

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

* MINUTES *

May 16, 2012

6:30 p.m. A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened by Chairman Gerald Wasserman at the Needham Town Hall. Present were Mr. Daniel Matthews, Mr. John Bulian, Mr. Maurice Handel, Mr. Matthew Borrelli and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick.

6:30 p.m. Newman School Playground
Ms. Holly Clarke addressed the Board seeking assistance in obtaining funding for the Newman School playground. She said that the fundraisers have raised approximately \$150,000 and the goal is \$250,000. She said that she feels the Town should contribute to the project.

Mr. Wasserman stated that the Town's contributing to a school playground would be a change in practice.

Ms. Louise Miller said that it is important that the playground be ready for the school's opening in the fall. She said that Newman is the Town's largest elementary school with a diverse population and that the Town should contribute. She said that she feels that it is unfair to burden those parents who happen to be at the school at the time of construction.

Mr. Bulian said that he is sympathetic to the need to have the playground constructed. He noted that the playground pieces can be added in phases. He said that his work on Greene's Field suggested that the playground could be built for closer to \$150,000.

Ms. Patty Carey, Director of Park and Recreation, said that while she hadn't met with the Committee, she had provided the fundraisers with guidance about the qualified vendors. She said that it is not necessary to provide full surfacing and that partial surfacing would be cheaper. She said that engineered fiber surfacing is ADA compliant.

Mr. Matthews suggested that the Superintendent and Town Manager evaluate the situation and make a recommendation.

Mr. David Tobin, Town Counsel said that if the project is funded by private means, no procurement is required but prevailing wage must be paid. If the Town contributes to the project, it is subject to the uniform procurement law.

Mr. Steve Popper, Director of Design and Construction, informed the Board that the fundraisers have asked the Newman School

contractor – Consigli – for a donation and that Consigli may perform the installation work. He said that the existing structure has been deemed unsafe, and must be relocated in the final site work component of the project.

Mr. Bulian said that in his view playgrounds should be provided for within the project budget – the burden should not be on the families.

Ms. Miller said there is a grey area with respect to the bidding laws and cautioned that additional Town involvement may eliminate the grey area and compel public procurement. She asked if the Town is willing to be a safety net in case the project cannot raise sufficient funds.

Mr. Handel said that he feels the Town should support playground construction, but that given the uncertainty and late hour of the request he cannot give an immediate answer.

Mr. Wasserman noted that a concrete answer cannot be provided until the project is vetted, but that all members are suggesting they want to help. He said that he agreed that the Town should revisit the question of playground funding.

Mr. Borrelli said that he is open to use of Town funds once proper planning is complete, and that there are a number of boards and committees that would need to be involved in the project.

7:20 p.m. **Motion: Mr. Bulian moved that the Board adjourn its meeting contemporaneously with the adjournment of Town Meeting. Mr. Borelli seconded the motion. Unanimous: 5-0.**

8:00 p.m. **Motion: Mr. Bulian moved that the Board voted to oppose Mr. Heller’s motion to refer Article 31 – Appropriate for Property Acquisition. Mr. Borrelli seconded the motion. Unanimous: 5-0.**

Note: The Annual Town Meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.