

## Personnel Subcommittee Report

The Personnel Subcommittee met on April 6, 2022 at 5pm to consider Articles 2, 9 and 11. Attending the meeting were Christine Westphal, Harry Friedman, and Harry Bohrs from the subcommittee; Gary Altman and Frank Zecha representing the Retirement Board; Ann Braga and Michael Downey representing the Town of Brookline; and Scott Ananian Advisory Committee and Town Meeting member.

### **Article 11**

Article 11 was submitted by the Brookline Retirement Board and seeks to increase the amount of the base used to calculate cost living increases for Brookline retirees from \$13,000 to \$15,000. State law regulates both the cost of living increase percentage (currently 3%) and the yearly amount of retirement payout to which that percentage is applied. Currently the cost of living increase is calculated using a payout base of \$13,000 which would result in an increase of the annual pay out to retirees of \$390. State law allows that base to be increased with a vote of Town Meeting. If Town Meeting approves the increase of the base amount to \$15,000, the yearly payout to retirees would increase by an additional \$60 dollars, making the cost of living adjustment added to a retirees yearly payout by \$450 dollars.

The Retirement Board believe that the yearly increase in the cost of retirement benefits paid by the Town would total approximate \$49,000 dollars since there are approximately 850 retired Town employees collecting pensions. After a review by the actuaries, the Board has determined that this increase would not impact the time line to reach full funding of the Town's retirement obligations. The representatives of the Retirement Board who attended the meeting also noted that the retirement funds were exceeding the projected return on investment, which they felt indicated that the retirement funds could absorb the additional pay out for the cost of living adjustment.

**By a vote of 3-0-0 the Personnel Subcommittee recommends favorable action on Article 11.**

### **Article 9**

Article 9 seeks to amend the Town's Living Wage bylaw SECTION 4.8.2 LIVING WAGE by adding the following language:

(d) Should the adjusted 'living wage' fall below the Brookline "minimum wage" as defined in Section 4.8.3, the Town shall adjust the living wage to be one dollar (\$1.00) more than the Brookline minimum wage.

The Director of Human Resources has proposed this Amendment to the Town's bylaws because, after review of the legislative history, she believes that it was the intent of Town Meeting to have the Town's Living Wage be higher than the Town's minimum wage. The Town's minimum wage, as defined in the bylaw, is used primarily to determine the compensation of part-time employees in the Recreation Department who are predominately high school and college students. The living wage was thought to be

the hourly rate paid to part-time employees of the Town who were not predominately students, but working adults.

Because the State Legislature has increased the State minimum wage, and the Brookline Minimum Wage uses that as its base, it is anticipate that without this change the Brookline Minimum Wage will exceed the Brookline Living Wage in the next year. By taking favorable action on this proposed amendment, the Town will insure that the Living Wage in Brookline will reman higher than the Brookline Minimum Wage.

The Subcommittee suggested that the word “Brookline” be added to the minimum wage described in this article to distinguish the Brookline Minimum Wage from the Federal and State Minimum wages. We also recommended that Section 4.8.3 of the Town’s bylaws have the word “Brookline” inserted in the title in order to add clarification to the bylaw, and after inquiry with the Moderator it was determined that the additional change to the title of Section 4.8.3 was within the scope of the article.

**By a vote of 3-0-0 the Subcommittee recommends favorable action on Article 9, as amended.**

## **Article 2**

Article 2 seeks to have Town Meeting approve the appropriation of the funds to pay for the adjustment of collective bargaining agreement between the Town and a Local 1358, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO (AFSCME) contained in a Memorandum of Agreement dated March 2022. The agreement, and the memo prepared by the Ann Braga, the Director of Human Resources, for the Select Board, are attached to this report. The agreement has been ratified by the AFSCME membership. It’s primary purpose is to set the wage increases for FY 22, FY 23 and FY 24. Those increases (1% in FY 22; 3% in FY 23; and 3% in FY 24) fall within the Towns goals for salary increases.

Other sections of the MOA remove several members of the Bargaining unit who have either supervisory or more managerial roles; clean up some language concerning civil service membership; and provide for a future Snow & Ice Operations Premium of \$5 an hour that will become effective on June 30, 2024.

The Snow & Ice Operations Premium is meant to further compensate public works employees who are working during a weather emergency. Several other local municipalities have begun offering these premiums. The reasoning behind this premium is that if a worker is called in during a weather emergency over the weekend they earn overtime pay on the weekend, but if the work continues during the week their payment reverts back to their regular hourly wage, and not the overtime wage. It therefore seems reasonable to AFSCME that they should receive premium compensation during the weather emergency.

**By a vote of 3-0-0 the subcommittee recommends favorable action on Article 2.**

### **Meeting Recording:**

<https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/P4vIB8LI7iZoWrY6d863oYQ3fukFTTaAS2JMnxEKPmrCW6WVHMuQdU-EyMZ0Kdie.eXSgTyn73UBmpwO4>

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