

Braintree Town Council

Committee of Ways & Means

One JFK Memorial Drive
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184

MEMBERS

Meredith Boericke, Chairwoman
Charles Ryan, Vice-Chairman
Donna Connors, Member
Julia Flaherty, Member
Steven Sciascia, Member

AGENDA

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Starting Time –6:30PM

Remote via Zoom webinar

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87312461871>

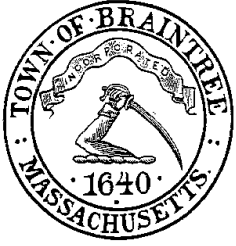
Telephone: Dial US: +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: **873 1246 1871**

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87312461871>

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
 - November 12, 2020
3. Old Business
 - None
4. New Business
 - 21 002 Mayor: Acceptance of Donations or take up any action relative thereto
5. Adjournment

Governor Charles Baker has declared a state of emergency in Massachusetts to support the state's response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus). According to the Town of Braintree's "Temporary Emergency Policy for Remote Participation Under the Open Meeting Law Pursuant to Massachusetts Executive Order of March 12, 2020," the Town Council will meet fully remotely for the health and safety of Councilors and the public during the Massachusetts State of Emergency. The Town Council will be using Zoom software to run meetings online for the immediate future. The Town continues to monitor the situation through the Health Department and specific questions should be directed to our Public Health Nurse at 781-794-8094 or Marybeth McGrath, Director of Health, at 781-794-8095.



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MINUTES
Thursday, November 12, 2020

A meeting of the Committee of Ways & Means was held Remote via Zoom Webinar, on Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 6:00p.m.

Councilor Boericke was in the Chair.
Clerk of the Council, Susan M. Cimino conducted the roll call.

All votes were taken by Roll Call Vote.

Present: Meredith Boericke, Chairwoman
Charles Ryan, Vice-Chair
Donna Connors, Member
Julia Flaherty, Member
Steven Sciascia, Member

Also Present: Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff
Ed Spellman, Finance Director
Christine Stickney, Director Planning & Community Development
Kelly Phelan, Conservation Planner
James M. Casey, Town Clerk
Debra Starr, Assistant Town Clerk
James Arsenault, DPW Director
John Thompson, Assistant DPW Director/Town Engineer
Jeff Kunz, Trash & Recycling Director
Stephen Leary, Assistant to the Mayor

Approval of Minutes

• June 29, 2020

Motion made by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of June 29, 2020.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of June 29, 2020

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (4--Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- July 28, 2020
 Motion made by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of July 28, 2020.
Motion: by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of July 28, 2020
Second: by Councilor Flaherty
Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- September 2, 2020
 Motion made by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 2, 2020.
Motion: by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 2, 2020
Second: by Councilor Flaherty
Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- September 14, 2020
 Motion made by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 14, 2020.
Motion: by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 14, 2020
Second: by Councilor Flaherty
Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- September 22, 2020
 Motion made by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 22, 2020.
Motion: by Councilor Ryan to approve Minutes of September 22, 2020
Second: by Councilor Flaherty
Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

Old Business

- None

New Business

- **20 070 Mayor: Appointment – William J. Grove to Planning Board Member or take up any action relative thereto**

Mr. Grove was appointed as an alternate earlier in the year and is now being appointed as a member due to Mr. Harnais leaving the Planning Board.

Motion made by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 070:

MOTION: : UPON THE REQUEST OF HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR, THE TOWN OF BRAINTREE, THROUGH THE BRAINTREE TOWN COUNCIL, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 3-3 OF THE CHARTER OF THE TOWN OF BRAINTREE HAS APPROVED THE APPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM J. GROVE TO THE PLANNING BOARD as a MEMBER.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 070
Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- **20 072 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Smelt Brook Culvert & Fisheries Habitat Restoration or take up any action relative thereto**

At the October 19, 2020, meeting of the Community Preservation Committee, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend the appropriation of Community Preservation Act funds for the Smelt Brook Culvert & Fisheries Habitat Restoration Park (Phase II). The appropriation of funds for Phase I of the Project were previously approved by the Council on October 20, 2020.

