

Brookline PAX News

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Co-editors: Marty Rosenthal & Neil Gordon

April, 2019

<http://www.brooklinepax.org>

Brookline PAX 2019 Annual Meeting & Awards

Sunday, June 9, 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM

Community Room, Brookline Public Safety Building, 350 Washington Street

Admission: A voluntary donation to the Brookline Emergency Food Pantry (nonperishable food or personal care items)

Keynote Speaker: State Rep. Nika Elugardo (15th Suffolk) Representing Brookline's Precinct 5

Rep. Elugardo's career began at the National Consumer Law Center in Boston. She later became founding Director of MassSaves, an economic justice collaborative. She earned her B.S. in Urban Planning from MIT, an MPP from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and a J.D. from Boston University Law School.



Annual PAX Community Awards

Jack Backman & Frank Farlow Social Justice Award: JALSA

Ethel Halperin Lifetime Achievement Award; BROOKLINE GREEN CAUCUS

Ethel & Ben Alper Progressive Activism Award: LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

PAX Board

Neil Gordon, PAX Secretary, Town Meeting Member Precinct 1, Constable

Where will you find PAX board members? Pretty much all over our local government. The PAX board includes a current and two former Brookline State Representatives, a current and two former members of the Select Board, half of Brookline's Library Trustees, four members of the Advisory Committee, twenty-eight Town Meeting Members, three current and former members of the Diversity Commission, and many more members of Brookline boards, committees and commissions. (Excuse the double counting, but many of our board members are multi-tasking.)

Officers & Board Members

CHAIR: Martin Rosenthal SECRETARY: Neil Gordon

TREASURER: Gary Jones ASSISTANT TREASURER: Judith Vanderkay

Catherine Anderson
John Bassett
Craig Bolon
Edith Brickman
Michael Burstein
John Businger
Abram Chipman
Susan Chipman
Susan Ellis
Andrew Fischer
Phyllis Giller

Jane Gilman
Koinonia Givens
Rachel Goodman
Susan Granoff
John Harris
Paul Harris
Regina Healy
Nancy Heller
Chobee Hoy
Gilbert Hoy

Julia Johnson
David Klafter
Bobbie Knable
Virginia LaPlante
Mark Levy
Harry Margolis
Rebecca Mautner
Rita McNally
Puja Mehta
Bob Miller

Tony Naro
Frank Smizik
Diana Spiegel
Stanley Spiegel
Charles Terrell
Dwaign Tyndal
Kea van der Ziel
Tommy Vitolo
Donald Weitzman
Sarah Wunsch

May 2019 Town Meeting Preview

Neil Gordon

In addition to the usual housekeeping warrant articles and the (not insignificant) fiscal 2020 budget, the Annual May Town Meeting will take up a host of legislation of particular interest to Brookline PAX.

There is a series of important diversity articles, including adding a member of the Diversity Commission to the Town, Naming Committee, funding a significant race and equity study across Town departments, improving the diversity of Town Meeting, and more.

In the area of public safety, Town Meeting Members will be voting on traffic calming measures, bicycle infrastructure improvements and a number of pedestrian friendly articles.

“Green” articles include funding of energy conservation projects, improved energy management systems, a shift to more climate friendly electricity and a plan by Jesse Gray to convert the Town’s vehicles from fossil fuel based to electric, where practicable.

Passing progressive legislation requires progressive voters. Please vote for PAX endorsed candidates on May 7th..



Brookline Diversity Commission

The Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (CDICR) works to support a welcoming environment by advancing, promoting and advocating for the human and civil rights of all persons who come in contact with the Town of Brookline, including residents, visitors, persons passing through the Town, employers, employees, and job applicants through education, awareness, outreach and advocacy.

The CDICR accomplishes most of its

work through its four committees:

- Outreach and Education;
- Employment Diversity;
- Fair Housing;
- Complaint Screening.

At the urging, and with the support, of Brookline PAX, the Diversity Commission now holds public hearings, makes recommendations, and, accordingly, speaks to applicable warrant articles at Town Meeting.

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Electric vehicles: practical and cost-effective

Jesse Gray, TMM Pct. 10, PAX Endorsed for May 7th, co-sponsor of TM art. 23

Brookline's been in the forefront of the struggle to reorient the USA to combat the climate crisis. The single most important thing many of us can do to reduce our carbon footprint is to trade in a gas or hybrid car for a fully Electric Vehicle (EV). Today's Eves can go 300 miles on the energy equivalent of 2 gallons of gas, with a corresponding decrease in CO2 emissions of *at least* 60% (more if you opt-up to 100% green electricity at <https://brooklineoptup.com/>)!

Thanks to rapid technological progress and innovation, owning an EV is now practical and cost-effective. EVs have very few moving parts and therefore are dramatically less expensive to maintain, making them cost savers even when they cost more to purchase upfront. 90% of EV owners say they will never go back to gasoline. EVs are also usually more fun to drive. They can be pre-warmed in a closed garage, without killing anyone! A plug is almost always closer than a gas station. Your car can be fully fueled every time you leave your home.

