

ARTICLE 24

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Submitted by: Arthur Wellington Conquest III, TMM6

To see if the Town will amend the General by-laws to provide for a citizen complaint procedure as follows (the amended language is in bold):

ARTICLE 3.14 COMMISSION FOR DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS SECTION 3.14.1 ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE

This By-law establishes the Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (“Commission” or “CDICR”) and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (“Office” or “ODICR”). Valuing diversity and inclusion in and for the Brookline community, the Commission, in coordination with the Office, aims to support a welcoming environment by encouraging cooperation, tolerance, and respect among and by all persons who come in contact with the Town of Brookline (“Town”), including residents, visitors, persons passing through the Town, employers, employees, and job applicants, and by advancing, promoting and advocating for the human and civil rights of all through education, awareness, outreach and advocacy. The Purpose of the Commission and the goal of the Town shall be to strive for a community characterized by the values of inclusion. The Town believes that inclusion will provide opportunities and incentives to all who touch Brookline to offer their energy, creativity, knowledge, and experiences to the community and to all civic engagements, including town government; and that inclusion is, therefore, a critically important government interest of the Town. Inclusion is defined as actively pursuing goals of including, integrating, engaging, and welcoming into the community all persons who come in contact with the Town regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, military or veteran status, genetic information, marital status, receipt of public benefits (including housing subsidies), or family status (e.g. because one has or doesn't have children) (herein, “Brookline Protected Classes”). In striving to achieve the goal of inclusion, the Commission shall be guided by the following general principles: (1) the foundation of community is strong and positive community relations among and between all groups and individuals in the community, regardless of their membership in a Brookline Protected Class; (2) the substance of community is the recognition of human rights principles as applicable to all persons who come in contact with the Town; (3) justice in a community requires, at a minimum, monitoring and enforcing civil rights laws as they apply to all persons who come in contact with the Town; and (4) the commitment of the Town to these principles requires vigorous affirmative steps to carry out the word and spirit of the foregoing. The Commission shall consist of fifteen (15) residents of the Town, who shall be called Commissioners. Commissioners shall be appointed by the Select Board and shall hold office for a period of not more than three (3) years with terms of office expiring on August 31 of an appropriate year in a staggered manner so that approximately

one-third (1/3) of the terms of the Commissioners will expire each year. A Commissioner whose term is expiring is expected to submit their renewal application to the Select Board not later than August 1 of the expiration year. The term of a Commissioner who does not submit a renewal application in a timely manner shall expire on August 31 of that year. The term of a Commissioner who submits a timely renewal application shall then be extended until notified by the Town Administrator that the renewal application has been acted upon. If the application is denied, the term of that Commissioner shall expire five days after the date of the denial letter. If the application is approved, the term shall expire on August 31 of the year specified in the approval letter. The Select Board may appoint additional non-voting associate members (Section 3.1.5) as it determines to be necessary, which may include youth or persons who do not reside in Brookline but have a substantial connection to Brookline or to the Brookline Public Schools. The Select Board shall select one of its members to serve ex officio as a nonvoting member of the Commission. A quorum of the Commission shall consist of a majority of the serving members on the Commission, with a minimum of six. The Select Board shall seek a diverse and inclusive group of candidates for the Commission, which may include youth. Candidates for Commissioner shall be qualified for such appointment by virtue of demonstrated relevant and significant knowledge, life experience, or training. The composition of the Commission shall include persons with the types of such knowledge, experience, or training necessary to enable the Commission to perform the duties assigned to it by this By-law. All Commissioners shall serve without compensation. In the event of discontinuance of the service of a Commissioner due to death or resignation, such Commissioner's successor shall be appointed to serve the unexpired period of the term of said Commissioner. The Commission may recommend to the Select Board candidates to fill such vacancies.

