Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM
6th Floor Hearing Room

1. **Open Session**

1a. Question of entering into Executive Session for the purpose stated in item two (2), and to reconvene in Open Session.

2. **Executive Session - Litigation**

2a. Executive Session, pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) ("Purpose 3"), for the purpose of discussing litigation strategy related to a claim by Anthony Buono, Alec Lebovitz, Joslin Murphy, Richard Murphy, and Donelle Sean O'Neal, Sr., seeking reimbursement for attorneys' fees following an investigation into potential violations of Town Policies and State Laws.

Chair Pearlman declared that the board shall enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation strategy related to a claim by Anthony Buono, Alec Lebovitz, Joslin Murphy, Richard Murphy, and Donelle Sean O'Neal, Sr., seeking reimbursement for attorneys' fees following an investigation into potential violations of Town Policies and State Laws, because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body. The board will reconvene in open session.

On motion, it was,

Voted to enter into executive session.
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman
Abstained: Anthony Buono

3. **Announcements/Updates**

Select Board to announce recent and/or upcoming Events of Community Interest.

- **ICE arrest incident in Chestnut Hill** – comments on resident safety, federal transparency, resistance movements, misinformation, and the Police Department's handling.
- **San Diego Islamic Center shooting** – reflections on white supremacist violence and federal threat assessment gaps.
- **Aaron Feuerstein Day event recap** – honoring the Malden Mills CEO's legacy of *hesed* (loving-kindness).
- **DPW Announcements**
  - *Springfest*: May 30, Allerton Overlook.
  - *Trash Amnesty Week*: May 26–30.

    - *Splash pads opened early* during the heatwave.
- **Memorial Day events** – ceremonies begin 8:30 AM at Walnut Hill/Walnut Street Cemeteries; main ceremony at 11:00 AM on Town Hall lawn.
- **Employee Training Day** – thanks to staff and community.

4. **Public Comment**

1. Janice Kahn (Town Meeting Member, Precinct 14) spoke about a zoning amendment concerning short-term rentals in the Chestnut Hill commercial overlay district. Kahn strongly supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation to prohibit short-term rentals within the overlay zone, emphasizing that the underlying zoning would remain unchanged. Kahn argued that the neighborhood is already facing significant upheaval due to anticipated development and that allowing short-term rentals would further destabilize the community. She urged the Select Board to "thoughtfully consider" adding this restriction to maintain a stable, welcoming residential environment for those who choose to make the area their long-term home.

2. Richard Nangle raised concerns about unshielded nighttime lighting at the Robert T. Lynch Golf Course, arguing it harms wildlife in what is supposed to function as a protected conservation area after dark. Nangle opposed the $300,000 CIP request for new driving-range lighting, noting missing environmental studies, inadequate public process, and broad community opposition, and urged the Board to reconsider and bring back a better-vetted plan in November.

5. **Miscellaneous**

5a. Question of approving the meeting minutes from May 12, 2026.

Approved as amended
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5b. Question of awarding and executing a contract for roof replacement at Lynch Recreation Center and Eliot Recreation Center to C&K Roofing, Inc., in the amount of $369,915.09.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5c. Question of awarding and executing a contract for roof replacement at the Baldwin and Lawrence Schools to Almar, LLC, in the amount of $1,336,700.00.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5d. Question of approving an Appropriation Transfer request from the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Relations in the amount of $4,000.00, to support events as follows:
From: Professional /Tech $4,000.00
To: Special programs supplies $4,000.00

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5e. Question of approving the 2026 Arbor Day Proclamation

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION

Town of Brookline, Massachusetts

WHEREAS, the Brookline Tree Planting Committee was created by a Special Act of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1886 to protect and preserve the Town's Tree Resources; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Brookline, the Department of Public Works, and the Tree Planting Committee are committed to planting and maintenance for all Town roadside shade trees; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Brookline encourages neighborhood organizations, schools, families and individuals to learn the importance of trees in observance of this Tree Planters' Holiday;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Town of Brookline, through its duly vested Tree Planting Committee, proclaims May 30, 2026 as Arbor Day in Brookline

