

ARTICLE 1

FIRST ARTICLE

Submitted by: Select Board

To see if the Town will establish that the number of Measurers of Wood and Bark be two, to be appointed by the Select Board, or act on anything relative thereto.

PETITIONER’S ARTICLE DESCRIPTION

Article 20 of the November, 2000 Special Town Meeting requires that this be the first article at each Annual Town Meeting. It calls for the Select Board to appoint two Measurers of Wood and Bark.

SELECT BOARD’S RECOMMENDATION

On March 21st the Select Board voted FAVORABLE ACTION 4-0 on the motion offered by the Advisory Committee.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aye:

Greene

Aschkenasy

VanScoyoc

Sandman

ADVISORY COMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation: FAVORABLE ACTION on Warrant Article 1 by a vote of 19-0-0.

Executive Summary	Each year, the Select Board is called up to appoint two Measurers of Wood and Bark, whose task it is to ensure that cords of firewood sold in Brookline measure eight feet long, four feet wide and for feet high.
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Voting Yes will...	Call upon the Select Board to appoint two Measurers of Wood and Bark, whose task it is to ensure that cords of firewood sold in Brookline measure eight feet long, four feet wide and four feet high.
Voting No will...	Eliminate this position.
Financial impact	The positions do not draw a salary, stipend or other remunerative benefit, and the Town incurs no current financial cost or future pension or OPEB liability. The Town does print several sheets of paper every year to send this description out to Town Meeting Members but this cost is considered de minimus.

Introduction

The position of Measurer of Wood and Bark was an early effort at consumer protection, important when homes were heated by wood and town dwellers had to purchase their fuel from vendors who came in from rural areas with their loads of cut and split cordwood.

Even into the 20th Century, the consumer protection aspect of the office remained. A town report from 1902 researched by Ken Liss of the Brookline Historical Society states that the town did not have a measurer that year. A number of complaints were filed regarding substandard cords of wood, and shortages were found in each case.

Discussion

At the spring 2000 Town Meeting the article was dropped because the Measurers of Wood and Bark were considered to be unnecessary. But in the fall of that same year, Town Meeting required that this traditional article be reinstated. The Advisory Committee in its report at the time noted:

“Of course the Measurers of Wood and Bark are unnecessary! They’ve been unnecessary for as far back as anyone now living can remember! But it was a harmless tradition, which cost nothing (except for the paper and ink used to print the Article in the Combined Reports) and it was a link with our origins in a less mechanized society.”

Recommendation

By a vote of 19-0 with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on the following motion under Article 1.

VOTED: That the Town establish that the number of Measurers of Wood and Bark be two, to be appointed by the Select Board.

ARTICLE 1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE VOTES

Article Description	Measurers of Wood & Bark
AC recommendation (Favorable Action unless indicated)	19-0-0
Ben Birnbaum	Y
Harry Bohrs	Y
Cliff Brown	Y
Patty Correa	Y
John Doggett	Y
Katherine Florio	Y
Harry Friedman	Y
David-Marc Goldstein	Y
Neil Gordon	
Susan Granoff	Y
Kelly Hardebeck	
Amy Hummel	Y
Anita Johnson	
Alisa Jonas	
Janice Kahn	
Pam Lodish	Y
Joslin Murphy	Y
Donelle O'Neal, Sr.	
Linda Olson Pehlke	Y
Markus Penzel	Y
David Pollak	
Stephen Reeders	Y
Carlos Ridruejo	Y
Lee Selwyn	
Alok Somani	Y
Carolyn Thall	Y
Christine Westphal	Y
Dennis Doughty *	
* Chairperson does not vote except to break a tie	