

Dear LCAC Members,

My name is Anthony Buono, and I am running for the Brookline Select Board because I believe our town's future depends on a leadership style that is driven by rigorous analysis rather than ideology. As a resident, Town Meeting Member, and member of the Advisory Committee, I have spent my time in government focused on modernizing Brookline's economic base. To protect the services we value, we must make our town a place where businesses can thrive, and the tax base can grow through pro-growth policies and disciplined fiscal responsibility.

With a Master's in mathematics and statistics from BU and a career in Data Management consulting, I bring a quantitative lens to town governance. On the Advisory Committee's Administration & Finance and Capital subcommittees, I have scrutinized our debt budget and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Most of my Advisory Committee colleagues have endorsed me, because they know I understand the levers of municipal finance. This experience is critical as we navigate the post-ARPA fiscal landscape.

But technical expertise is only half the battle. Members of the Advisory Committee hold an array of opinions, yet those on both the left and the right agree that I would be a strong addition to the Select Board. At a time when polarization is common, even here in Brookline, I pride myself on finding the common ground necessary to move policy forward.

My priority on the Select Board will be fiscal stewardship. On the Advisory Committee, I have been at the forefront of confronting wasteful spending and protecting our AAA bond rating. But 'playing defense' is not enough.

To sustain our town, we must grow. We must be honest with ourselves. We cannot maintain our current level of services and housing without either structural overrides or devastating cuts. I choose a third path. We must expand our economic base. By making it easier for businesses to invest in Brookline and prioritizing high-yield, transit-oriented housing that brings in net revenue, we can create the sustainable tax base needed to fund our future.

As a Select Board Member, I won't be starting from scratch. I will inherit the Brookline Fiscal Advisory Committee Report, the Housing Production Plan, and the upcoming Comprehensive Plan. These aren't just 'half-baked' ideas. They are rigorous, data-backed analyses that have lived on the page for too long. My goal is to turn these plans into active policy. We don't need more studies; we need the political will to execute them.

We must harness this growth to improve the services available to all Brookline residents, especially our seniors. Our Senior Center is one of the most crucial assets in our town, and my platform makes it clear that strengthening senior services is a top priority. What may be a minor inconvenience for some can be a significant barrier for those who moved here for our age-friendly community or who have lived here for decades and wish to age in place.

Infrastructure failures are a prime example. Uneven sidewalks are a threat to mobility. Many seniors have told me they are afraid to walk their own neighborhoods because of these hazards.

On the Advisory Committee, I was proud to support the DPW's FY2025 increase in sidewalk maintenance. We've also deployed a precision tool to shave uneven 'lips' in the pavement, which is a cost-effective solution that saves the Town money while providing peace of mind.

I recently saw the impact of this work firsthand. While at Tatte, I struck up a conversation with a neighbor and walked her home. When I pointed out a freshly shaved sidewalk as an example of our recent town initiatives, she told me that a fall last year had damaged her ankle and 'ruined her entire year.' Seeing the fix, her face lit up. It was a reminder that these pieces of concrete are investments in independence.

As someone who cares deeply about mental health, I will prioritize working with the Senior Center and Council on Aging (COA) to expand outreach programs that combat isolation and loneliness. Solo-Aging is a critical challenge for Brookline's future, and we must treat it with the same urgency as our physical infrastructure.

The data is clear that social connection is a clinical necessity that reduces the risk of depression and cognitive decline. We must do more than just maintain the status quo. We need to proactively reach those who have become disconnected. I am committed to ensuring the COA has the resources to sustain and grow vital programs like 'Aging Solo,' 'Wise Aging,' and their various arts initiatives.

The expiration of ARPA funds has placed our senior services in a critical position. One of the most significant casualties of this funding cliff is our medical transportation program. What was once a non-means-tested lifeline has been replaced by a \$10 voucher system burdened with restrictive conditions. This is unacceptable for a town that prides itself on being a 'Livable Community.'

If I am honored to serve on the Select Board, I will work directly with the Senior Center and the COA to formalize and fund a robust medical transportation program. This is a primary reason why I support the override. It would provide an additional \$175,000 in dedicated funding to the COA, which can and should be used to restore transportation services.

Thank you for being such active participants in our local government. Your advocacy is a testament to Brookline's commitment to showing up, speaking out, and fighting for what is just. Thank you for rejecting cynicism and for believing that a government by and for the people is not just our tradition, but our future.

Best,

Anthony Buono

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Select Board Candidate