

**Advisory Committee - Administration and Finance Subcommittee**  
**Select Board FY24 Department Budget**  
**Public Hearing Held via Zoom February 28, 2023**

Overview	FY23 Budget	Proposed FY24 Budget	
Request	\$885, 730	\$967,387	<i>Without passage of an override, the budget will be reduced by \$64,096 by the elimination of an open vacant position</i>

**Recommendation:** The Administration and Finance Subcommittee, by a vote of 4-0, unanimously recommends favorable action on the Advisory Committee’s proposed budget of \$967,387

**Hearing Recording:** Click on the link below and enter the passcode when prompted to view the recording of this hearing. Select Board budget review starts at 39:02

**Recording:** <https://bit.ly/3ESAdEm>

**Access Passcode:** txv^iJF7

The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on February 28, 2023 to review the Advisory Committee’s proposed budget. In attendance were: Harry Bohrs, Neil Gordon, Kelly Hardebeck and Joslin Murphy for the subcommittee; Dennis Doughty, Advisory Committee Chair, Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; Lincoln Heineman, Finance Director and Charles Young, Assistant Town Administrator for Finance

**Discussion:**

The Select Board budget covers the Select Board expenses as well as the office of the Town Administrator and the subcommittee finds labeling the budget as Select Board to be slightly misleading and continues to recommend renaming the budget to more accurately reflect what it funds. The Select Board serves as Brookline’s licensing board and is responsible for issuing and renewing licenses in 20 categories. While the Select Board initiates legislative policy by inserting articles in Town Meeting Warrants, the Town Administrator is largely responsible for implementation, management and oversight. The core functions of the Town Administrator’s office are budgeting and analysis.

FY23 was a year of transition in the Town Administrator’s office. With the appointment of Charles Carey as Town Administrator and Charles Young as Assistant Town Administrator for Finance, the office is nearly fully staffed with only the Cannabis Licensing and Mitigation Coordinator role remaining unfilled. The proposed FY24 budget is a 9.2% increase over the FY23 budget due largely to changes in HCA.

Due to the passage of Host Community Agreement Reform legislation in August 2022, the cannabis coordinator position will no longer be fully funded by HCA fees. As a result, the Town Administrator is

looking to restructure how Brookline deals with cannabis licensing and increase the current part-time licensing coordinator role to full-time.

The office plans to transfer the vacant Community Engagement Specialist role, currently staffed within ODICR, to the office of the Town Administrator and refocus the position on communications. Should the override fail, that position will be eliminated representing a cost savings of \$64,096.

The budget also shows an increase of \$6180 for Professional/Tech Services which reflects an increase in the subscription cost of the recently implemented software for managing boards and commissions. The Assistant Town Administrator for Operations reports the software has been essential to efficiently managing membership, renewals, notices and letters for those boards and commissions. The data is also integrated with the Town's website and each board/commission has a listing that shows each member along with the dates of their term. By clicking on a member's name, you can also see the full roster of boards and commissions that person serves on.

The offsets in this budget come from one-time ARPA funding and ongoing HCA funds. The ARPA monies currently fund the Town's Grant Administrator who, among other responsibilities, administers the ARPA funding. There are two HCA funded \$2000 offsets for supplies. Lastly, the Arts Council Coordinator position is partially grant funded and shows an offset of \$7500.

As noted in last year's report, there is a concern that the Town Administrator's office is too lightly staffed given the increasing workload. The Town depends on this office for oversight, management, analysis and strategic planning and they continue to deliver. The subcommittee endorses the increasing the capacity for this office and appreciates the value they deliver for the Town and its residents.