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5f. Question of accepting the transmittal of the SBDC (Small Business Development Committee) and EDAB (Economic Development Advisory Board) Annual Reports.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5g. Question of awarding and executing a contract with Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. for the DPW Operations and Facilities Feasibility Study, in the amount of $230,000.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5h. Question of approving an Appropriation Transfer request from the Assistant Town Administrator for Finance in the amount of $1,228.00:
From: 98909860 558099 Contingency $1,228.00
To: 12201220 533210 Meals and Receptions $1,228.00

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5i. Question of approving an Appropriation Transfer request from the Planning Director in the amount of $3,000.00
From:17201720 524010 Prof/Tech $2,000.00
To: 1720 1720 531012 Office Supplies $2,000

From: 1720 1720 524010 Consulting $1,000
To: 1720 1720 533210 Meals/Receptions $1,000

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5j. Question of approving an Appropriations Transfer request from the DPW Commissioner in the amount of $65,000.00:
From: 42004220 Salaries $8,000.00 To:
42004900 Natural Gas $8,000.00 From:
42004250 Salaries $15,000.00 To:
42004900 Electricity $15,000.00 From:
42004220 Salaries $7,000.00 To:
42004900 Water $7,000.00
From: 46004680 Salaries $8,000.00 To:
46004650 Diesel $8,000.00
From: 46004680 Salaries $10,000.00 To:
46004650 Electricity $10,000.00 From:
46004680 Salaries $3,000.00 To:
46004650 Natural Gas $3,000.00 From:
46004680 Salaries $8,000.00 To:
46004650 Natural Gas $8,000.00 From:
46004680 Salaries $6,000.00 To: Org
#46004650 Water $6,000.00

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5k. Question of approving a Temporary One-Day **Wine and Malt** Beverages Sales License to Lance David d/b/a Hive LLC for the Coolidge Corner Art Festival to be held on June 6, 2026, from 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM at Babcock St. between John St. and Harvard St. 1000 people expected to attend.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5l. Question of approving a Temporary One-Day **Wine and Malt** Beverages Non-Sales License to Karen Hasenfus d/b/a The Larz Anderson Auto Museum for an Annual Club Dinner Event to be held on May 27, 2026, from 6:00 PM –10:00 PM at 15 Newton Street. 100 people expected to attend.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5m. Question of approving a Temporary One-Day **Wine and Malt** Beverages Non-Sales License to Karen Hasenfus d/b/a The Larz Anderson Auto Museum for a Birthday Party Event to be held on May 31, 2026, from 6:00 PM –10:00 PM at 15 Newton Street. 100 people expected to attend.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

5n. Question of approving an Appropriation Transfer request from the Director of Public Health in the amount of $44,133.00 as follows:
From: 51005110 524010 Prof /Tech $5285.00 To:
51005110 5A001 Automobile $5,285.00
From: 51005120 524010 Prof/Tech services $38,848.00 To:
51005110 5A001 Automobile $38,848.00

*This transfer requires approval from the Advisory Committee.

Approved
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

6. **Calendar**

Review and potential vote on Calendar Items.

7. **Boards and Commissions - Interviews**

7a. Conservation Commission

Khandan Baradaran
Kelly Brilliant - withheld

Khandan Baradaran expressed interest that stems from:

- Career in the Biotech industry.
- Concern over human impacts on ecosystems, bird populations, and climate.
- Desire to help strengthen urban forestry, wildlife habitat, and pollinator-friendly landscapes.
- Commitment to supporting the 2026 Climate Resiliency Plan and the 2025 Open Space and Recreation 10-Year Action Plan.
- Interest in ensuring “sufficient funding, oversight, project management, and coordination” for implementing these plans.

8. **Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee**

8a. Review and possible vote on a slate of candidates for the Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee. The Parks & Recreation Commission’s recommended slate is:

Clara Batchelor (Parks & Recreation Commission Co-Chair)
Arisa Boit (Preservation Commission Representative)
Jason Bowers (Building Commission Co-Chair)
Mary Dewart (Friends of Larz Anderson Park Representative)
Robert Franklin (Member of the Public)
Andrew Mullins (Youth Hockey Representative)
David Pearlman (Select Board Chair)
Wadner Oge (Member of the Public)
Mark Zarillo (Planning Board Representative)

8b. **Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee Interviews**:
Debbie Hatzieleftheriadis
Arlene Fortunato - withdrew
Ethan Yankowitz
Isabel Taube

Debbie Hatzieleftheriadis described a deep, decades-long connection to Larz Anderson Park, having lived beside the park for 38 years and raised both children and grandchildren there. As a longtime user of the rink and a former president of Friends of Larz, Debbie emphasized extensive involvement in earlier phases of the rink process, including service on the Design Review and OPM committees. The interview highlighted strong attachment to the park's historic character and landscape, a personal history of family skating and hockey, and sustained engagement with community discussions about preserving the outdoor rink. Debbie expressed a desire to continue contributing to the project as an abutter and frequent park user who considers the site an essential part of daily life and the neighborhood's identity.