This phase of the Project includes a proposed park, comprised of approximately 6,000 square feet, including the day lighted Smelt Brook located within the Landing (between 1 Commercial Street (Braintree) and the former Old Mill Grill at 4 Commercial Street (Weymouth)). The park includes hardscaping a walking path, benches, landscaping, lighting and interpretive signage explaining the fishery habitat and life cycles.

Councilor Flaherty stated it looks like it is in both towns. Is Braintree only funding this?

Christine Stickney stated no both towns worked together on a Mass Works Grant. This request is for the \$150,000 for the park.

Councilor Flaherty asked if this is ADA accessible.

Christine Stickney stated yes all new construction is required to be. She will also check with BETA and see how close they can get to view the brook.

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 072.

MOTION: That in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 44B of the General Laws and with the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, the appropriation of \$150,000.00 from the CPA Open Space Fund for the Smelt Brook Culvert & Fisheries Habitat Restoration Project (Phase II) proposed mutual park in the Landing located between #1 Commercial Street (Braintree) and the former Old Mill Grill #4 Commercial Street (Weymouth) at the corporate town line with Weymouth, conditional on the funds expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Director of Planning and Community Development.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 072

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- **20 073 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Middle Street Monatiquot River Trail Application or take up any action relative thereto**

At the October 19, 2020, meeting of the Community Preservation Committee, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend the appropriation of Community Preservation Act funds for the Middle Street Monatiquot River Trail Application.

The proposed trail, approximately 1/3 of a mile in length and ADA compliant, will meander through the Middle Street Open Space property allowing the public to view and experience the Monatiquot River and overall site.

Councilor Ryan stated this is exactly what the CPA funds should be used for.

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 073.

MOTION: That in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 44B of the General Laws and with the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, the appropriation of \$150,000.00 from the CPA Open Space Fund and \$150,000 from the CPA Unreserved Fund for the Middle Street Monatiquot River Trail Project proposed for the Middle Street Open Space Parcel located off Middle Street (Assessors Map 2002 Plot 1 & Map 2006 Plot 1A), conditional on the funds expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Director of Planning and Community Development.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 073

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

- **20 074 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Monatiquot River Trail at Armstrong Dam or take up any action relative thereto**

At the October 19, 2020, meeting of the Community Preservation Committee, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend the appropriation of Community Preservation Act funds for the Monatiquot River Trail at Armstrong Dam.

The walking trail is part of the overall Monatiquot River Restoration Project, which includes dam removal, river restoration, migratory fish passage, a bridge and the walking trail. The trail will provide the opportunity to access the scenic rock falls area and view the annual river herring migration. The trail, which will be approximately 1/3 of a mile in length around the property, will be universally accessible and fully ADA compliant.

Councilor Ryan stated this is a great project. It is a beautiful spot in Braintree under this bridge with rock formations. I fully support this.

Councilor Sciascia stated some residents have stated concern with issues along this river and where water backs up and goes into the streets.

Nicole Taub stated there were questions/answers related to this that were submitted by Chairwoman Boericke:

Armstrong Dam Removal: Flood Control Questions and Answers

Q: Can you please elaborate on how the dam, today, does not provide flood protection, since holding water back is the job of a dam?

