

BrooklineCAN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes May 21, 2025

Attendees: Marilyn Benson, Ruthann Dobek, Susan Granoff, Yolanda Rodriguez, John Seay, Ruth Seidman, David Trevvett, Matthew Weiss, Emily Williams, Sonia Wong. Staff: Jessica Milley-Gee

1. Welcome to Emily Williams

- a. Introduction of Emily Williams to BrooklineCAN Steering Committee and an opportunity for Steering Committee members to introduce their connection with BrooklineCAN to Emily
- b. John Seay
 - i. Webmaster and Treasurer of BrooklineCAN.
 - ii. Manages membership database.
 - iii. Started shortly after original founders of BrooklineCAN.
- c. Sonia Wong
 - i. Involved since the beginning of BrooklineCAN.
 - ii. Originally did data entry of membership database.
 - iii. Budget report and expense report.
- d. Yolanda Rodriguez
 - i. CoA
- e. Marilyn Benson
 - i. Newest – 5/6 months involved with BrooklineCAN Steering.
 - ii. Membership committee rep – working with Bea Mikulecky.
 - iii. History of calls and emails by Marilyn to bring in members.
 - iv. Rewriting membership letters.
- f. Susan Granoff
 - i. Involved starting about 10 years ago.
 - ii. Originally attended LCAC meetings.
 - iii. Frank Caro encouraged her involvement with BrooklineCAN and Brookline Town government.
 - iv. Changed her life by involvement as TMM and in Town Finance/Advisory Committee.
 - v. After Frank died was elected to Chair LCAC for last 4 years.
 - vi. Steering Committee for about 7 years
 - vii. BrooklineCAN has made a huge difference in her life.
- g. Matt Weiss
 - i. BrooklineCAN since 2012 – current role is Clerk.
 - ii. Do social media for BrooklineCAN (Facebook and X)
 - iii. Frank Caro was somewhat of a mentor.
 - iv. Enjoy BrooklineCAN.
- h. David Trevvett
 - i. Melissa and David Trevvett introduced by Jude Kidd.

- ii. Membership Committee with Molly Turlish. (10 years ago).
- iii. Frank Caro brought David onto Steering Committee.
- iv. Worked years Town create Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
- v. 2017 Town created Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC).
- vi. Frank was 1st Chair and year later asked David to take over.
- vii. Chair PAC since 2018 and TMM.
- viii. Note – Walking important to older adults & key “open space”
- i. Ruth Seidman
 - i. Started a few years after BrooklineCAN started.
 - ii. Worked on Communications Committee with newsletter.
 - iii. Asked by Carol Caro to represent Communications on the Steering Committee.
 - iv. Joined Education Committee and learned older adult issues.
 - v. Became Chair of Steering Committee after Frank passed.
 - vi. Worked on Washington Square snow clearance studies.

2. Review of Candidates’s Forum 2025 Thursday, April 10th, 4-6:00 PM

- a. Wonderful event and thanks to Janet for her leadership.
- b. Lessons learned
 - i. Moderator Devon Fields – fantastic job.
 - ii. Time allocated to Select Board members was productive.
 - iii. Need a list of the candidates to distribute.
 - iv. Perhaps printouts of the ballot.
 - v. Consider raising speakers up by standing or a stage?
 - vi. Consider monitors to display speakers.

3. Annual Meeting 2025

- a. Date: Thursday, September 18th, 2025
- b. Planning Committee Chair: Emily Williams
- c. Planning group members needed – consider the following
 - i. Ruth Seidman – yes
 - ii. Marilyn Benson – yes
 - iii. Susan Howards – possible
 - iv. Zvi Bodi – possible
 - v. Bea Mikulecky – possible
 - vi. Ellen Bick – possible
- d. Consider previous year programs (note 5-7pm).
- e. Theme “15th anniversary of BrooklineCAN”.
- f. Creative thinking will also apply.
- g. Plan to thank Janet Gelbart at the meeting.

4. Nominating Committee

- a. Current member list:
 - https://www.brooklinecan.org/about_us.html
- b. Report of proposed slate for FY 2026
 - i. Emily Williams – Co-Chair

- ii. Ruth Seidman – Co-Chair
- iii. Matt Weiss – Clerk
- iv. John Seay – Treasurer
- c. Committees
 - i. Marilyn Benson – Membership Committee
 - ii. Carol Caro – Communications Committee
 - iii. Susan Granoff – Livable Community Advocacy Committee
- d. At Large
 - i. Bea Mikulecky
 - ii. David Trevvett
 - iii. Sonia Wong
 - iv. Can fill other At Large slots during the year.
- e. Vote will be in June.
- f. Interested in getting “Founders” reinvolved on Steering Committee or other ways.
 - i. Emily is reaching out.

