



TOWN OF BROOKLINE

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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Best Practices for Inclusion in Brookline Commissions, Committees, and Boards

Civic engagement and increased public participation in Town wide decisions is important to an inclusive and sustainable community. It is important to provide meaningful and accessible opportunities to increase public participation within the Town. In addition to communicating meetings more effectively and making meeting locations more accessible and inclusive, it is imperative to empower the diverse and underrepresented residents of the community to participate civically in Brookline.

Based on findings from Civic Engagement Barrier surveys, personal narratives, and collaborative work done by InclusiveBrookline, recommendations from the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations to further cultivate a community of civically engaged people and inclusive decision making groups are provided:

1. Identify groups that are particularly affected by your Committee's work and find ways to reach out to them and build a dialog to address their concerns and suggested actions. This is in addition to any outreach you perform for a specific topic, e.g. outreach about a specific warrant article. Other groups may have meetings of their own that members of your Committee can attend. Go to listen, not just to speak.
2. Mobilize and set up at different events within the Town (e.g. Brookline Day, BHA barbecues, Rotary Breakfast) to increase your committee's presence and accessibility.
3. Host Committee meetings in other community locations such as Town Libraries, Neighborhood Schools, or other accessible locations in Brookline neighborhoods beyond the immediate environs of Town Hall/Main Library/Public Safety/Public Health buildings. For example: Commission on Disability hold meetings at Elderly/Disabled Housing buildings, Commission for Women hold meetings at Family Housing buildings. If you need help identifying some locations for your committee to meet or how to book them, please contact Caitlin Starr, CDE at 617-730-2345 or at cstarr@brooklinema.gov.
4. Update your Committee's website to ensure that the information is accessible and current and provides working contact information for the members. If you need assistance determining if your website is accessible, please contact Caitlin Starr, CDE at 617-730-2345 or at cstarr@brooklinema.gov.
5. Consider times of meetings and how to make more accessible for parents, caregivers, or other members of the community. This may include allowing for remote participation by the public. Offer to provide childcare for your groups meeting in the Meeting Notices, if you are able.

If you have any questions about how your Committee can help to increase civic and community engagement within Brookline's decision making groups, please contact the Assistant Director in the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations, Caitlin Starr, CDE, at 617-730-2345 or at cstarr@brooklinema.gov.