A: There are various functions that dams can serve. One such function is as a “Flood Control Dam.” The Armstrong Dam does not serve this function. The Armstrong Dam impoundment is always full of water. The common analogy to visualize this phenomenon is to a swimming pool, a bathtub, or a drinking glass that is full to the brim. As water enters any container or impoundment that is already completely full, the same amount of water leaves it at the same time. Similar to this analogy, the impoundment of the Armstrong Dam is full at all times. The severity of a flood flow entering into the reservoir will equal the severity of the flood that leaves the dam and continues downstream. Therefore, flood flows downstream are unaffected by the presence of the dam or its impoundment

By contrast, a dam that is specifically and intentionally operated as a “Flood Control Dam” is actively managed through full time monitoring and manipulation of the water levels in the impoundment, such as at a drinking water reservoir. Before a large storm begins, the impoundment is slowly and intentionally emptied to create storage space, and the gates then closed when the storm begins. As flows into the reservoir increase, the newly emptied area begins to fill, and meanwhile flows exiting the control dam are much lower than those entering the impoundment. This reduces the effects of flooding downstream, thereby “controlling” the flood flows.

As previously mentioned, the Armstrong Dam was not designed to be, nor is it operated as a “Flood Control Dam.” Even if the dam were to be operated this way, Hollingsworth Pond is not large enough to hold a volume of water that would reduce downstream flooding.

Q: Will the removal of the dam increase the water level along the river?

The Armstrong Dam currently impacts flooding in two ways: it causes upstream flood levels to be higher (such as the intersection of Plain St and Hancock St) due to the impounded water it creates, and it retains a large amount of stagnant water which, if released during a catastrophic failure, would cause a large and damaging flood wave to travel downstream. Due to its age and condition, the dam will one day fail if it is not repaired, maintained, or removed. This is the case with all dams, as it is the case with all manmade infrastructure.

FEMA flood mapping does not account for the risk of a dam failure; therefore a dam failure could cause flooding that is worse than shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Mapping (FIRM), and property owners who are shown outside of the FEMA designated AE Zone (100-year floodplain) who do not carry flood

insurance may be impacted, without protection or recourse. Removing the Armstrong Dam will eliminate this risk of a catastrophic dam failure to downstream properties.

Q: How does the dam removal (both Armstrong and Ames) change the flood zone map and the floodways?

A: The removal of the dams will result in the remapping of the floodplain in the upstream impounded areas to reflect the lower flood risks upstream, and will have no impact to areas downstream of the dams. Remapping will include the reduction of flood prone areas commensurate with the lowering of water surface elevations by removing the obstruction to flood flows (the dam).

Q: What is the plan for this stretch of the Monaquot River to be consistently and effectively cleared of vegetation and debris so it may flow freely, and will so doing reduce the risk of it overrunning its banks during future high water periods?

A: Division of Marine Fisheries coordinates clearing of vegetation or debris which would block fish passage. Flooding is caused by an exceptionally large volume of water in the river from high precipitation events. Vegetation/debris removal has only a negligible effect on flooding.

Q: Is periodic dredging an option?

A: It is not feasible to deepen or widen the river channel enough to convey flood flows. A project of that scale would undermine roads and bridges.

Q: What is the plan to maintain the drains on easements that abut property-owners yards?

The DPW's Stormwater Division maintains the Town's drainage system. Please contact them at 781 794-8945 with any specific concerns.

Q: Was a study or assessment completed on the cause of the 2010 flood? If so, what findings can be applied to prevent such an event from occurring again?

The cause of the 2010 flood was excessive precipitation – over nine inches of rain fell in a few days. When this much precipitation falls, it overtops the banks of the river and occupies the floodplain which is the low-lying area adjacent to a river. Unfortunately, much of the Kensington St. /Logan Drive neighborhood was constructed in the floodplain. Protection measures such as raising HVAC is the best option for homes which were constructed in or near the floodplain-

<https://braintreema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/309/Raise-or-Flood-Proof-HVAC-PDF>

Q: Has the Conservation Commission approved this project? If not, can conditions be placed on the permit so that special attention and/or mitigation requirements are applied to protect the neighborhoods that run directly downstream of the dam, specifically those in FEMA designated flood zones?

The project has not gone before the Conservation Commission. We expect to be before the Commission in December or January. There are no mitigation opportunities associated with the dam removal which would improve downstream flooding.

