

BROOKLINE SELECT BOARD APPROVES NEW TOWN COUNSEL APPOINTMENT

BROOKLINE –Joseph Callanan, Weymouth’s town solicitor, received unanimous approval for his appointment to the town counsel of Brookline at the Brookline Select Board Meeting on March 1st.

During the vote, select board members spoke highly of Callanan, who will be replacing Patricia Correa, the former First Assistant Town Counsel, and welcomed him with open arms into his position at the Office of the Town Counsel, which provides legal counsel to the residents of Brookline.

“I look forward to Joe's arrival in the town and his first day of work for the town. And I think we're going to get good results from this, and I thank the members of the committee that did the search,” said Select Board Member John VanScoyoc at the remote meeting.

Meanwhile, Select Board Vice Chair Raul Fernandez emphasized the role Callanan will have in helping Brookline’s policymakers understand and push legal boundaries to achieve goals around climate change, racial justice, and more.

“We need the kind of town council that's going to work with us to continue to take those big swings. And I think Joe, based on our conversation, is up and ready for the challenge,” said Fernandez.

The recruitment process began with screening panels created by Town Administrator Mel Kleckner, who holds this responsibility under the [Brookline Town Administrator Act](#). During the screening process, Callanan, a BU graduate, was interviewed and asked to do several tasks, including creating an impromptu presentation on marijuana consumption in relation to Brookline as well as selecting warrant articles that he wanted to learn more about.

“I was very impressed with the way he handled a question that was posed to him about why he wanted this position, and he was very earnest when he said that he misses working with other

lawyers. And that was something that I identify with because COVID has been very isolating for many of us,” said Select Board Chair Heather Hamilton, who was part of the panel along with advisory committee member and attorney Chris Westfall, a library trustee and attorney Koinonia Martin-Page, and town meeting member and attorney John Karen.

After being recommended by the screening panel, Callanan, who also has a law degree from Northeastern University, underwent background checks and social media reviews by Kleckner.

“I’m a big fan of transparency and inclusion, but some processes, just, you need a committee like the one we have, a hiring committee with expertise and input. You can’t hire people for important positions by complete town consensus,” said Select Board Member Miriam Aschkensay.

Prior to his position as the town solicitor of Weymouth, Callanan worked in the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office under a few different administrations, under one of which most recently he supervised all of the real estate litigation for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Due to his approval to the appointment of Town Counsel by Kleckner, Hamilton, VanScoyoc, Fernandez, Aschkensay, as well as Select Board Member Bernard Greene, Callanan will transition to Brookline by the end of the month.