

**Human Services Subcommittee Report
Warrant Article 38**

Resolution Regarding the Celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
Public Hearing on September 16, 2022 at 12pm via Zoom

Recommendation: Favorable Action by a vote 5-0 with 0 abstentions

Executive Summary:	<p>This resolution asks that the Select Board officially proclaim the month of May in Brookline as "Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month." Both the federal government (since 1992) and Massachusetts (since 2018) officially designate May as AAPI Heritage Month.</p> <p>It seeks an official annual Celebration event, organized with the help of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (ODICR) in conjunction with either a Brookline-based AAPI organization willing to co-sponsor the event or, if no such co-sponsor were available, a committee established by the Select Board with the assistance of ODICR.</p> <p>Currently, and since 2016, ODICR, in conjunction with the Brookline Asian American Family Network (BAAFN), has had a staff member help to organize an annual May AAPI Heritage Month celebration in Brookline. The costs of the celebration until now have been funded primarily by donations to BAAFN and grant money.</p> <p>This resolution would elevate the Town's current annual AAPI Heritage Month celebration as an official event formally sponsored by the Town. and would ensure its continued occurrence if BAAFN ceased to exist. This resolution would also ask the Select Board to ensure adequate funding for the event.</p>
Voting Yes will...	<p>Make the Town's current annual May celebration of AAPI Heritage Month an official, Town-sponsored event, with Town funding. It will also be a sign of recognition and respect to Brookline's 12,000+ AAPI residents who comprise over 19% of Brookline's entire population.</p>
Voting No will...	<p>Have no immediate impact on current celebration – BAAFN and ODICR will continue to organize annual unofficial Brookline AAPI Month celebration, and its source of funding will continue to be donations to BAAFN and grant money with some town funding. However, it will be seen as a sign of disrespect for Brookline's largest community of color and nearly one-fifth of its population.</p>
Financial impact [if any]	<p>According to ODICR, if this resolution were enacted, the Town would earmark \$1,000 annually towards the Official AAPI Month celebration.</p>
Legal implications [if any]	<p>None</p>

Recording: https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/hiT2UoBRleuJxzo3Sw2JiHOWD4XAhZnDrY7D-0ohF90u4lj39q_8u5JQ1e28gMX8.FSsq1JG2UEp7qmE Passcode: A8ZX+T=j

Introduction

In 1992, the federal government enacted Public Law 102-450, which proclaimed the month of May to be Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month. In 2018, the Massachusetts State Legislature enacted, and Governor Baker signed, similar legislation for Massachusetts declaring May to be Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Massachusetts. The petitioners of WA 38 now ask that Brookline join with our federal and state governments in officially designating May as Asian American Pacific Islander Month in the Town of Brookline.

Brookline residents identifying as AAPI comprise 19 % of Brookline's population, according to data from the 2020 Census as reported by the Donohue Institute at the University of Massachusetts,¹ which makes it, by far, the largest community of color in Brookline.

Since 2016, a staff member of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (ODICR) and the Brookline Asian American Family Network (BAAFN), a local private organization, have worked together to organize an annual AAPI Heritage Month Celebration in Brookline. The celebration has been funded by donations raised by BAAFN and grant money, with some funding provided by the town.

In contrast, the Town holds official annual celebrations of Martin Luther King Day and Indigenous Peoples Day, and earmarks \$1,000 a year to fund each of these celebrations.

WA 38 asks that the Select Board (1) officially proclaim the month of May in Brookline as "Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month" in recognition of Brookline's AAPI community, and (2) establish an annual townwide celebration event during the month of May that would be organized with the help of ODICR in conjunction with either a Brookline-based AAPI organization willing to co-sponsor the event or, if no such co-sponsor were available, a committee established by the Select Board with the assistance of ODICR. It further seeks that (3) the Select Board ensure that there is adequate funding for this event and that (4) the public schools of Brookline organize activities in celebration of this month and provide instruction on the history and culture of Brookline's AAPI community.

Discussion

All Subcommittee members voiced support for this resolution. The Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations enthusiastically support this resolution. Subcommittee members suggested minor corrections, which the petitioners agreed to.

Roll Call vote: Yes: Granoff, Florio, Goldstein, O'Neal, Penzel

Recommendation: The Human Services Subcommittee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on Warrant Article 38, as amended, by a vote of 5-0-0.

In attendance

Health and Human Services Subcommittee: Susan Granoff, Chair, Katherine Florio, David-Marc Goldstein, Donelle O'Neale, and Mark Penzel

Town of Brookline: Caitlin Starr, Assistant Director, Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations

Brookline Residents: Chi Chi Wu, petitioner, Town Meeting Member Pct.7; Hsiu-Lan Chang, Adeniyi Ijanusi, Linda Louie.

Warrant Article 38 Amended clauses, changes crossed out and in red

Resolution Regarding the Celebration of Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

WHEREAS on October 23, 1992, Congress passed and the President signed a Public Law ~~102-150~~ 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

¹ Donohue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Census 2020 Data for Massachusetts: Municipal Summaries from the Census 2020 PL-94 Redistricting Data (19 September 2022) https://donahue.umass.edu/data/pep/dashboards/census2020_dashboard.html