Q: What are the ramifications to the project if we table this vote until we get the residents' concerns sufficiently addressed?

The vote for Community Preservation funding is related only to the trail/boardwalk along the restored river.

Chairwoman Boericke stated if any resident would like to speak on this please raise your hand. There will also be opportunity at the next Town Council meeting.

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 074.

MOTION: That in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 44B of the General Laws and with the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee, the appropriation of \$300,000 from the CPA Unreserved Fund for the Monatiquot River Trail at Armstrong Dam located on the former Armstrong Cork site (Assessor's Map 1031 and Plots 1 and 5), conditional on the funds expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Director of Planning and Community Development.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 074

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (4–Boericke, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (1 - Connors), Abstain (0)

Councilor Connors arrived at 6:50pm

- **037 20 Councilor Boericke: Update First Quarter FY 2021 Budget Actual vs. Projection or take up any action relative thereto**

Councilor Boericke stated during Budget Hearings it was asked this committee receive quarterly updates from the Mayor's office.

Nicole Taub stated we have a high level overview on where we stand with our larger revenue streams as well as some updates on some individual departments.

State Aid

Level funding State Aid based on FY20 funding:

- \$24,882,238
- -Offsets (\$50,322)
- -Assessments (\$3,821,682)
- TOTAL = \$21,010,234 (\$12,293 less than FY20)

To date, the Town has received confirmation that the State Aid for FY21, minus assessments, will result in a net increase in the amount of **\$42,850** from the budgeted amount.

- State Aid--\$24,919,108 (+\$36,870)
- State Assessment--\$3,814,731 (-\$6,951)
- Offset--\$50,322 (-\$971)
- TOTAL - \$21,054,055

Earlier this evening, the Town received notice that the House recommended budget included an additional \$3,000 and the Senate recommended budget included an additional \$10,000, so there may be an additional surplus of \$13,000 from the original estimates.

Meals Tax

Meals Tax was reduced by 25% from the FY20 estimate and valued at \$936,000

- Based on prior years, we estimated receipt of \$230,724 in the first quarter:
 - Q2 = \$227,074
 - Q3 = \$241,394
 - Q4 = \$236,808
- Initial earnings report shows receipt of \$198,630 (86.09%). Restaurants were able to defer tax payments, so this number may not be representative of the total earnings for this quarter and additional revenue may come in for this time period before year end.

Rooms Tax

Rooms Tax was reduced by 50% from the FY20 estimate and valued at \$832,500

- Based on prior years, we estimated receipt of \$205,211 in the first quarter:
 - Q2 = \$201,965
 - Q3 = \$214,702
 - Q4 = \$210,623

- Initial earnings report shows receipt of \$192,729 (93.9%). Vendors collecting room occupancy excise and sales and use taxes were given the option to extend the due date for filing returns and making payments. Those otherwise due March 20, 2020 through April 30, 2021 were extended to May 20, 2021. This was previously extended to June 20, 2020 and then to September 20, 2020. We do not know if any local establishments opted to file/pay late, which may increase the revenues.

Licenses and Permits (FY21 budgeted amount: \$2,053,000)

The Building Department Permit Fees, including Building, Plumbing, Gas, Electric, CO's, CI's and signs) received from July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, total \$309,799.50, down from \$529,906 in FY20 and \$426,226 in FY19.

CARES ACT/FEMA REIMBURSEMENTS

FEMA reimburses the Town for actual costs to perform COVID-19 emergency response measures, including first responder overtime, purchasing PPE and disinfectant/cleaning supplies, at a rate of 75%.

- First application
 - \$99,552.65
 - Federal share = \$74,664.49
- Second application
 - \$121,358.07
 - Federal share = \$91,018.55
- Anything not eligible under FEMA and the remaining 25% gets submitted for CARES ACT reimbursement

CARES ACT funds are used to reimburse the Town for estimated or incurred eligible expenses due to COVID-19, including school distance learning, nurses for contact tracing, additional cleaning/sanitizing, remote meeting software, etc.

