

BROOKLINE TOWN MEETING

NEWSLETTER: Fall 2025 Town Meeting Highlights

by **Jesse Hefter** (Town Meeting Member - Precinct 14)
November 21, 2025

Our Fall Town Meeting occurred over two (2) nights in November 2025. There are various [files on our town's website](#) related to this Meeting, but you need to be a dedicated analyst to review all the information spread across multiple documents and supplements.

Accordingly, this Newsletter aims to provide you with the high-level results of what was discussed and how your elected representatives voted overall (the Town website has published a [master file](#) with how each Town Meeting Member voted if you wish to see the nitty-gritty details). The Warrant Articles are presented in the order in which Town Meeting discussed them; certain non-voted and procedural articles are not included in this Newsletter.

If you are interested in which articles from our Spring 2025 meeting have been reviewed and either approved or are still being reviewed by the State Attorney General's Office, please see the following [Newsletter](#).

Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreements (Article 2)

Approved (Yes-236; No-2; Abstain-3)

WA 2 presents a ratified 3-year agreement between the Town of Brookline and the Fire Fighter's Union Local 950 for funding that, among other things, increases wages [2% in FY25/2% in FY26/1.5% in FY27], creates a weekend differential incentive pay [2%], and adds 5- and 10-year Step Increases [3% each]. The Agreement also increases Education Incentive pay amounts. The full roll-out cost to the Town is \$4.83 million over three years.

FY26 Budget Amendment (Article 3)

Approved (Yes-240; No-0; Abstain-3)

Two amendments to the FY2026 budget were proposed: 1) Appropriate annual revenue from the State assessment on transportation network companies (TNC), such as Lyft and Uber, to fund transportation projects, and 2) adjust the debt and interest portion of the

budget. Ride share revenue is identified by the Commonwealth each year and is specifically appropriated for Transportation Board-approved projects. Thus, this Article asked Town Meeting to appropriate a total of \$180,085.50 to 1) subsidize transportation programs for Brookline Seniors and for Brookline Teens, and 2) increase funds for pavement markings on Brookline streets and for the flex posts that delineate bike lanes. Further, approval of Article 3 reduced the FY26 budget to reflect lower than anticipated borrowing costs. Finally, this Article increased the Golf Enterprise Fund appropriation to reflect changes in the structure of Golf Enterprise Fund debt (an increase of about \$47K).

Continue work on creating an on-line Town By-Law infrastructure (Article 4)

Approved (Yes-239; No-1; Abstain-3)

At no cost to the Town, this Article further supports efforts in the office of the Town Clerk to provide consistent style to the Town's General By-laws, correct for changes in the names of various boards, committees and commissions, and otherwise make non-substantive changes to the General By-law, as the final step in completing the Town's By-law update project.

Amend the Zoning By-Law to comply with a state exception for Family Child Care Homes and Large Family Child Care Homes (Article 6)

Approved (Yes-240; No-2; Abstain-67)

The Dover Amendment, a Massachusetts law (G.L. c. 40A, § 3), exempts certain land uses —religious, educational, agricultural, and childcare — from many local zoning restrictions. This Article proposes amending Article IV of the Town Zoning By-Law to align with recent changes to the Dover Amendment that now require family child care homes and large family child care homes be recognized as allowable accessory uses in all zoning districts.

Create a Clark Road Multi-Family Zoning Overlay District (Article 7)

Approved (Yes-238; No-1; Abstain-6)

Modify the Zoning By-law to create the Clark Road Multifamily Overlay District which permits the redevelopment of the former Maimonides school building at 2 Clark Road into multifamily housing with 35 units guaranteeing 5 onsite affordable units for renters with income below 50% of the AMI (Adjusted Median Income), sets an application deadline of

April 19, 2027 to use the multifamily zoning for these apartments, and provides a maximum of 35 parking spaces, preserves and protects existing onsite trees, preserves a public walkway from Clark Rd. to Philbrick Rd. along with continued use of the play area located on the parcel, and retains a 10,000 square foot adjoining lot on Philbrick Rd to be zoned at a later date.

Create a new By-law to address nuisance lighting (Article 8)

Motion for referral-Approved (Yes-145; No-96; Abstain-4)

This Article proposes a new, general by-law to regulate excessive outdoor nighttime lighting and glare that originate from private residential properties in Residence Districts.. The by-law would be enforced by the Building Commissioner upon receipt of complaints from “neighbors”, defined as parties-in-interest. Due to broad, significant concerns about the differing opinions of the legality of this proposal, how such illumination issues would be measured, and how the proposed By-law could be reasonably enforced, an alternative proposal was made to refer this Article to a Moderator’s Committee for additional work.

Develop a Renter’s Handbook (Article 9)

Approved (Yes-230; No-4; Abstain-4)

Article 9 creates a by-law requiring that the Town’s Office of Housing Stability, in conjunction with other Town Departments, create a Renter’s Handbook that acts as a comprehensive informational resource for Brookline tenants. Such a document enhances tenant rights and makes essential information available to renters, both generally and in particular when a tenant is facing eviction proceedings.