5. Update on MetroBridge Project

- a. Presentation at the Senior Center Tuesday April 29th.
 - i. BU student project to characterize aspects of age-friendly and dementia-friendly environments.
 - ii. Focused on a park, BrooklineVillage Library and Coolidge Corner Library, and the Senior Center.
 - iii. Design of spaces and buildings amenable to those with dementia issues or other disabilities.
 - iv. Site visits on their own and a site visit with an older adult.
 - v. Open and positive outlook and willing to learn from others.
 - vi. The tools may eventually be used statewide.
- b. Will share any material and final reports.
- c. Note Sarah Kaplan was involved.

6. Discussion of BrooklineCAN’s relationship to Brookline Senior Center Foundation and administrative tasks

- a. Replacement for Sonia is Anya who will handle admin and funds from Brookline Senior Center Foundation to BrooklineCAN.
 - i. Includes access to PayPal account for BrooklineCAN.
- b. Note Foundation is also in transition.

7. Treasurers report (John Seay)

- a. Note 1 per year charge by Foundation for handling money.
 - i. \$385
- b. Expenses
 - i. Newsletter (300 newsletters sent each month)
 - ii. Summer – only 1 printing for 2 months.
 - iii. Sandy – paid monthly & BrooklineCAN charged twice/year.

8. Committee Reports

- a. Membership
 - i. Need to know ideas for BrooklineCAN going forward.
 - ii. Note survey of needs of older adults planned by the UMass Genealogical Institute.
 - iii. Needs 1 person from BrooklineCAN 1 person from CoA and 1 person from AFCC to assist with outreach.
 - iv. Kathy Burnes is facilitating on of the focus groups.
 - v. Possibly conduct conference after survey to focus on results.
 - vi. Full page ad for BrooklineCAN in next month's Beacon.
(Result of Carol Caro's donation to Senior Center for Ruthann's retirement and she donated it to BrooklineCAN).
- b. Communication
 - i. Newsletter – 2 new features: 1 on committees (1st is on Membership and in June Communications) and 2 on nature sanctuaries in Brookline)
 - ii. News Releases – No report.
 - iii. Website – No report.
 - iv. AFC-TV – Neil Wishinsky, Town Moderator.
 - v. Social Media – No report.
- c. Livable Communities Advocacy Committee
 - i. Currently on hiatus.
 - ii. New series by Town Departments re services each department provides for older adults.
 - iii. Depends on Susan's status going forward.
 - iv. Note taker depends on Janet Gelbart's participation.

9. Old and New Business

- a. Pedestrian lighting is constantly denied as a specific need.
- b. Surveys are step 1 followed by setting of priorities.
- c. Consistently older adult issues are priority 3 (lowest).
- d. Next Month – Review priorities as to what has and has not been accomplished and start thinking about priorities for FY2026.

10. Next Steering Committee meeting: 3pm Wednesday, June 18th, 2025

11. Priorities/Activities for 2025 as discussed at 12/2024 meeting

- a. Participate in CoA director transition and work with new Director: Emily Williams
- b. Support more secure funding for CoA as senior population grows and needs increase
- c. Candidates' Forum
- d. Annual Meeting in the fall

- e. Participate in offering educational events
- f. Continue efforts to engage and build membership; clarify role of the organization and communicate
- g. Seek ways to revitalize Age-Friendly Business Program

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 5/21/2025: 178

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 3/14/2025: 183

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 2/15/2025: 176

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 1/15/2025: 184

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 12/16/2024: 186

BrooklineCAN Membership as of 11/18/2024: 186

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Why become a member of BrooklineCAN: The Voice for Brookline's older residents

Your membership strengthens BrooklineCAN's advocacy

BrooklineCAN, the Brookline Community Aging Network, works to keep issues important to Brookline's older residents in front of Town leadership and advocates for policies, programs, and funding that make Brookline an age-friendly place to live.

Our Livable Community Advocacy Committee's "conversations" with Select Board members and Town staff educate Town decision-makers about the concerns of Brookline's older residents.

• Your membership helps improve the lives of Brookline's older residents

It means we can sponsor a Town Election Forum each year, distribute print copies of our monthly newsletter, update and expand our age-friendly businesses list, and sponsor more in-person and on-line programs.

• Your membership helps improve the lives of all Town residents

BrooklineCAN is a catalyst for creating new Town programs, like TRIPPS (alternative transportation programs); new Town priorities, like pedestrian-friendly sidewalk lighting and benches; and new Town committees, like the Pedestrian Advisory Committee, which are now independent of BrooklineCAN.

***Your membership opens up opportunities for you**

You can connect with others by joining one of BrooklineCAN's committees, engage in exciting projects, use your skills, and make new friends.

A yearly donation will get you an individual membership (including the monthly Newsletter) in Brookline's only voice for older residents.

PLEASE JOIN US TODAY.

*******BrooklineCAN is an all-volunteer organization*******