EVs are even practical if you are a "garage orphan" renting your spot. Later this year, Beacon Street will have 23 EV chargers, including three rapid chargers that will fill an EV battery to 80% in 30 to 60 minutes.

At this moment, the Tesla Model 3 can be obtained for less than \$31,000, after available federal and state incentives. For non-Teslas, the DriveGreen program ([https:// tinyurl.com/y573h2on](https://tinyurl.com/y573h2on)) is a great way to find the best deals.

To learn more or take an informal test drive in an EV owned by a Brookline resident, email jesse.gray@gmail.com.

**QUESTION 1 PASSES on MAY 7, 2019...
then in September, 2022:**

New Baldwin School

27 new classrooms, 450 students



New Driscoll School

10 new classrooms, 200 more students



YES  **for Brookline**

Chair's column: 57 years & still ticking!

Marty Rosenthal

Still mourning our and Brookline's loss of former Co-Chair Frank Farlow (as in our newly named Backman-Farlow Social Justice Award), we've experienced yet another hyperactive—and of course controversial—year. Our nation confronts chaos (and worse); but for nearly 6 decades, we've also not just advocated, but also organized (and recruited and mobilized)—mindful of Harry Belafonte's 2016 insight about civil-rights activists' lack of organized responses, “we have a struggle, but not a movement.”

Starting with last Mays town election, we did our usual hard work, starting with the contested Select Board race, where Bernard Greene & Nancy Heller were both re-elected, again keeping a 100% PAX-endorsed Board. Two of the three PAX-endorsed challengers for School Committee, Jennifer Monopoli & David Pearlman, were elected in another hard-fought campaign, as we kept seeking more community-attuned school leadership—as we have since 2016.

Brookline's voters also OK'd both an override (for underfunded essential services) and a debt exclusion (for a long-overdue BHS expansion).

Yes, our property taxes can be a burden, a burden we're trying hard to alleviate, especially for seniors. But those taxes are also a necessity if we hope to maintain first-class town services.

Our schools, especially, are Brookline's heart and soul. Brookline's reputation for educational excellence attracts new residents and helps to fuel steadily rising real estate values, building up home equities for current homeowners.

Overall, PAX endorsed 80 candidates in May, 2018: 75 of them won! Our candidates took 12 of 13 town wide seats and 63 of 67 candidates for TM won!

Every year, our endorsement process is painstaking and thoughtful. Board members endorsement decisions are based on questionnaires, voting records, and community knowledge. As always, each board member brings his own judgment and priorities to bear in deciding which candidates will best promote PAX's values,

Every endorsement requires at least 60% of board members present to cast favorable votes

before a PAX endorsement is given.

Special thanks to Neil Gordon (formerly my Co-chair and now PAX Secretary), Gary Jones, and Diana Spiegel for organizing the candidate information for our Board meeting!

With a sizeable majority of Town Meeting Members being our endorsees, we accomplished much in Mays 2018 Town Meeting. For example, Brian Hochleutners budget amendment supporting natural grass at Cypress Field; an open process for renaming Devotion School; a Home Rule petition to increase the Senior Tax Circuit Breaker; publication of Living Wage exempt positions; a study of Town use of Military/Surveillance Equipment (initiated by Scott Ananian); the mandating of Sustainable Food Containers and Packaging; a resolution Honoring Brookline's WWI War Dead; and another supporting Global Efforts to Prevent Nuclear War, were all passed with PAX support.

In June we had a very well-attended Annual Meeting, welcoming some new Board Members and giving PAX Awards to Marty Farlow; retired Police Chief Dan O'Leary; and Brookline's Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations.

Lew Finfer, a relentless statewide organizer and leader for Raise Up MA, Jobs Not Jails, & MCAN (Mass. Communities Action Network), was the meetings keynote speaker.

For the Sept. primary election—and for November—we voted to endorse Jay Gonzalez for Governor, Josh Zakim for Secretary of State, Nick Carter for Governors Council, Cindy Creem for State Senate, and—after lengthy debate—PAX Board member Tommy Vitolo for State Representative (precincts 2-4, 6-13) to succeed former PAX chair, Frank Smizik. Brookline voters soundly supported all of them, but there are 350 other communities, and only Cindy & Tommy won.

For the November & December Town Meetings, we again had great success with our recommendations, e.g. a resolution to study restoring Olmsted Bridle Path on Beacon St. The most heated issue [see Aristotle below]—in and out of PAX—was Decembers debate to support Baldwin School as the newest prong of the Select Boards and School Committees proposed “3-Prong

Chair's Column continued

Plan” for ending school overcrowding. First, town meeting rejected an anti-Baldwin motion for further “study.” As we wrote to Town Meeting Members:

It comes down to “seeking the perfect would be the disgraceful enemy of the desperately/shamefully-needed good.” [We] focused primarily on horrific overcrowding that’s victimizing hundreds of our kids, including special needs kids, as well as many teachers, a pathetic stain that’s been intensely studied to...death (for about 11 lloongg years!), Including the hopeless fantasy of finding real additional space north of Route 9.... Its long past the time for real/concrete action, not more studies ([and] debates)—[and] delays.

We were gratified when 230 town meeting members present voted 162–58 (74%–26%) for Baldwin.

