



Braintree Town Council
Committee of Ways & Means
One JFK Memorial Drive
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184

MEMBERS

Joseph Reynolds, Chairman
Julia Flaherty, Vice-Chairwoman
Elizabeth Maglio, Member

MINUTES
Tuesday, March 7, 2023

A meeting of the Committee of Ways & Means was held in Johnson Chambers, on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 6:00p.m.

Councilor Reynolds was in the Chair.

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

Present: Joseph Reynolds, Chairman
Julia Flaherty, Vice-Chairwoman
Elizabeth Maglio, Member
Meredith Boericke, President (ex-officio)

Also Present: Charles C. Kokoros, Mayor
Ed Spellman, Director of Municipal Finance
Jim Arsenault, DPW Director
Cindy DePina, Human Resources Director
John Thompson, Town Engineer/Asst DPW Director
Hilary Waite, Director Stormwater
Melissa SantucciRozzi, Director Planning & Community Development
Kelly Phelan, Conservation Planner
Christopher Griffin, Acting Director of Parks & Recreation
Elizabeth Manning, CPC Director
Andrew Berman, President East Braintree Little League
EBLL Board Members

Approval of Minutes

- None

Old Business

- None

New Business

- **23 011 Mayor: CPC Appropriation—Watson Park – Delorey Field Rehabilitation, (Assessors Map 3001, Block 0, Lot 1B) or take up any action relative thereto (Public Hearing at full Council)**

Chairman Reynolds asked if there was anyone from the Mayor's office who would like to speak on Order 23 011.

Christopher Griffin, Acting Director of Parks & Recreation stated we have a unanimous favorable recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee for a complete rehabilitation of Delorey Field at Watson Park. It is the oldest field and their "home" field. This field will extend the outfield to 200 feet. Other than that there will be no other extension. New aluminum bleachers will be added. New path will be added. The old one is full of cracks.

At the January 23, 2023, meeting of the Community Preservation Committee, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend the appropriation of Community Preservation Act funds for the "Watson Park - Delorey Field Rehabilitation" project from the Undesignated Fund. The Town, acting through Mayor Kokoros and the Recreation Department, in partnership with East Braintree Little League (EBLL) proposes to undertake a complete rehabilitation of Delorey little league baseball field. The proposed work includes site preparation, a new field, new infrastructure, new fencing, dugouts, scoreboard and walkway pavement around the field. This facility has been the home of East Braintree Little League for decades and the enhancements proposed through this application will enhance the use of the property and benefit all who enjoy the area.

It has been many years since Delorey Field received a significant capital upgrade. In fact, the most recent work occurred around twenty years ago with the replacements of the field's original inground dugouts with above ground dugouts. The park's location along the coastal area has resulted in decades of weathering resulting in aging of the field's infrastructure significantly. Also, the existing pavement that runs outside the field's fence along both baselines and behind the backstop has, over the years, become cracked and damaged, causing a hazardous walkway. Additionally, the left and right field foul lines only reach one hundred and eighty feet from home plate, which is twenty feet less than the minimum required by little league for the hosting of official little league sanctioned tournaments and events. The proposed work would extend the outfield fencing to meet current little league standards.

ADA accessibility will also be addressed, bringing the facility into compliance as per the following design features:

- Accessible route to each at-grade dugout
- Slip resistant surfaces as indicated by designer and Town ADA Coordinator
- Wheelchair accessible bleachers
- Signage at proper height for handicapped parking space(s)
- Accessible route adjacent to retaining walls and mounded area behind backstop levelled for accessibility
- Access to the batting cages via accessible route

Charles C. Kokoros, Mayor stated it is so important we have good playing fields for our children. This is an opportunity for the Town to step up and do something at Watson Park for our baseball players over there.

Chairman Reynolds stated I am in full support. I am an East Braintree Little League alum. I have played on that field. This Town is a baseball town. This field is in need to bring it into regulations. This is a significant upgrade.