Ethan Yankowicz described living in South Brookline for 13 years near Larz Anderson Park and regularly using the outdoor rink with family, often visiting many times each winter. Ethan emphasized appreciation for the rink as a historic and cultural asset and expressed a strong interest in preserving its simple, outdoor character. With a prior background in historic preservation and current work as a lawyer, Ethan noted having some relevant skills but primarily offered the perspective of a frequent user who values the site's setting and community role. Ethan characterized this application as an opportunity to contribute thoughtfully to a place that holds personal and neighborhood significance.

Isabel Taub described a lifelong connection to Larz Anderson Park, having grown up playing, sledding, and skating there, with a decade researching Larz and Isabel Anderson and their historic Brookline and Washington, D.C. estates. As an art historian with substantial knowledge of the site's cultural and architectural context, Isabel expressed a commitment to helping ensure the new rink design is both contemporary and respectful of the historic landscape. Isabel highlighted experience managing complex projects and balancing diverse viewpoints as a New York City co-op board president and noted active engagement with the current rink process by reviewing meeting recordings and design materials. Emphasizing the Andersons' legacy of public recreation, Isabel conveyed an interest in representing the broader public and in treating the rink as both a functional facility and an integral, year-round historic feature of the park.

The board discussed expanding the membership slate.

On motion it was,

1. Voted to appoint Debbie Hatzieleftheriadis as a full member of the Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee.

2. Voted to appoint Isabel Taub as a full member of the Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee.

3. Voted to appoint Ethan Yankowicz as an alternate member of the Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

On motion, it was,

Voted to approve the full slate of candidates for the Larz Anderson Rink Design Review Committee.

Clara Batchelor (Parks & Recreation Commission Co-Chair)
Arisa Boit (Preservation Commission Representative)
Jason Bowers (Building Commission Co-Chair)
Mary Dewart (Friends of Larz Anderson Park Representative)
Robert Franklin (Member of the Public)
Andrew Mullins (Youth Hockey Representative)
David Pearlman (Select Board Chair)
Wadner Oge (Member of the Public)
Mark Zarillo (Planning Board Representative)
Debbie Hatzieleftheriadis (Member of the Public)
Isabel Taube (Member of the Public)
Ethan Yankowitz (Alternate Member)

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

9. **(7:00 PM) FY27 Annual Water and Sewer Rates - Public Hearing**

9a. Presentation, public hearing, and possible vote on the proposed increase of 3.0% to the FY27 Water and Sewer rates.

Jay Hersey, Director of Water & Sewer, and Dave Fox, Consultant with Raftelis, Municipal Consultants, made a presentation.

- The FY27 Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund totals $35.56M, a 3.12% increase from FY26.
- Most costs are driven by the MWRA assessment and debt service, with modest increases in salaries, utilities, and reserves.

- Services and capital show slight reductions.
- The proposed FY27 program continues major infrastructure reinvestment: $3M for wastewater rehabilitation (aimed at reducing infiltration & inflow).
- $2M for lead gooseneck removal following the town-wide lead service line inventory, and $500K for stormwater improvements and MS4 compliance.

Raftelis recommends a 3% across-the-board rate increase for both water and sewer, with an emphasis on maintaining healthy reserve balances to ensure financial stability and protect against revenue volatility. Example bill impacts were shown for low, median, and high-usage customers, and Brookline remains competitively low compared to regional communities. Cash-flow and reserve projections indicate stable long-term performance under the 3% annual increase assumption.