When, after Town Meeting, Newbury College came on the market, the anti-Baldwin folk started urging it as an alternative. As we say for May 7th, below, it is not!

Smack between Runkle & Heath, and near Lincoln, it’s not an improvement, nor is it readily or cheaply convertible to a K–8 elementary school. And of course, acquiring Newbury for this purpose is still little more than a wish.

PAX supports the Town acquiring the Newbury campus, but the overcrowding crisis is shameful, immediate, and ongoing! We need to vote YES on May 7th.

Almost finally, we recently lost two progressive stalwarts, Natalie Zuckerman, on the School

Committee 1974–1989; and Bob Stein, a selectman for 6 years—and a personal mentor for me, most recently as a colleague on Brookline’s Committee on Town Organization and Structure for about 2 decades.

To end on a lighter note, we commend Rob Daves and his teammates, including Tommy Vitolo, for arranging the purchasing, and unveiling on January 27th, of John Wilson’s magnificent bronze bust of Martin Luther King, Jr.

We in PAX don’t avoid controversy. Indeed, we see it as a badge of honor. To our occasional critics, I (often) cite Aristotle’s “Criticism is something we can avoid easily by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing.” That’s three things we can never be accused of. And, again, la lutte continue! See the article on the outside back page about the May 7 Town election and its crucial debt exclusion vote! And then watch for PAX recommendations for the May 21st Town Meeting.

Don’t forget! The June 9th, PAX Annual Meeting is coming soon. Please join us!

On Your May 7, 2019 Ballot

QUESTION 1

Shall the Town of Brookline be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to reconstruct and enlarge the existing school on the site of the Driscoll School property and to reconstruct and enlarge the existing school on the site of the Baldwin School property?

YES

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Send this coupon with a check payable to Brookline PAX to:
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- Regular: single \$30, family \$50
- Student or fixed income: single \$20, family \$30
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Name(s): _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

**ON MAY 7, 2019 BROOKLINE PAX
ENDORSES:**

For SELECT BOARD:
Raul FERNANDEZ

For LIBRARY TRUSTEE:

MICHAEL BURSTEIN, PUJA MEHTA,
JUDITH VANDERKAY, KOINONIA GIVENS

For SCHOOL COMMITTEE:
SHARON ABRAMOWITZ

For HOUSING AUTHORITY:
JOANNE SULLIVAN

For CONSTABLE:
JOE FIGLER, NEIL GORDON,
STANLEY RABINOWITZ, ERNIE FREY,
KRISTINE KNAUF

For TOWN MEETING Precinct 1:
ALEXANDRA E. METRAL, ROBERT L. SCHRAM,
CHARLES TERRELL, SUSAN HELMS DALEY,
ANTHONY ISHAK, 1-YEAR: DEBORAH BROWN



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Vote "YES" on **Question 1**
for Brookline's School Children

PAX Endorses Fernandez, Abramowitz, Sullivan, YES!

Frank Smizik, former PAX Chairperson

Brookline PAX (active since 1962) urges everyone to vote on May 7th. By super-majority votes, the PAX Board has endorsed

"YES" on QUESTION 1: Overcrowding from Brookline's schools 40% enrollment increase since 2006 has hurt all our kids, especially special needs students. Question 1 funds new space at both the Driscoll School and the former Baldwin School as part of a thoughtful "3-Prong Plan" including the Pierce School (currently awaiting state funding approval). In December, Town Meeting backed Driscoll and Baldwin by a 74% majority. Baldwin is the best available location for a new elementary school. (The School Committee has declared untenable the often-discussed Newbury College campus situated near both Heath and Runkle.) Brookline needs a "YES" vote now.

SELECT BOARD: RAUL FERNANDEZ is an Associate Dean for Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion at BU and a Brookline Town Meeting Member (TMM). An educator, activist, and organizer, he brings people together to create social change. Raul has made an impact working with Brookline for Racial Justice & Equity and creating the Coolidge Theatre's Wide Lens film series. He listens to the community and speaks truth to power. The Town would greatly benefit by giving more power to Raul's truth.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: SHARON ABRAMOWITZ, a Driscoll School and Brookline Early Education Program parent, is an anthropologist and global health advocate with two decades of community engagement, public policy research and advocacy. The School Committee has lost touch with the concerns of educators, parents, students and the community in ways that affect teaching and learning, including excessive reliance on testing to state imposed standards. Sharon understands and she's a proven advocate for inclusion, equity and community involvement. In 2 years we've elected 3 new School Committee members willing to challenge the status quo. Make Sharon #4!

HOUSING AUTHORITY: PAX knows 2-term-incumbent JOANNE SULLIVAN well as a former TMM and past PAX Treasurer. Moreover, as a Brookline Housing Authority commissioner she's proven her affordable housing expertise in many ways, including the BHA's successful 2016 addition of 32 new units on Dummer Street.

CONSTABLE: Incumbents JOE FIGLER, NEIL GORDON, and STANLEY RABINOVITZ, along with ERNIE FREY and KRISTINE KNAUF, have the necessary attitude, demeanor, and empathy to perform a constable's duties sensitively and effectively.