SECTION 3.14.2 APPOINTMENT, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

There shall be an Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations ("Office"), which shall be a unit of the Select Board's Office, and led by a professional in the field of human relations or similar relevant field of knowledge, who shall be known as the Director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations ("Director"), and that person shall also serve as the Chief Diversity Officer ("CDO") for the Town. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Director, the Town Administrator, after consultation with the Commission, shall recommend to the Select Board a replacement with appropriate qualifications. The Director shall offer professional and administrative support to the Commission in the administration of its functions and policies under this By-law or any other Bylaw giving the Commission responsibilities. If needed, the Director shall ask for additional assistance to carry out the Director's duties. The Office shall be physically situated in whatever department the Town Administrator determines would most easily provide the Director any such assistance. The Director shall be a Department Head/Senior Administrator and shall report to the Town Administrator. The Director/CDO may bring a matter directly to the attention of the Select Board in the event that person believes, in their professional judgment, that a particular situation so warrants. The CDO work with the Human Resources Office to promote diversity and inclusion. The CDO shall serve in the role of ombudsperson to provide information and

guidance and dispute resolution services to all persons who come in contact with the Town who feel that they have been discriminated against or treated unfairly due to their membership in a Brookline Protected Class, or in relation to Fair Housing or Contracting issues, interactions with businesses or institutions in the Town, or interactions with the Town and/or employees of the Town. The CDO shall be responsible, with the advice and counsel of the Commission, the Human Resources Director, and the Human Resources Board, for the preparation and submission to the Select Board of a recommended diversity and inclusion policy for the Town, including equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, and recommended implementation procedures. The diversity and inclusion policy shall address hiring, retention and promotion, and steps to ensure a work environment that is friendly to diversity and inclusion. The CDO shall respect the rights to privacy and confidentiality of all individuals to the fullest extent required by law. The CDO may attempt to mediate disputes/complaints and/or to refer such complainants to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Town Counsel, or such other body as the CDO deems appropriate. The Director/CDO shall report on these incidents to the Commission in terms of issues and trends but shall show full respect for the rights to privacy and confidentiality of the individuals involved to the fullest extent required by law. In the event that a person who comes in contact with the Town, except for employees of the Town, chooses to bring a complaint to the Commission after seeking the services of the CDO in said officer's role as an ombudsperson, the Director/CDO may discuss the case in general terms with the Commission (see Section 3.14.3(A)(v)). The CDO shall also serve as an ombudsperson for employees of the Town if they feel they have been discriminated against or treated unfairly on the basis of membership in a Brookline Protected Class. The CDO may attempt to mediate such disputes or refer such employees to the Human Resources Office, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, their union representative, and/or such other body that the CDO deems appropriate. The Director/CDO shall hold all such Town employee matters in confidence and shall respect the privacy rights of any such individuals but may discuss with the Commission, in general terms, the problems or issues that such individual cases, provided, however, doing so does not violate any person's rights to privacy.

SECTION 3.14.3 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

(A) To implement the Mission of the Commission and the Office, the Commission, with the assistance of the Director and the Director's staff, shall have the following responsibilities:

(i) Strive to eliminate discriminatory barriers to jobs, education, and housing opportunities within the Town and work to increase the capacity of public and private institutions to respond to discrimination against individuals in the Town based on their membership in a Brookline Protected Class;

(ii) Enhance communications across and among the community to promote awareness, understanding and the value of cultural differences, and create common ground for efforts toward public order and social justice;

(iii) Work with the Select Board, the Town's Human Resources Office, the School Committee, and other Town departments, commissions, boards, and committees to develop commitments and meaningful steps to increase diversity and inclusion, and awareness of and sensitivity to civil and human rights in all departments and agencies of Town government;

(iv) Provide advice and counsel to the CDO on the preparation of a diversity and inclusion policy for recommendation to the Select Board, including equal employment opportunity and affirmative action procedures, or amendments or revisions thereto; and make suggestions, through the CDO to the Human Resources Director, the Human Resources Board, and the School Committee on the implementation of the diversity and inclusion policy;

(v) Receive Complaints Against the Town, directly or through the CDO, against the Town, its employees, agencies, or officials concerning allegations of discrimination or bias from all persons who come in contact with the Town, except Town employees (see Section 3.14.2), and after notifying the Town Administrator, ~~review and summarize the complaint and issues of concern to the Commission, without investigating or making determinations of fact, or drawing any legal conclusions, concerning allegations of discrimination or bias against a member of a Brookline Protected Class, by any Town agency, Town official or employee.~~ the Commission shall (1) investigate the complaint by interviewing the complainant and any witnesses, (2) prepare written findings, and (3) recommend appropriate action to the Select Board, Library Trustees or Moderator as appropriate within 90 days of receipt of the complaint. The Commission/CDO, may in addition ~~(1) present its summary and concerns to the Town Administrator and the Select Board for consideration of further action and/or (2) provide the complainant with information on complainant's options to bring proceedings at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or other appropriate federal, state, or local agencies.~~ This By-law does not preclude any complainant from alternatively or additionally using other complaint procedures, such as the Police Department's Citizen Complaint Procedure or the Human Resources Office's procedures;