Public hearing: No speakers

On motion, it was,

VOTED:

(1) To approve the following quarterly Water and Sewer rates effective July 1, 2026:

Water Rate: **Single Family Residential Customers**

$3.46 per hundred cubic feet (hcf) for all use up to 18 hcf

$8.65 per hundred cubic feet (hcf) for all use greater than 18 hcf

All Other Customers

$6.92 per hundred cubic feet (hcf) for all use Sewer Rate:

$10.36 per hundred cubic feet (hcf) for all use

(2) To approve the quarterly Base Charge based on meter size according to the following schedule effective July 1, 2026:

Meter Size (in inches)	Quarterly Water Base Charge	Quarterly Sewer Base Charge
0.625	$39.42	$39.42
0.75	$55.85	$55.85
1	$95.26	$95.26
1.5	$190.51	$190.51
2	$305.47	$305.47
3	$571.53	$571.53
4	$949.27	$949.27

(3) To approve the quarterly Irrigation rate at $6.92 per hundred cubic feet (hcf) effective July 1, 2026.

(4) To approve the annual Fire Service Charge at $24.68 per inch-diameter squared of fire service pipe size effective July 1, 2026.

(5) To continue the Senior Water and Sewer Rate Discount Program in an amount equivalent to 50% of the water and sewer base charge for eligible ratepayers, with eligibility for said program determined

by eligibility for Property Tax Exemptions allowable under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clauses 17D, 41A, 41C and the Senior Work-off Tax program.

(6) The above votes are set under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 22F.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

10. **Presentation of Climate Action and Resiliency Plan**

10a. Discussion, Presentation & Possible Vote to Adopt and Issue a Letter of Support for the 2026 Climate Action & Resiliency Plan

Alexandra Vecchio, Director of Sustainability & Natural Resources, presented the final draft of Brookline's 2026 Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) and requested Select Board adoption.

The plan is the product of a year-and-a-half of technical analysis, departmental coordination, and community engagement, building on the 2018 Climate Action Plan and 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan. CARP establishes a comprehensive 10-year roadmap to meet Brookline's net-zero emissions goals and enhance climate resilience, supported by an implementation framework that identifies stakeholders, timelines, and funding pathways. The presentation noted Brookline's longstanding leadership in climate action and outlines commitments to transparency, including a public dashboard and a five-year progress review.

The plan's development incorporated updated greenhouse gas inventories, climate vulnerability analysis, and alignment with major Town planning documents, including the Urban Forest Climate Resiliency Master Plan, Zero Waste Framework, and Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The presentation noted engagement with municipal departments, public forums, surveys, and advisory committees such as ZEAB, which unanimously recommended adoption. CARP identifies 45+ strategies and 178 actions across five key areas—Buildings & Energy, Resource Conservation, Transportation & Mobility, Natural Systems, and Resilience, using a prioritization framework based on cost, funding, equity, ease of implementation, and climate impact. Adoption of the plan is framed as essential to achieving net-zero by 2050 and coordinating climate mitigation and adaptation across Town operations.

On motion, it was,

Voted to Adopt and Issue a Letter of Support for the 2026 Climate Action & Resiliency Plan

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

11. **Boards and Commissions - Fisher Hill West Uses Advisory Committee**

11a. Expand the Fisher Hill West Uses Advisory Committee from 7 members to 9 members
11b. Appoint applicants George Cole and Michael Sandman

The board noted these two candidates would be a good fit for the committee.

On motion, it was,

1. Voted to expand Fisher Hill West Uses Advisory Committee from 7 members to 9 members
2. Voted to appoint George Cole and Michael Sandman to the Fisher Hill West Uses Advisory Committee.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

3. **2030 Roadmap**

12a. Review and possible vote on 2030 Roadmap

Abbey Fullem, Consultant, reviewed the final draft of the 2030 Roadmap plan.

The 2030 Roadmap is a five-year strategic plan capturing shared priorities of the Select Board and Select Board Office. Developed through interviews, department input, and four workshops between July 2025 and May 2026. It is intended to give Town staff clear direction through changing conditions and leadership transitions. The roadmap articulates guiding values, including transparency, equity, efficiency, and good governance, and structures seven major goals covering core service delivery, government alignment, fiscal health, communication, diversity, infrastructure, and climate action. Each goal includes strategies, Select Board and staff actions, and key performance indicators designed to support consistent implementation and measurable progress.

The plan outlines detailed strategies such as improving service transparency with dashboards, modernizing operations and public body governance, strengthening long-term fiscal stability, expanding multilingual outreach, increasing racial and economic diversity through targeted housing and marketing initiatives, accelerating roadway and infrastructure work, and adopting and implementing the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP).

