

ARTICLE 19

**REFERRAL MOTION OFFERED BY DAVID LESCOHIER, TMM11
AND BOB LEPSON, TMM9**

VOTED:

To refer the subject matter of Warrant Article 19, creation of a Brookline Black N Brown Commission, to the Select Board for additional consideration of whether the goals of the article would be best achieved through a Commission as opposed to a separate body.

Explanation:

Arthur Conquest, Town Meeting Member, Precinct 6, filed Warrant Article 30, a resolution for the Special Town Meeting, November 2022, to see if the Town will create a Commission for Black N Brown residents. This Warrant Article proposed to create a commission “independent of the constraints of Town Government to investigate, announce events, and disseminate events and activities, etc. to the Black and Brown residents in Brookline.”

For this current Town Meeting, Adeniyi Ijanusi submitted Warrant Article 19, a Town general bylaw, an “act as a centralizing force in the Town of Brookline and the community...”

The combined report contains recommendations from the Committee on Town Organization and Structure and an ad-hoc subcommittee of the Advisory Committee. Through these processes spanning many meetings from the closing of the warrant until the present, the proposed bylaw evolved substantially. These committees identified and addressed serious flaws in the bylaw, as originally proposed.

The Advisory Committee and the Committee on Town Organization and Structure worked with the petitioner in good faith and to recommend favorable action for this motion, with extensive revisions, negotiated with great effort.

Unfortunately, a group calling itself the Black N Brown Club, registered as a non-profit corporation in Massachusetts recently issued a 21-page, disturbing newsletter, circulated among Town Meeting Members. The newsletter defames Town leaders and uses racist tropes against members of the community.

We want to acknowledge the work done by the Advisory Committee and the Committee on Town Organization and Structure on this article. We feel that at this time a Town Meeting vote of Favorable Action would exacerbate a culture of harassment and deepen divisions among Brookline’s communities. We believe that a referral to the Town’s appointing authority, the Select Board, would allow an opportunity for a ‘cooling off’ period in order to promote greater collaboration and inclusivity, including consideration

of whether the goals of the article would be best achieved through a Commission as opposed to a separate body.