- To date we have received \$69,746.
- A second application was submitted on October 30, 2020 and included actual and projected costs through the end of the year.
 - Actual costs submitted were \$1,233,071
 - Projected costs (based on historical data and projections) was \$2,343,657.
 - Total requested = balance of available funding \$3,284,247

Schools also received funding from the CARES ACT for approximately \$1.2 million. They were allowed to just draw down from that funding as needed.

Lorraine See is also working on the following Grants:

COVID-Related Grants

- Elections Grant \$13,465
- Fire Grant (COVID) \$33,840
- Police Grant (COVID) \$17,788.56
- CDBG Block Grant \$320,000 (Small Business Assistance)
- Remote Learning Grant \$147,000
- Food Security Infrastructure Grant \$42,614.82

The following are department updates:

Police Overtime

Projected FY21 overtime at current trends is lower than FY20.

- Averaging \$15,000 less per payroll versus last year, and have spent \$119,000 less in FY21 than we did in FY20 through the same time period.
- Note, this is also before any COVID-19 or enforcement grant adjustments or reimbursements for Federal task force overtime.

Golf

As a result of COVID-19, the Golf Course was required to close from March 16, 2020 through May 6, 2020. The Golf Course was allowed to partially reopen on May 6, with the food and beverage service starting up again on May 29, 2020. Modifications to service included a reduced number of tee times (4 per hour down from the standard 6), a prohibition on golf cart rentals (restriction lifted mid-June) and closure of the club house for on-site dining.

Looking at our revenue deposits for that time period (March 16 through June 30) comparing 2019 to 2020, we had a revenue loss of **\$450,000** due to the COVID-19 state mandated closure and subsequent state mandated restrictions once we re-opened; however, despite the restrictions imposed by the state once the golf course was permitted to reopen, first quarter revenues are up significantly over prior years.

The following is a summary of the first quarter revenues from Fiscal Years 19 and 20:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Q1 Revenue</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
• Fiscal Year 2019	\$1,586,992	\$559,697	35.27%
• Fiscal Year 2020	\$1,907,151	\$796,513	41.76%

The revenue for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 21 is:

• Fiscal Year 2021	\$1,949,400	\$1,113,619	57.12%
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In total, the earnings are up \$307,352 over the FY20 first quarter. Additionally, when factoring in the revenue earned in October 2020, the total earnings is up to \$1,348,830, or 69.19% of the total budget for the year.

They are starting to set up the Simulators for the Winter.

- **038 20 Councilor Boericke: Update Billboard or take up any action relative thereto**

Chairwoman Boericke stated during the budget hearings we had factored the sale of a billboard into the town's general operating fund. The Mayor's office has agreed to give us an update on where that revenue stands.

Nicole Taub stated the case of the billboard is still pending before the land court. All the hearings have taken place. All the briefings and motions have been filed. We are just waiting for the court to issue its decision on the appeal with regards to the billboard on Wood Road. We will continued to seek updates.

- **039 20 Councilor Boericke: Update Status of Allen Street RFP or take up any action relative thereto**

Chairwoman Boericke stated during the budget hearings we had factored the sale of Allen Street into the town's general operating fund. The Mayor's office has agreed to give us an update on where that revenue stands.

Nicole Taub stated we published a Request for Proposals back in August and due October 8, 2020. We received 5 proposals in total. 4 were reviewed. The 5th was received after the deadline without all the required documentation. There was an evaluation committee of John Thompson, Nicole Taub and Karen Shanley. The committee did its own independent evaluations and then came together. Arch Communities and Wynn were the highest rankings. A Purchase and Sales agreement needs to be executed in the same form as was stated in the RFP. We are waiting to hear if there are items they would like to discuss. We are working to receive the \$1.5 million by the fiscal year end. 25% will be dedicated to workforce families in Braintree.

