

Meredith Boericke
President
District 5



Charles B. Ryan
Vice President
At Large

Shannon L. Hume
At Large

Joseph Reynolds
District 2

David M. Ringius, Jr
At Large

Elizabeth Maglio
District 3

Julia C. Flaherty
District 1

Stephen C. O'Brien
District 4

OFFICE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

MINUTES

A meeting of the Town Council was held in the Cahill Auditorium, Braintree Town Hall, on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 beginning at 7:30p.m.

Council President Boericke was in the chair.

President Boericke asked for a moment of silence for our first responders and all those serving our military home and abroad.

Clerk of the Council, Susan M. Cimino conducted the roll call.

Present: Meredith Boericke, President
Charles Ryan, Vice President
Shannon Hume
David M. Ringius, Jr.
Julia Flaherty
Joseph Reynolds
Elizabeth Maglio
Stephen C. O'Brien (remote participation)
Lawrence C. Mackin, Jr.

Others: Charles C. Kokoros, Mayor
Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff/Town Solicitor
Marybeth McGrath, Director of Municipal Licenses & Inspections
John Thompson, Town Engineer/Asst Director
Ben Hulke, Assistant DPW Director

REMOTE PARTICIPATION of a Council member: We have a Council member who is participating remotely this evening. Councilor O'Brien is on speaker phone and therefore all VOTES are required to be by ROLL CALL.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• 001 22 Council President: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Braintree celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day by honoring a resident for their service to the town. On Thursday, January 13th Mayor Kokoros honored former Town Councilor Henry "Hank" Joyce with the Town of Braintree Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Peacemaker Award.

Town Council also presented Hank with a Recognition Certificate that read:

Henry "Hank" Joyce is recognized by the Braintree Town Council as the 2022 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Citizen of the Year honoree. Your service as a Councilor from 2008 – 2014 and as a community leader and volunteer for decades has truly made a difference in the lives of Braintree residents.

• 002 22 Council President: 2022-2023 Committee Assignments

All Councilors received a copy of the Committee Assignments – It is also posted on the Town Council webpage.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

• November 16, 2021

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Approve Minutes of November 16, 2021

Second: by Councilor Hume

Vote: For (9 – Boericke, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, Maglio, O'Brien, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan),
Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

COMMUNICATIONS

• 003 22 Council President: COVID Update

(Marybeth McGrath, Director of Municipal Licenses & Inspections)

Director McGrath stated I am here before you as we are seeing COVID cases increasing. There was a spike on December 21, 2021 of 51 cases by December 28 we had 108 cases by December 31, 2021 we had 238 cases reported which is the highest we ever had during this two-year event. We have a surge of Omicron going on. The data we have on our website are lab-confirmed cases. This number does not reflect the home tests. We need to presume we could be positive or we have been near someone who has been or is positive. Today we have 64 cases. This is good because we are starting to see a decline. The total cumulative of cases since we started the COVID event in February 2020 is 8,784 cases. The number of deaths from COVID remain at 136 and has been that for quite a while.

A question was asked about face masks.

Director McGrath stated the Town of Braintree follows the Governor's advisory which stated it is advised to consider wearing facemasks. At present there are no mandatory requirement for face coverings.

• **004 22 Council President: Department of Public Works Update**

Councilor Ryan, Chairman of the Committee on the Department of Public Works stated this committee has asked Director Arsenault to give an update on what is being worked on to the full Council and the residents at home.

A PowerPoint Presentation by Director Jim Arsenault included some of the following discussion points:

Current roadway construction projects

Paving, curbing/sidewalks

- Middle Street (Liberty Street to Lisle Street)
- Arnold Street / Cindy Lane / Farm Road
- Miller Street / Hamilton Street / Totnes Road / Elm Knoll Road
- Liberty Street (Grove St. to Peach St.) and Proctor Road
- Old Liberty Street, Braemore Road, Aspinwall Road, Highview Ave, Hillsdale Ave, and Eutaw Ave
- South Street (Roundabout to Holbrook) / Forbes Road (Granite Street to Grandview Road)
- South Braintree Square - Washington Street (Hancock Street to Taylor Street)
- Pilgrim Road and Mayflower Road
- Commerce Drive
- Granite Street (“DDU” to Anderson Road) (Sidewalk Only)
- Union Street (Ivory Street to Washington Street) (Sidewalk Only)
- Summer Street (Franklin Street to Safford Street) (Sidewalk Only)
- Holmes Street (Sidewalks Only)

Intersection projects

- Pearl Street at Ivory Street and John Maher Highway – The Town’s traffic consultant is proceeding with the final design for the reconstruction of this intersection. Currently anticipating final design completion this fall/winter with construction possible for 2022 pending availability of funding.
- Quincy Ave at Commercial Street – The Town has retained a traffic consultant to evaluate this intersection and diagnose any issues which may be limiting its level of service.
- Granite Street at Pond Street and King Hill Road - The Town has retained a traffic consultant to evaluate this intersection and develop several conceptual designs to improve its operations