Annual March workshops will serve as formal checkpoints where the Select Board reviews KPIs, updates goals, and aligns the roadmap with yearly priorities. The document is designed to evolve over time as actions are refined, added, or retired, ensuring that the Select Board focuses on strategic, high-impact work while maintaining accountability and clarity across departments.

Amanda Zimmerman recommended expanding upon Vision Zero tracking.
Under Town Staff, after 6.B.4, language was added to address annual reporting.

Town Administrator Carey and the Board thanked Abby Fullem and the team for crafting this important policy guiding document.

On motion, it was,

Voted to approve the 2030 Roadmap plan with member Zimmerman's additions.
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

13. **Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

13a. Discussion and a possible vote on amendments to STM 1 - Article 1 and Article 2

Linda Pehlke, Advisory Committee member, explained that the Advisory Committee voted to remove short-term rentals (STRs) from the Chestnut Hill Commercial Overlay because STRs undermine long-term neighborhood stability and conflict with the goals of the new zoning district. Pehlke noted that City Realty did not object to eliminating STRs from the proposal, making the amendment straightforward and broadly supported.

Pehlke also detailed why a majority of the Advisory Committee supported eliminating the Transit-Oriented Mixed-Use (TOM) sub-district north of Route 9. The TOM zoning, allows 7–8 story buildings with minimal setbacks and no transition to adjacent two-family homes, making it incompatible with surrounding residential character.

The area currently hosts Star Market parking, CVS, a gas station, and 2 residential homes, with no indication of redevelopment interest, and that adding large-scale density there could make the Hammond/Boylston intersection even more congested.

Meredith Mooney, Community Development Director, added that some language revisions were cleaned up with some Scrivener's corrections.

- Advisory Committee amendment to prohibit short-term rentals (STRs) in the overlay was adopted after public comment from Linda Pehlke. Developer City Realty, had already indicated this change would not **j**eopardize the MOA.
- Advisory Committee amendment to eliminate the Transit-Oriented Mixed-Use (TOM) sub-district.
- The TOM sub-district was designed as urban, transit-oriented mixed use up to 7 stories, integrated with CHC3 standards across Route 9.

The Select Board declined to endorse removing the TOM area north of Route 9 and will recommend No Action at Town Meeting, indicating that ground-floor commercial requirements (generally 60% of frontage to 30 ft depth) and a pedestrian corridor help break up massing and maintain street-level activity; limited waivers apply off Boylston via Special Permit**.** Keeping TOM sustains a cohesive corridor plan and future net-new tax growth potential if properties redevelop over time.

On motion, it was,

Voted to reconsider STM1, Article 1.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

On motion, it was,

1. Voted, to approve all staff recommendations as outlined in Meredith Mooney's memo dated May 14, 2026 for STM1, Article 1.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

2. On motion, it was,

   Voted to remove the short-term rentals from the prior versions.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

3. On motion, it was,

   Voted 5-0 No Action on the Advisory Committee's amendment to remove the Transit-Orient District.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

Member Rubenstein offered a fallback position for the Board pending Town Meeting outcome. After discussion it was withdrawn.

4. **Warrant Articles - Continued**

14a. Review and possible vote on any warrant articles or motions/amendments thereto at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting including, but not limited to:

14b. **Article 8. FY27 Budget**

Deputy Town Administrator, Melissa Goff reviewed that there was a revised motion Article 8 - special appropriation 41 for the rehabilitation of streets, submitted from petitioners Paul Warren, Marissa Vogt, Andrew Fischer, Brian Kane, and Michael Sandman; this revision stems from a consensus between two competing articles. The new version is attached in the packet. This version has been adopted by the Advisory Committee.

Another budget amendment relates to the reallocation of Town Counsel's budget in the amount of $31,000. The Advisory Committee voted to reallocate those funds from the Council on Aging's budget to the Reserve Fund.

On motion, it was,

Voted to reconsider Article 8 amendments.
Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

On motion, it was,

Voted 4-0-1 Favorable Action on the Warren, Sandman, Kane, Fisher, Vogt amendment, and to adopt the Advisory Committee's vote on transferring $31,000 to the Reserve Fund.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman
Abstained: Anthony Buono

14c. **Article 12.** To see if the Town will add Article X.X "XXX" of the Town's General By-law as follows
ARTICLE X.X
SECTION X.X.X Transparency of Public Record Request and Responses
The Town shall ensure that all Public Record requests made of the Town of Brookline as well as all responses — except those subject to a statutory exclusion — are made publicly available via the Town's website as soon as practicable but no later than 14 days after either the Town receives a request or the Town issues a response. (Toffel, TMM; Lebovitz, TMM8)

Co-petitioner Alec Lebovitz outlined the revised Article.