This will all need to be permitted and subject to review during the construction phases.

- **20 071 Town Clerk: Polling Locations or take up any action relative thereto**

James Casey, Town Clerk asked for the support of the Town Council to make the trial of the consolidated voting centers that we have used these past 3 elections to have be a permanent basis going forward. The vote that the Town Council took in July 2020 was going to end December 31, 2020. Our next election is November 2, 2021. A home rule petition needs to take place to make this all happen for (2B and 3B) due to these locations not being contiguous to the new locations. During the 3 elections this year we had over 40,000 people come before us and not a single traceable COVID case came from that. In person voting on election days has been trending downwards. Voters will be taking one of the other four options to cast their ballots. Absentee, Early Voting, Vote by Mail, In-person voting are all options. Once legislation is passed to allow something it typically remains. Giving more conveniences to voters.

Beginning with the 2016 State General Election, Massachusetts voters were given the option to vote up to eleven days before Election Day. Nearly 7,000 Braintree voters took advantage of this new voter choice. The intended objective of its introduction was to increase voter turnout however, an increase in voter turnout did not materialize. It simply was a convenience for voters to avoid lines on Election Day.

Late July 2020, legislative changes in election laws to address COVID concerns were expanded to include a "vote by mail" option; giving voters a fifth choice to cast their ballots; absentee-by mail,

absentee-in person, early vote-by mail, early vote-in person and on Election Day. The success of early voting, by mail and in-person, in 2020 will, most likely, be continued into the future for State Elections and, a local option for local elections.

At this past election there were about 33 voters per hour in each of the precincts which is very manageable if we combine them into 3 voting centers. We can manage more effectively to have staff members together to share their knowledge. I lost 7 “seasoned” Wardens. Without the consolidation of polling locations and Wardens tutoring the new Wardens the success would not have been so great. Instead of the old paper check in/check out books we now have new electronic poll pads that reduce the check in time considerably.

Administratively, there are a number of benefits associated with district voting centers that the general public would not notice

- Staff support
 - Knowledge base of experienced election workers assisting new or less experienced workers in election laws and processes as well as on technical issues
- Delivery of absentee and early voted ballots
 - Efficient delivery of ballots received by mail on Election Day
 - 3 voting sites vs 12 voting sites
- Poll Books
 - Each polling location requires a separate secure wifi transmitter to communicate to the host center (Town Clerk's Office) on voter activity
 - More costly
 - District 2B and 3B are operated by private entities
 - Wifi access points in each polling location, other than the three voting centers, would require to be upgraded to support secure transmitter
- Election Day oversight
 - Opportunity of staffing each voting center with a precinct coordinator Empowered to act on Town Clerk's behalf to resolve Election Day issues
- Election Day Coordination
 - Efficient and secure delivery of election day uncast ballots and equipment
 - Efficient and secure return of election day cast ballots and equipment
- Costs savings
 - Reduction of police details
- Less impact on schools
 - Elimination of polling locations at elementary schools

The Town Clerk's office received many notes of support for the consolidation. We kept with social distancing, there was plenty of parking with no issues and the check in process went smoothly. This process of voting centers is more efficient while keeping with the integrity of the election process.

Councilor Flaherty stated I heard fabulous reports from residents on how clear the instructions were and how quickly they were able to move through the process and even though it was a big change it went very smoothly. I dropped into the locations and everything looked good. I think there is a lot of community support. My concern is to do with a small minority of people being voters who do not drive especially if you have a handicap. None of the polling locations are accessible by public transportation. How do we get people who do not drive to the polls? The Senior Center has busses but you need to be over 60 years of age. The Marge Crispin center may have handicapped accessible vehicles but the center would have to pay increased insurance premiums to cover additional riders. The "Ride" by the MBTA was mentioned but is not what that is intended to do. The solution that kept coming up was you call the candidates themselves and they run operations to get this achieved. I called campaigns and the ones that got back stated they are not committing resources to that. I do recognize there are other ways of casting ballots. Some people do require assistance at the polls opting to use the AutoMark machine. There are also some people who mistrust and want to go the polling location to cast their ballot and really do not want to do any other way. Do we have anything that we are working on to make sure these people can make it to the polls? I know they want to come. I want to know if this town will make an effort to solve the problem of accessibility.