Other current projects

- Elder Affairs Parking Improvements – The expanded parking area at the Elder Affairs property has been excavated and paved as part of a two-phased approach to improve the overall site. The second phase will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will include the installation of low-impact- development stormwater improvements, as well as resurfacing and restriping the existing parking areas. The Town has submitted and is awaiting award status of an EPA Section 319 to fund the stormwater improvements of this project.
- Sunset Lake Playground Improvements – The scope for this project includes the installation of ADA compliant walking paths throughout the playground area at Sunset Lake and will also include the installation of cement concrete pads for accessible benches and picnic tables. This work will occur this fall, concurrently with the project on Summer Street.
- Cemetery Expansion Project – The Engineering Division has substantially designed the expanded cemetery area and has retained a consultant to assist with the permitting process. This project will be finalized and put out to public bid during Winter 2021/2022 for construction in Spring of 2022

Future projects

- Allen Street Reconstruction – This project is currently at 75% design stage, and involves the reconstruction of the roadway, retaining wall, and sidewalks from Shaw Street to Quincy Avenue. The project also establishes one-way traffic in the westerly direction (towards Shaw St). This project will be advanced to final design this winter, with construction to be coordinated with the pending development at 44 Allen Street.
- Traffic Signal Inventory – The Engineering Division has retained a traffic consultant to conduct a town-wide traffic signal inventory of town-owned intersections. The draft report of this inventory was submitted in July 2021. This inventory serves many purposes: to compile and centralize detailed information on all the town's existing traffic equipment, to identify deficiencies at signals that can be corrected immediately to improve operations, to identify and catalog ADA compliance at intersections for the Town's transition plan, and to use as a platform to make informed decisions on future improvements. Over the next few months the Engineering Division will be working with its consultant to finalize the report and will begin prioritizing work to be done on intersections throughout the Town over the upcoming years.
- Pavement Management Inventory / Pavement Capital Improvement Plan – Similarly, the Engineering Division has recently received a draft report of the current pavement condition of all of the roadways in Town. Over the fall and winter months this inventory report will be finalized and a Capital Improvement Plan will be developed to aid in the determination of the annual paving program and to help allocate necessary funding to the Town's future infrastructure needs.
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS)/ Updated Town-wide Aerial Imagery and Planimetric Data – During Spring 2021 the Engineering Division partnered with MassGIS to conduct a flyover of the Town in order to get new aerial imagery and to update planimetric data which is used by various Town Departments and the general public for geographical planning and, billing, assessments, and engineering purposes. This new data would replace data the Town is currently using which was captured in 1993. At this time the new data is being processed and should be delivered during the 2021/2022 Winter. The Engineering Division can then use this data to update the public GIS system, to maintain updated mapping and asset management to assist field personnel, and to better model existing infrastructure during capital planning and project designs

Water and sewer - water projects

- FY20 Watermain Construction Project – Glenrose Ave, Argyle Rd, Cain Ave, River St, Railroad St. - All water construction work is complete, the roadways have been reclaimed and are in binder. Roads will be topped and completed next season.
- FY21 Watermain Construction Project – Middle St, Commercial St, Liberty St. - The Middle Street portion of the contract is completed. Construction on Commercial St is expected to be completed in November 2021.
- Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) – Work is expected to begin soon to install three data collectors throughout the town to gain a town-wide communication network for water meters.
- Tri-Town Treatment Plant - The new treatment plant is currently at 90% design.
- PFAs Removal
- The project to install new GAC filter media at the water treatment plant is complete.
- Several rounds of water sampling have continued to show that no PFAs are being detected in the finished water leaving the plant.
- Water System Hydraulic Modeling and Capital Planning
- Braintree Water and Sewer Division is planning to issue an RFP to undertake an effort to perform a system wide water infrastructure study. The study will determine how best to allocate capital funding over the next decade and into the future while maintaining optimal water quality and distribution

