

BrooklineCAN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes April 15, 2026

Attendees: Marilyn Benson, Carol Caro, Susan Granoff, Yolanda Rodriguez, John Seay, Ruth Seidman, David Trevvett, Matthew Weiss, Emily Williams, Sonia Wong.

1. Review Minutes

- a. Remove Jessica going forward.
- b. No other changes.
- c. Approved.

2. Candidates Forum (Carol Caro)

- a. April 16, 4PM-6PM – wrap up before 7PM required.
 - i. Moderator is Sandy Gadsby.
 - ii. Select Board – 3 candidates for 2 spots.
 - iii. School Board – 4 candidates for 3 spots.
 - iv. Library Committee – 5 candidates for 4 spots.
- b. Table will be set up for people who are running for office, but are not town-wide offices, to be able to put out their literature.
 - i. Carol will be early to help set up.
- c. School Committee will go first.
- d. Matt is timekeeper.
- e. Membership/BrooklineCAN table – Sonia will have it set up.
- f. Audience questions – More time for audience questions only one formal question.
- g. Publicity – BIG will record the Forum and it will be available on the website and delivered via social media.
 - i. Recording will be on the front page of the website.
 - ii. Forum is only vehicle recording all 3 boards.
 - iii. Suggested email blast re available recording.
 - iv. On LWV, BIG and BrooklineCAN websites.
 - v. Send a flyer out tonight on social media and email.

3. Treasurers report (John Seay)

- a. No input from the Senior Center Foundation this month.
- b. Contributions – 9 from \$10 to \$55, average of \$240.
- c. Note – BrooklineCAN checking account managed by the Foundation.
- d. Need QuickBooks report or access to QuickBooks.

4. Projects

- a. Set up Nominating Committee
 - i. Two Co-Chairs and Jon Seay as in the past.
 - ii. Requested an additional person.
 - iii. Note – Some terms are up in June.

- iv. Note – Committee Chairs and Yolanda terms end when they leave their positions.
 - v. Note – Open At-Large spots would like to fill.
 - vi. Ask Diane Abrams – Member of BrooklineCAN and Neighbors Connect.
 - vii. Will ask Julia Herskovitz of Communications.
 - viii. Carol suggested Mary McConnell also of Communications.
 - ix. Ruth – Will report back next month and vote in June.
 - x. Emily – Suggested Claire Bonfillio.
 - xi. Susan – Suggested Susan Cohen and she will talk to her.
 - xii. New positions begin July 1st.
 - xiii. Emily will set up Nominating Committee Zoom meeting.
- b. Supporting BIG

https://brookline.news/brookline-interactive-group-furloughs-nearly-half-its-staff-as-financial-squeeze-continues/?utm_medium=emaol&utm_campaign=Newspack%20Newsletter%20%2852602%29&utm_source=8ed387ec27

- i. BIG furloughed nearly half its staff due to financial squeeze.
 - ii. Older adults benefit from BIG.
 - iii. BIG tapes and distributes Candidate Forum recording.
 - iv. BIG enables the AFC-TV program.
 - v. Discuss donation from BrooklineCAN to BIG.
 - vi. Carol recommended \$1,000 plus.
 - vii. John Seay motion approved to donate \$1,000 to BIG.
 - viii. Agreed to publicize our donation.
 - ix. Generally agreed that those BrooklineCAN members that can afford it should give generously to BIG as a major communications vehicle for older adults in Brookline.
 - x. Article this month's newsletter by John Seay supporting BIG.
- c. Age-Friendly Business Campaign – Carol
- i. 5 new businesses to add to our collection.
 - ii. Note – Mailbox for BrooklineCAN in Senior Center.
 - iii. Need to train people at desk re BrooklineCAN existence.
- d. Partner Project: Spring Coffee Social with Neighbors Connect – June 2026
- i. Newbury offering free space for 45 people on a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday and they provide refreshments.
 - ii. Across from Fisher Hill Park (potential community center)
 - iii. Transportation to be discussed, but available parking.
 - iv. Assist – Matt, Yolanda, Emily, Marilyn

- v. Background per Emily – Decision of both groups to have a social, to try to recruit members for both groups, to try to bring awareness to both groups.
- vi. The two groups complement each other since they are a village, we are a non-profit coalition advocacy group.
- vii. We have access to services via the Senior Center that they do not, but they have discounted home care services, active lists for in-home supports, handymen, but they don't have a presence in Brookline.
- viii. Susan will plan Neighbors Connect for May LCAC meeting.
- ix. Matt will organize the project (Emily, Marilyn, Yolanda)
- x. Note – Michael Sandman, former Select Board member, moved to The Newbury.
- xi. Newbury residents will be invited so we could get new members and perhaps Michael Sandman for Steering.
- xii. Note – Will be a social meeting only.
- xiii. Note – We can accept members from JP.
- xiv. **Matt – Please send any thoughts as to what we want and can get from this activity.**

5. Annual Meetings

- a. Fall Forum – October 2026
 - i. Different approach for the annual meeting, a fall forum.
 - ii. Possibly in October, so just be thinking about that, and be thinking about topics.
 - iii. Carol – Forum focus on how to become an advocate.
 - iv. Carol - Experienced advocates from different organizations.
 - v. Carol – Send speaker recommendations to Ruth.
 - vi. Note – Senior Center fundraising event moved to spring.
 - vii. Susan – Suggested contacting National Council on Aging for speaker advocates.
 - viii. Susan – Jewish Holidays are in September so clear.

6. Committee Reports

- a. Membership (Marilyn Benson)
 - i. Several renewals and 1 new member (daughter for parents)
- b. Nominating Committee (to be named in April)
- c. Communications
 - i. Newsletter – (Ruth Seidman) – BIG, election (encouraging drop off of mail in ballots because it will be late).
 - ii. News releases and Outreach – *****
 - iii. Website and social media – (John Seay & Matt Weiss) – John working on add to calendar function for events page of website.

- iv. AFC-TV – (John Seay) Episode 58 is Caitlin Starr of ODEICR and Episode 59 is Friendship Works.
- d. LCAC & Notetaker – (Susan Granoff)
 - i. Last meeting was the third candidate for Select Board, Anthony Buono, and also the new library director, Jill Mercurio, doing a presentation with great feedback.
 - ii. 5/11 meeting – Neighbors Connect if they are interested.
- e. Education
 - i. No report.

7. Review of 2026 Priorities (Develop plans for each)

- a. No discussion.

8. Old and New Business

- a. David – Commission on Disability and Pedestrian Advisory Committee are trying to arrange a joint meeting this summer in which we invite DPW leadership and experts to talk about the problem of tree roots and sidewalks, and all the problems.
 - i. BCoD meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, starting at 5.30, on July 8th, Wednesday, 5.30 p.m.
 - ii. Erin says she's going to try to get staff to hold that date, and she will be talking with others in DPW to figure who are the right people to participate.
 - iii. Discussion followed re the importance of walking as people age and the need to make the sidewalks safe.

9. Next Steering Committee meeting: May 20, 2026 at 3 PM