(vi) Receive Complaints Against the Public Schools of Brookline, directly or through the CDO, against the Public Schools of Brookline, its employees, agencies, or officials concerning allegations of discrimination or bias from all persons who come in contact with the Schools, except school employees, and, after notifying the Superintendent of Schools, the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, and/or the School Committee of the complaint, ~~review and summarize the complaint and any issues of concern to the Commission, without investigating or making determinations of fact or drawing any legal conclusions, concerning allegations of discrimination or bias against a member of a Brookline Protected Class, by any School official or employee.~~ the Commission shall (1) investigate the complaint by interviewing the complainant and any witnesses, (2) prepare written findings, and (3) recommend appropriate action to the Superintendent and/or School Committee as appropriate within 90 days of receipt of the complaint. The Commission/CDO, may in addition ~~(1) present its summary and concerns to the School Superintendent and/or the School Committee for consideration of further~~

~~action and/or (2) provide the complainant with information on complainant's options regarding dispute resolution and the boards, agencies, or courts to which the complainant may file a complaint. The Public Schools of Brookline are encouraged to engage the expertise and/or resources of the CDO/Commission when pursuing resolution of any such complaints and/or when revising policies and procedures relative to diversity and inclusion.~~

~~(vii) Receive Other Complaints; according to procedures developed by the Commission and as approved by the Select Board, and initiate preliminary review of the facts, without drawing any legal conclusions, from any person who comes in contact with the Town, concerning allegations of discrimination or bias against a member of a Brookline Protected Class. The Commission shall also have the authority, in its discretion, to take one or more of the following actions: (1) Provide the complainant with information about complainant's options to bring proceedings at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or other appropriate federal, state, or local agency; (2) Refer the complainant and any other parties to the complaint to the CDO acting as ombudsperson or to a local or regional mediation service; (3) Present any results of preliminary review of the alleged facts to the Town Administrator and/or the Select Board, in an appropriate case, for action;~~

(viii) The Commission shall develop, to the extent permissible by law, a log for the complaints referred to in subsections (v), (vi) ~~and (vii)~~ above, provided that such publication contains public record information only and does not violate anyone's right to privacy, and the Commission shall compile and maintain statistical records regarding the nature of complaints, types of incidents, number and types of complaints, and other pertinent information, without identifying specific individuals, and include such information in the annual report filed with the Board pursuant to Section 3.14.6 of this By-law.

~~(viii)~~ Develop official forms for the filing of complaints under paragraphs (v) and (vi) above and also procedures for the receipt of such complaints and follow-up by the Commission to the extent not inconsistent with the procedures set forth in paragraphs (v) and (vi);

(ix) Carry out the responsibilities and duties given to the Commission by rules or regulations, if any, promulgated under Section 3.14.4 of this Bylaw in relation to its Fair Housing responsibilities, as authorized by law, under Bylaw 5.5;

(xi) With respect to any complaints or patterns of complaints involving the civil or human rights of any persons who come in contact with the Town, work with the CDO, in such officer's role as ombudsperson, to facilitate changes that will reduce and eliminate violations of rights;

(xii) Institute and assist in the development of educational programs to further community relations and understanding among all persons in the Town, including Town employees;

(xiii) Serve as an advocate for youth on issues arising in the schools and the community, concerning diversity and inclusion, and encourage public and private agencies to respond to those youth needs.

(B) To carry out the foregoing responsibilities, the Commission is authorized to work with community organizations, government and nonprofit agencies, educational institutions, persons with relevant expertise, and others to:

(i) Develop educational programs and campaigns to increase awareness of human and civil rights, advance diversity and inclusion, eliminate discrimination, and ensure that the human and civil rights of all persons are protected and assist in the development of educational programs to further community relations and understanding among all people, including employees of all departments and agencies within the Town;

(ii) Conduct or receive research in the field of human relations and issue reports and publications on its findings or, where appropriate, submit local or state-wide proposed legislation, after approval by the Select Board and review by Town Counsel, to further human and civil rights of all persons who come in contact with the Town, provided that the Commission shall evaluate all such research conducted or received for its relevance and validity and for its openness to diverse viewpoints and perspectives;

(iii) Receive and review information on trends and developments in youth research, services, and programs, both generally and as they relate to youth who are members of a Brookline Protected Class, and consider the applicability of such research, services, or programs to Brookline, provided that the Commission shall evaluate all such research conducted or received for its relevance and validity and for its openness to diverse viewpoints and perspectives;

(iv) Do anything else deemed appropriate in the furtherance of its general duties and that are not inconsistent with its Mission, the State Constitution and laws, or the Town By-laws.

