusive and consider diverse views, 2) through discussion, a broader consensus in our community with respect to balancing access to recreational marijuana, tax revenue, community health and protection of those most disadvantaged 3) clear policy direction for our Select Board and town administration to support decision making, and 4) reduced number of future warrant articles because by-law and regulatory adjustments for new license types will already have been considered and in place.

e. What research on the topic supports or does not support the proposed article?

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- There is emerging research, links below, that suggests that recreational marijuana is stronger than in the past, has the potential to harm developing brains, and is addictive.
- <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/marijuana#topic-7>
- <http://files.hria.org/files/CC5815.pdf>
- <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/brain-and-addiction>

f. What alternatives to the proposed action were considered?

- The alternative considered was to submit a warrant article proposing bylaw amendments that prohibit advertising, require data collection and analysis to enable understanding of the effect on community health and a requirement to add to the next ballot a vote to approve or reject social consumption cafes. The current proposal is preferred to this alternative because the objective of the warrant article is to develop a broad-based consensus which hopefully will result in a better community outcome than a debate and vote on a prescriptive set of measures from one interest group.

5. Consider the impact on town infrastructure (parking, roadways, parks, etc.); residents; the environment; employers; etc. Are there potential adverse effects from positive action on the article by Town Meeting?

- No potential adverse effects on Town infrastructure.

6. Consider town priorities and allocation of funding. What amount of funding might be required to start and maintain the proposed action? What is the source of those funds? How does the proposed article fit within the operating and/or capital budgets?

- The Study Committee would be composed of appointed and unpaid members from our Town. The Study Committee would balance the cost of any proposed by-law amendment with the potential benefit. And most importantly, the Study Committee would be disbanded after completing the study.

7. How does the proposed article and implementation impact the Town administration and staff priorities? Will a department either need to divert staff from an existing program, subcontract the work or add staff?

- The Warrant Article does not impact Town administration activity or priorities. The goal is to develop a policy framework that balances objectives. The framework is

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intended to guide Select Board and Town Administration decision making with respect to licensing and oversight of Marijuana Establishments located in Brookline.

8 Who will be responsible for implementing the action that a favorable vote will require? Has the petitioner consulted with those participants?

- The Study Committee will be responsible for sponsoring a warrant article and the Town Meeting will be responsible for considering the warrant article and voting to approve or not approve it.

9. Community Outreach:

a. What steps has the petitioner taken to assure that interested parties were notified and provided an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the proposed article?

- We have spoken to the Select Board, the CDICR, the ODICR, the Advisory Council on Public Health, the Department of Public Health, a smattering of TMMs, health professionals, addiction professionals, high school affiliated groups, researchers, Colorado based not for profits and many parents.

b. Are there are Town Boards or Committees that might be consulted?

- WE have reached out to the Advisory Council on Public Health and presented to a CDICR sub-committee.

c. If another board or committee has considered the action of the proposed article, please include a summary of the discussion and outcome.

- We are not aware of another committee that has considered this. The Select Board suggested working with the Cannabis Mitigation Committee but recognized that that would require a change to the mandate of that committee as well as enlarging the membership beyond parties resident near the existing licensed retail shops.

10. Prior Articles:

a. Do you know whether Town Meeting previously considered any Warrant Articles that address the same or similar topic? If so, do you know what the outcome was?

The Select Board sponsored WA18 in Spring 2019 to create a by-law for the licensing of Marijuana Establishments. We checked warrants back to 2018 Fall and could not find a warrant article that recommended a diverse committee to consider and recommend policy goals with respect to licensing Marijuana Establishments.

Fall 2021 Town Meeting

WA9 – Study Committee to Consider Policy Goals for Licensing Marijuana Establishments

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The Spring 2021 Town Meeting considered WA19 and WA20 pertaining to licensing Marijuana Establishments. There was a motion to refer those warrant articles to a Moderators Committee that failed by 6 votes with 104 Yes; 115 No and 10 Abstentions.

b. How does the proposed article differ from ones that were previously considered?

c. Is there new information or are there new circumstances to support raising an issue that was previously considered by Town Meeting?