Stormwater projects

- Staffing/overall program- the Stormwater Division is looking to add an inspection position and complete the implementation of the program this next FY.
- Regulatory – The Stormwater Regulations were revised in June 2021. US EPA sets the standard used in the Town’s regulation, which holds developers to higher standards for stormwater retention and treatment than previously required. In FY22 we have issued 5 major stormwater permits, which generally apply to projects disturbing more than 0.5 acres of land. We continue to work with the Planning Department to help streamline the permitting process as much as possible.
- EPA Enforcement – following an EPA audit in February 2020, the Town worked with US EPA over several weeks in June and July (2021) to come to agreement on an Administrative Order for Compliance related to noncompliance with our federal stormwater permit. The main concern of the order was related to sanitary sewer overflows that occur due to heavy rain events and limited capacity at our connection to the MWRA line in East Braintree. The order requires the Town to develop and follow plans to reduce these overflows. We have contracted with Weston & Sampson to assist us in meeting the requirements of the order.
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination – A major portion of the Town’s NPDES permit requires screening of all outfalls in dry weather and most outfalls in wet weather. Dry weather screening was completed in 2019 and must be conducted every 5 years. Wet weather screening must be completed by 2027. The Division is evaluating strategies to fund and conduct ongoing screening according to these timelines, modeling after sewer I/I programming.
- Catch Basin Cleaning – Between Division staff and a contractor, we cleaned almost 2,000 catch basins, about 50% of the Town, in FY21. We are considering this round of cleaning a “reset”, and once every basin has been cleaned, we will focus on keeping catch basins less than 50% full at all times. Residents can report clogged catch basins on SeeClickFix and we will respond to those as necessary. In addition to catch basin cleaning, field staff regularly update our stormwater system mapping to improve its accuracy. We are having frequent repair issues with the vehicles used to perform this work, and expect to need to replace them in the next few years.
- NPDES MS4 Permit – Apart from the items in the administrative order, we are back on track for NPDES permit compliance in FY21 and FY22. Our next large undertaking will be working with the Planning Department to evaluate existing Town requirements for creation of impervious cover and allowing green infrastructure.
- Green infrastructure – We have received an MVP Action grant for \$47,500 to assist with the design of a new porous pavement parking lot and supportive stormwater management structures at Smith’s Beach. We have also received a Section 319 Grant for \$138,000 to construct stormwater green infrastructure improvements at Elder Affairs, which will complement the parking improvements and improve the site’s overall stormwater impact. Both grants include a significant public outreach component.
- Outreach – Braintree is the first community in Massachusetts to launch an Adopt-a-Drain campaign, which encourages residents to help keep their catch basins clear and educates the public about the storm sewer system. 25 residents or businesses have adopted a drain. Regular updates and stormwater outreach are on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @CleanBraintree

Facilities Projects

- Working with the school department to mitigate the numerous concerns in the BHS and looking at expanding that to all of the school maintenance facilities.
- Working with Guardian Energy Management Solutions through the Green Communities Grant Program to address a number of energy upgrades throughout the Town. Including 74 Pond, Town Hall, Thayer Library.

- Eldridge School (46 Lincoln Street): - Prep for Asbestos Abatement
- Sunset Lake Restrooms: - renovations
- Daughraty Gym: - Continue basement renovations
- 2 JFK (Old Thayer Library): - renovating the large front doors and will be working with police and fire to get communications facility up and running.
- Upgraded the evidence room, HVAC system, dispatch, eight room, front entrance way and numerous other projects at the police station and fire station as well.
- Roof Evaluations of all Town buildings.
- Install updated Town water Dispensers throughout Town

Recreation Projects

- Athletic Field Improvements/Re-design: Watson Park and Hollis Field. Some design at land by 5 corners as well.
- Working with Mayor's Office for CPC funding for Ball Fields master plan and redevelopment. Going for funding for designs for Hollis Field and Watson Park.
- Highlands School Hockey Rink and Playground: This project is in its early stages. Seeking estimates and then pursuing CPC funding for the project

Highway Projects

- New DPW Facility, Feasibility Study – in preliminary review now.
- Regular landscaping of all town roadways, fields and parks.
- Regular winter operations including plowing of snow.
- Regular Basin, sidewalk and roadway repairs as needed.
- Fleet Maintenance – Replacement Vehicles needed

Solid Waste projects

- The Town converted to cart collection in 2013 to address: Beautification issues, appearance, recycling, one trash and recycling cart with larger families purchasing additional carts.
- Possible future Solid waste utility so that it is self funded. This is very much needed since staff are retiring and need to get dedicated staff (right now just part time retired staff that will be leaving soon)
- Future of recycling and current costs
- We currently use Covanta for Town waste disposal, recycle America for our recycling, Sunrise Scavenger for curbside pickup, annual contract with Clean Harbors to remove hazardous waste, maintain the drop off center and oversee the transfer station

Golf Projects

- Updating vehicles and equipment.
- Constantly working to minimize flooding and use of fields through many different methods.
- Future need to expand kitchen area and event space to be able to capture larger events.
- Future needs for a complete replacement of irrigation system

OLD BUSINESS

- **21 061 Mayor: Authorization to Enter into Grant Agreement with Norfolk County for Funding Under the American Rescue Plan Act or take up any action related thereto**

Council President Boericke referred to Councilor Reynolds, Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means for a recommendation on Order 21 061.

Chairman Reynolds stated the Committee met earlier this evening and voted unanimously for a favorable recommendation to the full Council with a vote of 4 to 0.