(C) At least every two years, prepare written organizational goals for the Commission ("Commission's Goals") that are (i) specific, (ii) measurable, (iii) attainable with the resources and personnel of the Commission, (iv) relevant to the mission of the Commission, (v) designated as either short term or long term, and (vi) capable of being evaluated on a continuing basis and at the next goal setting point. The Commission's Goals shall be submitted to the Select Board at a public meeting and posted on the Town's website. The Commission shall receive and consider the comments of the Select Board at the public meeting and shall also receive and consider written comments from the community on the Commission's Goals.

SECTION 3.14.4 RULES AND REGULATIONS

In order to carry out the purposes and provisions of this By-law, the Commission, with the approval of the Select Board, after review by the Town Counsel, shall adopt procedural rules and regulations as necessary to guide it in carrying out its responsibilities. Such rules and regulations shall require that actions by the Commission

be taken by a quorum or larger vote of the Commissioners and shall include procedures for holding regular public meetings, including at least one public hearing annually to apprise the public on the status of civil rights, diversity, inclusion and community relations in the Town and to hear the concerns of the public on those issues. The Commission may also establish procedures and rules and regulations to carry out its responsibilities with respect to Fair Housing, with the approval of the Select Board, after review by Town Counsel. Such rules and regulations may further provide for the governance of the Commission with respect to matters such as the appointments of committees as necessary to deal with specific community issues or concerns.

SECTION 3.14.5 INFORMATION, COOPERATION, AND DIALOGUE

The Commission shall notify the Town Administrator of all complaints it records. In the event that such complaints fall within the purview of the Superintendent of Schools, the Superintendent shall also be notified. All departments and agencies in the Town shall cooperate fully with the Commission's reasonable requests for information concerning such complaints and when appropriate engage with the Commission in a dialogue on them. All such requests and dialogue shall respect and protect, to the fullest extent possible, the privacy of all involved and shall comply with all local, state and federal laws. The Director of Human Resources shall annually present a report to the Commission concerning the Town's statistics on employment diversity in Town departments and staff, as well as the efforts of the Town to increase the employment diversity of Town departments and staff. The School Superintendent and the Library Director, or their designees, shall annually provide a report to the Commission on their statistics on employment diversity, including but not limited to the most recently completed EEO-5 form. The Police Chief shall annually present a report to the Commission on other police matters that touch on the Commission's mission. The Commission may respond to such reports through dialogue and/or through written reports; and all Town departments, including the Brookline Public Schools, are encouraged to cooperate with the Commission as it reasonably requests.

SECTION 3.14.6 REPORT

With the assistance of the Director, the Commission shall submit an annual report to the Select Board, the School Committee, and the Board of Library Trustees, detailing its activities and the results thereof. This report shall include (i) a review of the implementation of the diversity and inclusion policy by the Town, (ii) the Commission's Goals and a report on the extent to which the goals have been achieved to that point, (iii) a review of reports received by the Commission from the Director of Human Resources, the School Superintendent, the Library Director, and other Town departments or agencies, (iv) a narrative discussion of any impediments to the implementation and achievement of the Commission's Goals and its diversity and inclusion policy, and (v) recommendations of ways that such impediments could be removed. A synopsis of such report shall be published as part of the Annual Report of the Town.

SECTION 3.14.7 FIVE YEAR REVIEW

Beginning no later than July 1, 2019 and at least every five years thereafter, the Commission shall review this Bylaw and any other related Town by-laws, in consultation with other pertinent departments, and propose changes if necessary, by preparation of

appropriate Warrant Articles for consideration by Town Meeting. The Commission shall prepare a written report summarizing its review and proposing any changes no later than February 1, 2020.

PETITIONER'S ARTICLE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this article is to have the Town of Brookline take responsibility for rectifying racial discrimination (and other discrimination) complaints by requiring a Town board to investigate such complaints and make written findings as to their merit and to recommend appropriate actions to resolve such complaints. The existing procedures do not go far enough in ameliorating the complaints and concerns of people who feel they have been disrespected and aggrieved.

SELECT BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION

ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

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