Purpose:
Article 12 aims to improve transparency around Brookline's handling of public records requests by making information about each request, and the town's response publicly available.

Original Proposal:

- Post all public records requests and the actual documents provided in response.
- Update this information online twice monthly.

Why It Changed:

- Town Counsel and the Town Clerk raised concerns about:
  • Staff workload and the ability to meet state-mandated response timelines.
  • Technical limitations (e.g., redacting sensitive information before posting).
  • The cost of posting full responses for every request.

Amended Proposal (Petitioners' Revised Version):
Instead of posting full documents, the new version requires posting a monthly public index that includes:

- A list of all public records requests received that month.
- A brief summary of what was provided in response (not the full documents).
- Notes when a request was denied or exempt under state law.

Benefits of the Revised Approach:

- Achieves meaningful transparency.
- Reduces staff burden and avoids the need for extensive redaction.
- Keeps implementation costs in the low thousands annually (based on Clerk's past experience).
- Still allows the public to request any of the documents listed in the index at little or no cost because they would already be redacted.

Select Board Discussion Points

- Recognition of the public appetite for better transparency.
- Concern about Town Clerk staffing and backlog of state-mandated responses.
- Interest in ensuring that any system allows protection of private or exempt information.
- Agreement that additional consultation with the Clerk and Town Administrator would help refine final language before Town Meeting.

There was no vote to reconsider Article 12 pending input from the Town Clerk.

14d. **Article 22.** Proposition 2 1/2 Resolution (Schoen, TMM1; Kimball, TMM1)

Article 22 is now a resolution asking the Town of Brookline to explore creating a regional inflation index; a tool that could help towns understand how Proposition 2½ limits interact with real-world municipal cost increases.

Petitioners Schoen and Kimball presented a revised Article 22. The petitioners reviewed that instead of referring the matter of the index to a Select Board committee, they changed it to a resolution which calls on the Town Administrator, the Select Board, and/or town staff to evaluate the possibility of constructing a regional index and reaching out to the Metro Area Planning Council to do so. This is in an effort to alleviate concerns about town-wide vs. regional action, and brings us back to the original aim, which is adding to the statewide conversation about municipal budgets and inflation pressures.

On motion, it was,

Voted 5-0 to recommend Favorable Action on the revised Article as a Resolution submitted by the petitioners.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman, Anthony Buono

14e. **Article 23.** To see if the Town will adopt a resolution to increase stipends for Select Board members. (Vogt, TMM 6; Golden, TMM11; Kenet)

Co-petitioner Jonathan Golden outlined the revised Article

Purpose

Article 23 proposes establishing or increasing stipends for members of the Select Board, and the School Committee.

The goal is to modernize compensation so civic service is more accessible, especially to residents who cannot afford uncompensated or low-compensated public service roles.

Background

- Petitioners noted that the current stipend structure (especially the *absence* of School Committee stipends) creates barriers for people with caregiving duties, lower incomes, or limited work flexibility.
- The Advisory Committee recommended that the issue be studied by a Moderator's Committee before any major increase is implemented.
- Petitioners revised their article to:
  • introduce modest stipend increases now, and
  • direct the proposed Moderator's Committee to study larger changes and report back within a defined timeframe.

Key Elements of the Revised Article

- Increase Select Board stipend to a level just below the pension-trigger threshold (i.e., $4,999), effective July 1, 2029.
- Establish a stipend for School Committee members for the first time, also effective July 1, 2029.
- Moderator's Committee Study:
  • examines long-term compensation models
  • analyzes pension implications (important because stipends ≥$5,000/year can trigger future pension obligations).
  • reports back to Town Meeting in 2027, not 2028 (petitioners' preferred timeline).

Select Board Discussion Themes

- Bernard Greene supports the Article due to the relatively low compensation increases.
- Some members expressed concern about voting on compensation that could eventually benefit themselves
- Town Counsel clarified that because the stipend changes would take effect after the next election, Select Board members may legally vote on the article without conflict.