Council President Boericke asked if anyone from the Mayor’s office would like to speak on Order 21 061?

Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff stated Norfolk County received funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to be distributed to cities and towns, including Braintree.

The Norfolk County Commission has launched the Norfolk County portal for ARPA grant management and payments. In order to participate in the program, the Town has registered for the portal and must now execute a Grant Agreement with the County to facilitate the release of funds. The Agreement must be signed by me, as Mayor, and the Town Council.

Grant funding will cover the time period from March 3, 2021 to June 30, 2024 (subject to extension at the sole discretion of the County, but not later than December 31, 2024) and will be used as revenue replacement related to COVID-19 losses. Once the Agreement is executed, the County will begin reviewing the Town's revenue loss calculations through 12/31/21 in order to verify the grant amount.

Council President Boericke asked if any member of the Council wants to speak on Order 21 061?

Council President Boericke asked if there is anyone else wishing to speak? Hearing none.

Council President Boericke asked is there a motion for Order 21 061?

Motion was read by Councilor Ryan:

MOTION: To approve American Rescue Plan Act Grant between Norfolk County and the Town of Braintree as submitted under Council Order 21 061.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Approve Order 21 061 as submitted

Second: by Councilor Hume

Roll Call Vote: For (9 – Boericke, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, Maglio, O’Brien, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan),
Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

• **Order 22 002 renumbered from (item) 031 21 Councilor Mackin: Municipal Oversight Committee or take up any action related thereto**

Council President Boericke referred to Councilor Ringius, Chairman of the Committee on Ordinance & Rules for a recommendation on Order 22 002.

Chairman Ringius stated the Committee on Ordinance & Rules met in December on this Municipal Oversight Committee proposed by Councilor Mackin. This is allowed per Town Council Rule #40 which states: Rule Forty: Special Committees may be authorized at any time by majority vote and shall be appointed by the President to consider such matters as the Council may refer to them. The Committee voted unanimously for a favorable recommendation to the full Council.

Councilor Mackin stated I proposed to the Committee on Ordinance & Rules to create this Municipal Oversight Special Committee. This oversight committee has already had a lot of oversight. I strongly felt a lack of oversight was a problem before. Now for going forward the town will be engaged in other projects. Any item going to this committee will be referred by the full Council and 5 other Councilors would have to vote in favor of the referral. The goal would be to ensure we are being responsible with tax payer money and proper procedures are being followed.

Council President Boericke asked if anyone from the Mayor's office would like to speak on this?

Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff stated more eyes are always good. I would note there are other committees that have oversight on certain projects like South Middle School there is the School Building Committee. If you do have questions please come join us.

Councilor Flaherty states per charter the Council is empowered to look into the affairs of the town. This more formally allows the Council to attend to that business.

Councilor Reynolds asked what the output would be? Reviewing I agree with. Would there be a report or recommendation? I also would like to see a review of past, present and future projects. Councilor Mackin stated the outcome would be whatever we deem as necessary.

President Boericke stated this will provide tax payers with an additional level of oversight.

President Boericke ask if there was a Motion for Order 22 002

Councilor Ryan read the following Motion:

MOTION: To Approve an amendment to Town Council Rule #40 for the Establishment of a 3-member Special Committee to provide independent review and investigation of all matters relating to Town of Braintree managed construction projects for which concern arises and referred to it by the Council and/or Council President, as allowed via applicable Charter provisions and relevant state and federal laws. The primary purpose of this Committee is to ensure proper procedures are being followed, were followed on past projects, to ensure responsible spending of taxpayer money, and to establish reports of such. Each member will be a Town Councilor appointed by the Council President.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Approve Order 22 002 as submitted

Second: by Councilor Hume

Roll Call Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, Maglio, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan),
Against (1 – O'Brien), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

NEW BUSINESS

- None

Refer to the Committee of Ways & Means

- 22 003 Mayor: Appointment - Scott Lamphere to the Commission on Disabilities or take up any action relative thereto

Motion: by Councilor Ryan referred Order 20 003 to the Committee of Ways & Means

Second: by Councilor Hume

Roll Call Vote: For (9 – Boericke, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, Maglio, O’Brien, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan),
Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

- 22 004 Mayor: Appointment - Michael Guerriero to the Braintree Housing Authority or take up any action relative thereto

Motion: by Councilor Ryan referred Order 22 004 to the Committee of Ways & Means

Second: by Councilor Hume

Roll Call Vote: For (8 – Boericke, Flaherty, Hume, Mackin, Maglio, O’Brien, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan),
Against (1 – O’Brien), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

Topics the Chair does not reasonably anticipate will be discussed

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 @ 7:30pm

ADJOURNMENT

It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:43p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan M. Cimino, Clerk of the Council