Clerk Casey stated whether 3 locations or 12 this problem will exist. Not all voting locations have public transportation unless there was a building on a public transportation site that we could be guaranteed to have for use during every election. In late October the Secretary of State's office was mandated to allow on-line voting for the handicapped. An online ballot could be sent to them with the proper identification.

Councilor Connors stated I did volunteer to be a poll worker for the past 3 elections from 6am to close. The Town Clerk's office did a great job. I was initially against going down to 3 voting locations. Now knowing all the bugs that need to be worked out and a little panic when polling books went down. I did help with the AutoMark machine. The individual was very happy. It was incredibly smooth. There were three lines for the voters to follow, come in the door and at their voting stations in 2-3 minutes. I feel this should be fully supported.

Councilor Sciascia stated I heard it was very well received going down to 3 locations. We do need to solve the problem for the handicapped and elderly. I think we need to go above and beyond on our notification when this will be discussed at the Full Council.

Councilor Ryan stated congratulations to our Town Clerk and his staff on a great job. We hear about problems with getting votes counted all over the country and we do not hear about that in Braintree – great job!

Councilor Ryan stated residents from St. Thomas More asked why they had to go to BHS and not vote at East Middle School.

Clerk Casey stated we have 12 polling districts. District 1A/1B and 2A/2B are aligned with State Senator Timilty and Districts 3 through 6 are aligned with State Senator Keenan. I keep districts

together to make sure the ballot styles are not mixed up. I want to make sure people are getting the correct ballot for the people they should be voting for.

Councilor Connors stated she got just a handful of people stated they didn't get notified on the polling location changes.

Clerk Casey stated there was a mailing to every household that had a registered voter, there was a reverse 9-1-1 call from the Mayor, there was signage up at every location that had a change, and the changes were also posted on the town website and put out on social media.

Councilor Boericke asked if mail-in voting will continue.

Clerk Casey stated once legislation is done in the past it tends to stay but it is not determined yet.

Councilor Boericke stated I reached out to my constituents and I hear loud and clear and tend to agree my obligation is to ensure voting accessibility is as easy as possible. I am in favor of voting returning to 12 precincts. I know it is a lot of work. Bending over to make sure voting is accessible and easy to everyone in town is important.

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for recommendation to the full Council Order 20 071.

MOTION: : With the availability and suitability of East and South Middle Schools and Braintree High School and pursuant to M.G.L. C. 54, § 24, that the public convenience would be better served by relocating voting precincts as follows:

- **District 1A** - Town Hall, **District 1B** - Flaherty School, **District 2A** - Hollis School, be relocated to Braintree High School at 128 Town Street
- **District 3A**- Ross School, **District 4A**- Elder Affairs Building, **District 4B**- Morrison School be relocated to East Middle School at 305 River Street
- **District 5A** -Town Hall, **District 5B** - Liberty School, **District 6A** - South Middle School, **District 6B** - Highlands School be relocated to South Middle School

And it is further order, the existing polling place **District 2B** - Hollis School, currently located in a voting precinct not adjacent to Braintree High School at 128 Town Street and, the existing polling place **District 3B** - Braintree Yacht Club, currently located in a voting precinct not adjacent to East Middle School at 305 River Street, that the public convenience would be better served by relocating **District 2B** - Hollis School, to Braintree High School at 128 Town Street and **District 3B** - Braintree Yacht Club, to East Middle School at 305 River Street, and that a home rule petition be filed in the form set forth in the accompanying order.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for recommendation to the full Council Order 20 071

