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WHEREAS Asian American & Pacific Islanders (AAPI) residents constitute the largest community of color in the Town of Brookline. According to the 2020 Census, over 12,000 of Brookline residents identify as AAPI, which is 19% of the Town's population or 1 in 5 residents;

WHEREAS AAPI residents have made numerous contributions to the civic, business, and social life of Brookline;

WHEREAS on October 23, 1992, Congress passed and the President signed a Public Law 102-450 proclaiming the month of May to be AAPI Heritage Month;

WHEREAS the needs of the AAPI community are often overlooked because of the Model Minority Myth;

WHEREAS Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations (ODICR), in conjunction with the Brookline Asian American Family Network (BAAFN), has sponsored and sponsored an AAPI Heritage Month celebration since 2016;

WHEREAS the Town of Brookline sponsors an Annual Town-wide Commemoration of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a result of a Resolution passed by Town Meeting on May 25, 2010; and

WHEREAS Town Meeting passed a Resolution on November 15, 2017 to commemorate the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day and to establish a Committee to organize an annual commemoration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT TOWN MEETING URGES:

1. The Select Board to proclaim the month of May as Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Brookline in recognition of Brookline's AAPI community and its contributions;
2. The Select Board to establish an Annual Town-wide Celebration of AAPI Heritage Month during the month of May, to be organized by ODICR in conjunction with a Brookline-based AAPI organization. In the event there is no willing Brookline-based AAPI organization to co-sponsor the event, an AAPI Heritage Month Celebration Committee shall be established with the assistance of ODICR;

3. The Select Board ensure there is adequate funding for the annual AAPI Heritage Month Celebration;

4. The people of Brookline celebrate the month of May as AAPI Heritage month, including by attending the annual Celebration and by learning more about the history, culture, and lives of their AAPI neighbors, classmates, and friends;

and

5. The Public Schools of Brookline observe AAPI Heritage Month by organizing activities in celebration of the month and providing instruction on the history and culture of the AAPI community.

#### PETITIONER'S EXPLANATION

Nearly one in five Brookline residents identify as AAPI, according to data from the 2020 Census as reported by the Donohue Institute at the University of Massachusetts. See U.Mass Donohue Institute, Census 2020 Data for Massachusetts: Municipal Summaries from the Census 2020 PL-94 Redistricting Data, found at [this link](#) (scroll to "Brookline"; reporting 12,124 out of 63,131 residents identify as "Asian alone"). AAPI residents have made tremendous contributions to Brookline's civic, business, and cultural life, including notable writers (Mai Kim Le, Joon Lee); musicians (Lucia Lin); businesspeople (**Laura** Sen, Raj Dhandu); scientists (Dr. Frederick Pei Li, Dr. John Fan), academics (Dr. Min Hyoung Song, Andrew Leong) and activists (Stephanie Fan, Michael Liu).

Yet the AAPI community is often overlooked in Brookline. This is in part the result of the Model Minority Myth, which wrongly portrays all AAPIs are well-educated and well-off and thus have no needs requiring attention. The AAPI community certainly has needs requiring attention. Anecdotally the staff of the Brookline Food Pantry have estimated that an astounding 50% of its clients are AAPI. [Fourteen percent](#) of Brookline Housing Authority residents are AAPI. Nationally, a [2018 report by Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy](#) found that of every \$100 awarded by foundations in the United States, a mere **20 cents** was designated for AAPI communities.

It's time for this Town to officially recognize the many contributions as well as the needs of its AAPI residents. This Town proudly celebrates Martin Luther King Day and Indigenous People's Day as a result of Resolutions passed by Town Meeting. AAPI Heritage Month is celebrated as a result of volunteer efforts by BAAFN, with the support of ODICR. BAAFN organizes an annual Essay Contest and holds an awards event in May that also includes a celebration of AAPI Heritage Month.

This Resolution would elevate the annual AAPI Heritage Month Celebration as an official event sponsored by the Town. BAAFN can continue to organize the annual celebration in conjunction

with ODICR in the near future, but this Resolution ensures that it will continue to be held regardless of any one organization's ability to support it.