On motion, it was,

Voted 3-0-2 to recommend Favorable Action on the revised Article to include both the Select Board and the School Committee stipends.

Aye: Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman
Abstained: David Pearlman, Anthony Buono

14f. **Article 25.** Resolution response to Federal Immigration Enforcement and Police Protocols (Lebovitz et al.)

Select Board members Anthony Buono and Bernard Greene worked closely with the petitioners to reshape the article into a version the Board could support.

Their draft included:

- Removing earlier more restrictive language (e.g., ending fingerprinting, blanket UASI prohibitions).
- Shifting focus to a study and review process rather than immediate policy changes.
- Assigning that review to PCAC (Police Community Advisory Committee) with:
    - Immigration-law experts
    - Community representation
    - Evaluation of BRIC's practices, including:
        - Data sharing
        - Surveillance tools
        - Threat assessment programs
    - Examination of booking procedures, including:
        - Fingerprinting requirements
        - Detainee phone access
        - Whether the police can obtain advanced notice of ICE actions

Petitioners expressed strong support for this direction.

Member Buono noted they are close to a consensus with the petitioners.

Susan Granoff, Advisory Committee member, spoke in support of reviewing the Select Board's revisions, and noted support for a study committee on this Article.

Town Administrator Carey noted the tasks that were assigned to various public safety, related commission members, and staff which will result in some time constraints, and sought consideration of timing to allow those tasks to be completed should a referral be approved by Town Meeting.

Marty Rosenthal, resident, inquired about the referral motion he proposed for Article 25. Rosenthal added some parts of the article require improvement.

There was no vote.

5. **General discussion of Warrant articles and amendments related to transparency, responsiveness, and community input**

Member Rubenstein reflected on the growing number of warrant articles centered on transparency and accountability, noting that this signaled broader community frustration and a need for more proactive engagement. Adding, that trust in government is being strained nationally and locally, and that many articles this season, such as those addressing public records, data sharing, or police protocols, stem from residents feeling unheard or unsure about how decisions are made.

Board members agreed. They emphasized that the Board must take a stronger leadership role in communicating priorities, collaborating earlier with Town Meeting Members, and ensuring residents understand why certain processes work the way they do. To address this, the Board discussed concrete ways to improve public access and input. Ideas included Select Board office hours, precinct-level conversations led by individual Board members, and early-season workshops where residents can share ideas before drafting warrant articles.

Members also proposed incorporating structured community-input practices into their summer retreat and long-term roadmap.

Throughout the discussion, they emphasized the value of replacing reactive, last-minute conflict with more consistent, transparent, and accessible communication channels.

6. **Policy Against Fraudulent Conduct**

16a. Review and possible vote regarding revisions to the Town's Policy Against Fraudulent Conduct.

Administrator Carey reviewed that this policy was crafted in 2011, and has been the subject of concern as part of a dispute between Select Board members and the Advisory Committee about an investigation that happened involving Advisory Committee members as well as a Transportation Board member.

That investigation had been initiated under the authority of the Fraudulent Conduct Policy, which led some Advisory Committee members to express concern that executive-branch investigation powers could be used inappropriately in situations involving members of the legislative branch.

The Board acknowledged these concerns and agreed the policy, originally adopted in 2011, should be reevaluated to ensure it protects both the Town's interests and legislative independence.

Town Administrator Carey recommended a careful and methodical review rather than rushed edits, particularly because the policy is cited as an internal control measure in external audits and affects the Town's financial integrity assessments. The Board agreed and unanimously directed staff to prepare a revised version of the policy that:

1. clarifies boundaries between executive and legislative oversight;
2. preserves the Advisory Committee's investigatory role; and
3. maintains compliance with financial and ethical standards.
4. Staff will consult appropriate experts

On motion, it was,

Voted to ask staff, led by the Town Administrator's discretion, to formulate a modified policy to the current policy against fraudulent conduct.

Aye: David Pearlman, Bernard Greene, Michael Rubenstein, Amanda Zimmerman
Abstained: Anthony Buono

Public comment: Reginia Frawley, (Town Meeting member Precent 16) noted surprise that the State Ethics Commission was not consulted before the board taking a vote on stipends, Article 23.

There being no further business, the Chair ended the meeting at 11:05 PM.
ATTEST