Name a Warren Field baseball diamond “Campagna Diamond” (Article 10)

Approved (Yes-226; No-0; Abstain-5)

Town Meeting was asked to consider naming the baseball diamond at the northwestern corner of Warren Field to honor one of Brookline’s coaching legends, Brookline’s Joseph Campagna. Mr. Campagna served as the varsity Head Coach at Brookline High School and BHS Assistant Athletic Director for nearly thirty (30) years. The School Committee, Select Board, Naming Committee, and Advisory Committee unanimously approved this proposal. The installation of a plaque at the field will be privately funded.

Amend the Town By-Law to allow Advisory Committee members to serve on boards and committees related to the construction or reconstruction of specific Town buildings or properties (Article 11)

Amend a Town By-Law to clarify standing board and expenditure control language relative to Advisory Committee appointments (Article 12)

Motion to Refer - Approved (Yes-229; No-1; Abstain-6)

These two articles refer to solving an interpretation of an existing Town By-Law (Section 2.2.1 (B)) that would prevent Advisory Committee members from serving on standing boards or committees that have control of the expenditure of money. Advisory Committee members possess in-depth knowledge of Town finances and, in general, municipal finance. As experts in their professional fields, they bring valuable expertise and insights to the committees on which they serve. Significant public scrutiny of board and committee activities provide safeguards that Advisory Committee members will not act in ways that are self-dealing or a conflict of interest. The Advisory Committee and the Committee on Town Organization and Structure (CTOS) recommends that the CTOS further study and report on this matter at a later date. Town Meeting voted to refer the subject matter of the Articles to the CTOS for further study, while also recommending that the impacted appointees retain their current seats.

Resolution to consider the needs of senior adults when considering the use of the Fisher Hill property (Article 13)

Approved (Yes-231; No-1; Abstain-4)

As ideas are offered and plans are made for the future use of the Fisher Hill West property (currently serving as swing space for the Pierce school during construction of the new building at School and Harvard streets), this resolution requests that the needs of older adults be considered. The current Senior Center is out-of-space for serving the 20% (and growing) population of senior adults in Brookline. Members of the Council on Aging advocate for more opportunities for senior adults to socialize to prevent isolation, enjoy recreation and wellness activities, and participate in educational programs.

Resolution regarding contact information for public officials (Article 14)

Approved (Yes-234; No-1; Abstain-4)

This Resolution requests that the names and contact information of all elected officials, including Town Constables, be made clearly available to the public, ideally via the Town of Brookline website.

Resolution regarding the celebration of LGBTQIA+ Pride Month (Article 15)

Approved (Yes-222; No-3; Abstain-12)

This Resolution requests that Brookline recognize LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in June and History Month in October of each year, along with several other days of celebration for the LGBTQIA+ community. The latter days include International Transgender Day of Visibility (March 31), the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (May 17), the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots (June 28), and the Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20).

Resolution regarding bringing a WNBA basketball team to Boston (Article 16)

Approved (Yes-213; No-0; Abstain-19)

This Resolution asks that Brookline support the notion of the WNBA bringing a franchise to Boston. The presence of a professional women's sports team in our area can provide positive role models to young women and girls in particular, and to young men and boys in general who are residents of the greater Boston area.

Resolution regarding tree preservation practices (Article 17)

Approved (Yes-225; No-8; Abstain-10)

The proposal in this Resolution aims to close a gap in Brookline's municipal tree protection framework by urging the Select Board or its designee to ensure that internal processes are in place to protect trees on public property such as parks, playgrounds, and other open

spaces. Clear procedures for arborist reviews, public hearings, public notice, mitigation, and annual reporting are some of the elements that should be applied to municipal tree preservation to align with similar processes already in place for trees on privately-owned residential properties.

Resolution regarding recordings of public meetings (Article 18)

Approved (Yes-233; No-1; Abstain-7)

Brookline Interactive Group (BIG) is the local media organization that supports the recordings of many municipal meetings of Boards, Committees, and Commissions. This Resolution requests that recordings of meetings be uploaded to the Town's Civic Clerk software platform in a timely manner. Our Town places an emphasis on accessible and user-friendly public meeting records to ensure transparency, increase community engagement, and community participation.

Resolution urging Brookline Town Meeting to express its opposition to the continued presidency of Donald J. Trump (Article 19)

Approved (Yes-141; No-27; Abstain-20) - the vote was a count, not recorded by name of the voter

Adopt a resolution expressing Town Meeting's concern regarding the dangers presented by the leadership of President Donald J. Trump, and also stating that his words and actions render him unfit for office. The goal of this resolution is to affirm Brookline's civic conscience and commitment to democratic principles in a moment of national crisis.

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