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Brookline PAX Recommendations Annual Town Meeting, May 22, 2018

Article 2, Collective Bargaining Agreements: **SUPPORT**
PAX recommends favorable action, and we reiterate our longstanding support for labor unions.

Article 6, Increase Property Tax Exemptions: **SUPPORT**
YES to this annual article to increase property tax exemptions for older and disabled residents, surviving spouses, and veterans.

Article 7, Budget (Special Appropriations):

#s 48 & 71 Plastic Turf at Cypress Field: SUPPORT likely Hochleutner amendment

PAX supports this amendment in support of natural grass at Cypress Field, opposing the converting of green space in the park and vicinity to plastic, and supporting a renovation using natural grass -- given the impact on the environment and the park's character, the many and diverse uses of the grass field by neighborhood families, the significantly greater capital cost of plastic turf, and the lack of comprehensive Town-wide fields planning.

44 Notice to A/C of Street Rehab. Items over \$100k: SUPPORT Select Board motion

YES on the Select Board's striking "and to the Capital Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee" from the requirements for notices about "changes to pedestrian, bicycle or motor vehicle traffic patterns or pavement marking." A/C subcommittees are not among the appropriate bodies designated in our bylaws, and do not have either a sufficient "management" role or necessarily/forever a sufficiently representative composition.

Article 15, Erosion and Sediment Control: **SUPPORT**
As more trees are cut down by the growing number of teardowns that are replaced by bigger buildings, water runoff has become a growing problem. Approval would allow the town an enforcement mechanism to control runoff and protect mature trees on private property.

Articles 17–22, Marijuana Zoning & Regulations: **SUPPORT**
We, like most Brookline voters, strongly favor ending the failed and harmful marijuana Prohibition. We commend Town officials for accepting that overdue seismic shift, and support the regulations; but our Board was divided on the controversy over sales in local commercial districts vs. restricted to the four general business districts.

Article 23, Renaming Devotion School: **SUPPORT**
Edward Devotion's principal contribution to the Town was his donation of wealth, including from sale of a slave. It is important that our children, and the community, be more unequivocally proud of the huge honor bestowed by the naming of a school..

Article 24, Land Bank: **SUPPORT REFERRAL**
We commend TMM-11 Lescohier, for initiating this proposal, raising an important issue; and we agree that it needs careful study. [We are not yet clear on the final motion(s).]

Article 25, Senior Tax Circuit Breaker: **SUPPORT**

This article, for a home rule petition, would authorize a Senior Circuit Breaker tax exemption, tax relief for seniors living in their own homes, seeking to increase the upper limit of the value of homes to qualify for exemptions in an effort to reflect the high cost of housing in Brookline.

Article 26, Exempt Some Senior Homeowners from Future Overrides: NO ACTION

While also very well-intentioned and raising some very important concerns, unlike Art. 25 this one has too many impediments, e.g., authorizing tax exemptions without considering need or other equities, and it providing relief for heirs who inherit property as well as seniors. (The PAX Board did not vote on a possible referral motion.)

Article 27, Publication of Living Wage Exempt Positions (resolution): SUPPORT

This article deals with exemptions to the town's living wage requirement, asking that the Town's annual Financial Plan include the staff positions that are exempt from the living wage. Originally filed as an amendment to the Living Wage By-Law, this warrant article has been amended into a resolution.

Article 28-30, Military Equipment/Surveillance: SUPPORT Rosenthal Referral Motion¹

We commend TMM-10 Ananian for raising some very important issues -- about both substance and process. While the articles clearly need refinement by a study, we abjure both the AC's brush off "no action" vote, and CTOS' (majority) referral motion. The latter (a) is both too general and too specific; (b) it, too, doesn't take the pertinent issues seriously enough; (c) it ignores the public hearings issue; and (d) it calls for a new committee which is both too ad hoc and too constrained. We hope the composition of the study committee will include the significant sector of the community that is concerned about these issues.

Article 31, Sustainable Food Containers and Packaging: SUPPORT

This builds upon the 2012 legislation intended to encourage sustainable packaging and to reduce use of plastics. The petitioner has worked with the town Planning Department, EDAP and local businesses, including caterers, in order to address concerns about economic impacts.

Article 33, Non-Electronic Communications (Resolution): SUPPORT

Resolution for Select Board to study reducing printing/postage costs, maybe also enhancing the Town's electronic communication abilities, both a fiscal and good government proposal.

Article 34, Resolution Honoring WWI War Dead: SUPPORT

In the 100th anniversary year since the end of World War I, this resolution honors and remembers the Brookline soldiers who gave their lives in that conflict.

Article 35, Global Effort to Prevent Nuclear War (Resolution): SUPPORT

Unsurprisingly, PAX supports this resolution calling on our elected federal leaders to endorse a global effort to prevent nuclear war.

Please bring these PAX recommendations to Town Meeting.

¹ In May 16's Supplemental Combined Rpt mailed to TMM's. Petitioners and Diversity Commission agree to it.