Second: by Councilor Connors

Roll Call Vote: For (2 – Connors, Ryan), Against (2 – Boericke, Flaherty), Absent (0), Abstain (0), Present (1 – Sciascia)

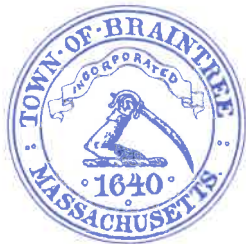
It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:56p.m. by Roll Call Vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Cimino
Clerk of the Council

Documents provided for Meeting

- Minutes of June 29, 2020
- Minutes of July 28, 2020
- Minutes of September 2, 2020
- Minutes of September 14, 2020
- Minutes of September 22, 2020
- 20 071 Town Clerk: Polling Locations or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 070 Mayor: Appointment – William J. Grove to Planning Board Member or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 072 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Smelt Brook Culvert & Fisheries Habitat Restoration or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 073 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Middle Street Monatiquot River Trail Application or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 074 Mayor: Request for Appropriation – Monatiquot River Trail at Armstrong Dam or take up any action relative thereto
- 037 20 Councilor Boericke: Update First Quarter FY 2021 Budget Actual vs. Projection or take up any action relative thereto
- 038 20 Councilor Boericke: Update Billboard or take up any action relative thereto
- 039 20 Councilor Boericke: Update Status of Allen Street RFP or take up any action relative thereto



Office of the Mayor

One JFK Memorial Drive
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184

Charles C. Kokoros
Mayor

781-794-8100

To: Shannon L. Hume, President of the Council
Susan Cimino, Clerk of the Council
James Casey, Town Clerk

From: Charles C. Kokoros, Mayor *CKK*

CC: Nicole I. Taub, Chief of Staff and Director of Operations
Dr. Frank Hackett, Braintree School Department Superintendent
Karen Shanley, Director, Human Resources
Vincent Fountaine, Veterans Services Agent
Sharmila Biswas, Director, Department of Elder Services

Date: January 13, 2021

Re: Acceptance of Gifts

President Hume, Clerk Cimino, Clerk Casey,

I am submitting this request for your consideration and acceptance of the following donations to be used for the stated purposes.

The first donation, in the amount of \$20,000.00, is from sisters Nancy and Grace Parlee and shall be used to start the Dottie and Bob Parlee Scholarship Fund. Dottie and Bob were lifelong residents of Braintree and graduates of Braintree High School—Dottie in 1942 and Bob in 1939. Dottie was a member of the Braintree High School band, where she played the trombone, and Bob was affiliated with the Drum & Bugle Corps. Nancy and Grace would like to establish a music scholarship in their memory with the following qualifications: 1) \$2,000 per year would be allocated, \$1,000 each for a male and female; 2) the funds must be related to music; and 3) the recipient must be a Braintree High School Graduate. Dottie and Bob loved Braintree and Grace and Nancy are excited to be able to honor their legacy by helping a Braintree graduate fulfill their dreams.

The second donation, in the amount of \$5,000.00, is from the “Friends of Charles Kokoros,” and shall be dedicated to the Town of Braintree-Department of Veterans Services, to be used as needed.

The final donation, in the amount of \$435.00, is also from the “Friends of Charles Kokoros,” and is to be used to benefit the Town of Braintree-Department of Elder Affairs for assistance to defray transportation costs for elder residents.

Accordingly, your review and approval of the following motion is requested:

MOTION: That the Town of Braintree be and hereby is authorized, in accordance with Section 53A of Chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws to accept the following gifts upon the conditions attached and herein set forth:

<u>DONOR</u>	<u>GIFT</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>
Grace and Nancy Parlee	\$20,000	Dottie and Bob Parlee Scholarship Fund
“Friends of Charles Kokoros”	\$5,000	Town of Braintree-Department of Veteran Services
“Friends of Charles Kokoros”	\$435	Town of Braintree-Department of Elder Affairs