Chairman Reynolds asked if any Committee members would like to speak on Order 23 011.

Julia Flaherty, Vice-Chairwoman stated it is nice to review these projects with people who care in attendance. Thank you for coming out.

Councilor Flaherty asked to what extent does the plan regarding flooding being addressed to keep the fields from being flooded.

Kelly Phelan stated that the Watson park project was first to stabilize the wall and the berm came along after to prolong the life of the park and protect it from storm surge.

Councilor Flaherty asked do we have a plan to address the seawall issue? How long will it last.

John Thompson, stated during an extreme event and astronomical high tide their appeared to be some water that was coming through the wall. It was very localized and appeared to be very minor. We inspected the wall and saw no damage but traces of where the water was coming in. We will do an assessment and do a short term repair and look at possibly long term repair. We are looking at grant fund options.

Kelly Phelan stated it will last through 2070. The higher fields will still be useable.

Councilor Maglio stated anytime there was conversation around making a change at Watson there is now a turnaround with the community. Some concerns were signs on the fences and adjust where they will be placed. We mentioned ADA for batting cages. Having parking/traffic enforcement in that area a couple of times would make a big difference. Signage to encourage parking at Smith Beach would be helpful.

Christopher Griffin stated Signage would direct folks on how to walk from Smith Beach to Watson Park.

Melissa SantucciRozzi stated once we go from concept to design phase these items will be incorporated.

Councilor Maglio stated as part of this plan we are losing parking spaces.

Christopher Griffin stated there will be no extension to the parking lot. The spots taken out are spots avoided due to the possibility of a ball hitting the car.

Councilor Maglio stated I would hope soil testing will take place before any games are played due to the recent chemical fire. This is a critical piece. This should be a coordinated effort in conjunction with and paid for by Clean Harbors.

President Boericke stated looking back at the original vote from October 2021, which was for the appropriation for the design study.

Melissa SantucciRozzi stated the plans are conceptual. This was a planning and sizing exercise on what can fit where. If the plans are approved Weston/Sampson will now go and complete a full design that will be a permitting level plan that Kelly and I would get involved in reviewing.

President Boericke asked if the plans do not pass the next steps? Is there a chance the Conservation Commission or Planning Board do not pass this?

Director SantucciRozzi stated we do not anticipate this will not be permissible. It will be in accordance of the wetlands protection act.

President Boericke stated she received some concerns about ADA and we want to be mindful this field in its future state is going to work for everybody. Is there an opportunity for the Commission on Disabilities could weigh in on the final punch list with the contractor.

Director SantucciRozzi stated we do forward our plans to all departments. If the committee wants to discuss further the committee is welcome to do so. Early in the process we request those to identify any issues.

President Boericke asked if this is a formal agreement between the town and the EBLL. I might request there be a formal memorandum of understanding because 20 years from now these same dedicated people might not be here. So everyone knows who is responsible and for what. It protects both parties.

Andrew Berman, President East Braintree Little League stated there has been a revitalization of EBLL. We have 22 board members. We have dedicated to plan for the long term. We purchased the poop Zamboni that will remove a majority of the goose droppings. We are going to vote to purchase a machine to keep the fields in pristine condition. This is a dedicated group. We take pride in Watson Park. The way the field looks and is maintained tells our children what we think about them.

Chairman Reynolds stated my questions have been answered. Thank you Mr. Berman.

Chairman Reynolds asked if there is a Motion for Order 23 011.

Motion read by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council:

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 \$737,142 from the CPA Undesignated Fund for the Watson Park - Delorey Field Rehabilitation, (Assessors Map 3001, Block 0, Lot 1B). Said funds shall be expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Director of Planning and Community Development.

Motion: by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council to Approve Order 23 011

Second: by Councilor Maglio

Vote: For (3—Flaherty, Maglio, Reynolds), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

- **23 009 Superintendent of Schools: MSBA Statement of Interest Core Project Braintree High School or take up any action relative thereto**

Chairman Reynolds asked if there was anyone who would like to speak on Order 23 009.

Superintendent Lee stated this is a request to allow me to submit to the MSBA Statement of Interest Core Project Braintree High School. This will be the 6th attempt. It is required that the Town Council authorize this.

Chairman Reynolds asked if any Committee members would like to speak on Order 23 009.

Councilor Flaherty asked will this be our year?

Superintendent Lee stated honestly, I do not think this is our year but I do feel we are getting close. We are up against school systems that are more dire than we are.

Chairman Reynolds asked if there is a Motion for Order 23 009.

Motion read by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council:

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 7, 2023, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the Town Council of Braintree, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated February 1, 2023 for the Braintree High School located at 128 Town Street, Braintree, Massachusetts, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future: Priority #5: Replacement, renovation or modernization of the school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility; Priority #7: Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with the state and approved local requirements; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town of Braintree or the Braintree School Department to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Motion: by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council to Approve Order 23 009

Second: by Councilor Maglio

Vote: For (3–Flaherty, Maglio, Reynolds), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

- **23 010 Mayor: Transfer Funds from Human Resources Salary Reserve or take up any action relative thereto (Public Hearing at full Council)**

Chairman Reynolds asked if there was anyone from the Mayor's office who would like to speak on Order 23 010.

Cindy DePina, Human Resources Director explained the Town continues to negotiate successor collective bargaining agreements with our unions and, in addition to the agreement reached with the Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO, Local No. 466 (UWUA), the Town has reached agreement with the Braintree Library Staff Association, Local 4928 (BLSA). In order to implement the terms of the agreement for Fiscal Year 2023, I am requesting the transfer of funds to support a one percent (1%) wage increase for the current fiscal year. In total the wage increase for the BLSA is one and a half percent (1.5%) and the balance of half a percent (.5%) is coming out of the existing Library budget. This is a fair and affordable agreement that stays within the fiscal parameters that were originally requested and approved in the 2023 budget. As a result, funds for these contractual increases are to be transferred from the Town's salary reserve account in the current Human Resources budget. This is not a request for any new fiscal appropriations. The total amount to be transferred is \$8,620.76 and will be funded entirely through the Human Resources Reserve Line (0115204 578050). The current balance of the line, as approved in the original FY23 Budget less the funds transferred for the non-union salary increases, is \$407,749.25. A detailed breakdown of the transfers, including the position, the FY23 budgeted salary amount, the value of the contractual increase and the total transfer amount per position, is attached for your reference.

Chairman Reynolds asked if any Committee members would like to speak on Order 23 010.

Chairman Reynolds asked if there is a Motion for Order 23 010.

Motion read by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council:

MOTION: That the Town vote to amend .the wage and salary classification schedules, as most recently amended by appropriating the sum of \$8,620.76 for the purpose of funding a wage increase for the library employees effective July 1, 2022, and for this purpose the sum of \$8,620.76 be transferred from the Human Resources-Employee Benefits Program-Reserve Line (0115204 578050) and further, that the Director of Municipal Finance is authorized to allocate said sums to and among the various accounts affected thereby in such amounts as are proper and required. In anticipation of approval of these agreements, funds were appropriated to the reserve account in the originally approved Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

Motion: by Councilor Flaherty for Favorable Recommendation to the full Council to Approve Order 23 010

Second: by Councilor Maglio

Vote: For (3–Flaherty, Maglio, Reynolds), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:05p.m. by Roll Call Vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan M. Cimino
Clerk of the Council

Documents provided for Meeting

- 23 011 Mayor: CPC Appropriation—Watson Park – Delorey Field Rehabilitation, (Assessors Map 3001, Block 0, Lot 1B) or take up any action relative thereto (*Public Hearing at full Council*)
- 23 009 Superintendent of Schools: MSBA Statement of Interest Core Project Braintree High School or take up any action relative thereto
- 23 010 Mayor: Transfer Funds from Human Resources Salary Reserve or take up any action relative thereto (*Public Hearing at full Council*)