

**Town of Needham  
Select Board  
Minutes for March 24, 2020  
Needham Town Hall  
Powers Hall**

7:00 p.m. A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair John A. Bulian. Those present were Maurice P. Handel, Matthew D. Borrelli, Daniel P. Matthews, and Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager. Marianne B. Cooley, Select Board member participated by phone. Recording Secretary Mary Hunt recorded via the Needham Channel.

7:00 p.m. COVID-19 Action Update:  
Ms. Fitzpatrick reported to the Board the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is reporting 1,159 cases of COVID-19, of which 129 are in Norfolk County. She said 8 active cases and 1 recovered case is in Needham, indicating the number will be updated each Tuesday. She reminded the public the number does not reflect the reality of the situation, strongly encouraging continued social distancing. She stated the Emergency Operations Center at the Rosemary Complex is being staffed by Tim McDonald, Tiffany Zike, Rebecca Ping, and Cyndi Roy Gonzalez, with all other staff working remotely. Ms. Fitzpatrick said efforts promoting social distancing include keeping all staff out of Town buildings, and only allowing people approved by her or Dave Davison, Assistant Town Manager, to enter the building. She said the nursing staff is working overtime answering questions from employees, the public, and businesses. Ms. Fitzpatrick reported the Center at the Heights is now delivering lunches to seniors who regularly ate meals at the CATH. She said the Town has partnered with Trader Joe's delivering weekly essential groceries to those in need. She noted many stores now have a policy allowing seniors and vulnerable residents to shop one-hour prior regular store hours. Ms. Fitzpatrick reported Youth and Family Services is working with Aging Services and students are contacting elderly residents to check on them. She said Cyndi Gonzalez is sending out daily updates via social media (Facebook and Twitter), and a new Coronavirus town web page will open tomorrow. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the RTS remains open; however, the Swap Shop and the scrap metal/electronics areas are closed. She said all commercial hauler stickers will be extended until the end of April 2020 and asked the Select Board to consider voting to allow residents without a sticker the ability to dispose of trash in yellow bags.

**Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to allow residents without an RTS sticker the ability to dispose of trash in yellow bags during the State of Emergency.**

**Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

Ms. Fitzpatrick implored the public not to flush anything other than toilet paper to avoid sewer backups. She said the Medical Reserve Corps has had a great turnout of volunteers, noting a person does not need to be a medical professional to sign up

as there are other positions to be filled. Ms. Fitzpatrick said donations to the Gift of Warmth program via the Health Department is a great way for people to help, noting checks can be made out to the Town of Needham Gift of Warmth and sent to or placed in the mailbox at Town Hall. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Governor approved legislation allowing the Board to move the Town election to a date certain. The Board agreed to discuss the possibility of moving the Town election and Town Meeting at the next Select Board meeting on Friday, March 27, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Matthews surmised if people continue social distancing and following the measures in place by the Governor, there is a possibility within the next 10 days or so, the effect could be taking the slope off the curve of cases or bringing it down quite a bit. Mr. Matthews said people should stay at home and contact their physician, except in extreme cases of illness. He commented people have been very good in complying with the changes. He said while the number of cases is likely to go up, at some point they will start to go down and people must understand it does not mean the situation is not a big deal. He said people must continue following public health guidance.

Mr. Borrelli asked if there is a way Needham can help small businesses? Ms. Fitzpatrick said restaurants with take-out service have been aggressively promoted by the Newton Needham Chamber and some of the relief from the Governor's bill will help small businesses with penalties or late fees.

Mr. Handel said information is key, thanking the Town Manager and staff for their efforts. He suggested residents peruse the town website instead of relying on information from other people. He said misinformation is destructive and counter to getting the situation under control.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked people to talk to neighbors, particularly those people who do not regularly use Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, and tell them of the available programs and daily updates.

7:22 p.m.

Public Hearing: Verizon Grant of Location - Noyes Street

Ms. Fitzpatrick said abutters were noticed and asked to send any concerns by email to the Town by 5:00 p.m. She said no questions or concerns had been received as of 7:00p.m. She said all paperwork is in order.

**Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to approve and sign a petition from Verizon New England Inc. and Eversource Energy to place one (1) JO pole, P.6, on the easterly side of Noyes Street at a point approximately 98' southeasterly from existing pole, P.5. This work is necessary for a new service.**

**Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

7:24 p.m. Open and Continue Public Hearing: Change of Ownership, Beneficial Interest & Manager - Spiga Restaurant, 18 Highland Circle, Needham.  
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked the Select Board to open and continue the public hearing for the Change in Ownership, Beneficial Interest & Manager for Spiga Restaurant as there was not sufficient time to re-notice the public hearing. She said written approval from the owners of Spiga agreeing to continue the public hearing until April 15, 2020 was received.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to continue this public hearing to its April 15, 2020 meeting.**  
**Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

7:25 p.m. Babson College Scholarships:  
Mr. Handel said the Select Board awards scholarships annually to local residents from a fund made available to the Town from Babson College. The number of scholarships and their size is determined by the Select Board and the Financial Aid Office of Babson College. Meredith Stover, Director of Financial Aid at Babson College, Board Vice Chair Moe Handel and Sandy Cincotta remotely met recently to review the applications.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to award the Town of Needham Babson Scholarships to the following applicants: Orin Chulita, Emma Capone, Constantino Silas, and Maria Colon Figueroa.**  
**Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

Mr. Matthews said the program has been sponsored by Babson College and has benefitted many candidates over the years. He thanked Babson College.

7:27 p.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:  
**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.**

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Solid Waste & Disposal**

**Recycling Advisory Committee**

**Wells Blanchard (term expires 6/30/2021)**

**CONSENT AGENDA \*=Backup attached**

- 1. Accept \$100 donation made to the Needham Health Division's Gift of Warmth Program from Shahin Sagafi, resident of Maryland.**
- 2.\* Water and Sewer Abatement #1289.**

**Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

7:28 p.m. Community Preservation Consultation - Proposals Under Review:  
Peter Pingitore, Chair, CPC and Carys Lustig, CPC Liaison spoke with the Board remotely about projects before the CPC for funding this year.

Mr. Pingitore said people who would like more information about the CPC and committee members should go to the Town website. He reviewed the charge of the CPC and the process for reviewing applications. He summarized current projects before the CPC for funding this year include the First Baptist Church Needham, First Parish Church in Needham, Growing Bed Area Expansion, Professional Design Services - Trail Identification, Claxton Field Light & Skin Renovation - Design, and Resurfacing of the Synthetic Track at DeFazio Park.

Discussion ensued on the applications for the First Baptist Church and the First Parish Church, both non-government organizations. Mr. Pingitore said legal counsel is being sought to work through the issue of addressing the permissibility of CPC funds in connection with renovation of a church. He said the goal is that any decision made be in compliance with applicable law. He noted each proponent is being asked to contribute a significant percentage of the budgeted amount for the project and the CPC is looking to enter into agreements to protect their investments with fall back provisions.

Mr. Borrelli commented he wants to make sure the investment by the Town in the First Baptist Church is sound, noting financial information was provided. He commented on the estimate for the First Parish Church and asked if more information is available? Mr. Borrelli asked if these projects will be ready to move forward to Town Meeting or postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak?

Mr. Pingitore said extensive scrutiny into the financials of the First Baptist Church was done knowing the congregation is small. He said, based on the CPC review, the church has a balanced budget and revenue coming from the daycare center, along with significant reserves. He noted the First Baptist Church has said they would commit to funding a little more than  $\frac{2}{3}$ 's of the project, with the town's portion being less than 25% of the funding. He said agreements with both churches would be in the nature of "claw back" agreements, but he is unsure if an agreement would be signed at the time of Town Meeting.

Mr. Handel said the criteria outlined for the historic preservation from these two churches is prudent and makes sense as it protects the Town's investment on historical assets of the entire community. He noted the First Parish Church houses the Paul Revere Bell and the church is an historical architectural asset along Great Plain Avenue. He concluded saying the projects are good investments if the legal issues can be solved.

Ms. Cooley said the presentation was helpful. She commented on historical preservation and the town's perspective of what historical preservation dollars are being used for going forward. She said the whole picture and money potentially available for funding is needed.

Mr. Pingitore said the CPC envisions funding to be less than \$150,000 for both projects. He briefly commented on the Emery Grover Building and possible use of CPC funds.

Mr. Bulian said he would like to see requests for funding from private institutions be a percentage of the project total, with a cap. He thanked Mr. Pingitore for his work.

Mr. Pingitore said there are many tools to use for private, non-governmental requests.

7:55 p.m. Open and Continue Public Hearing: Community Stormwater Mitigation Assessment  
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked the Select Board vote to open and continue the public hearing until April 15, 2020.

Mr. Bulian opened the hearing and asked for a motion to continue the public hearing to April 15, 2020.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to open and continue the Public Hearing for the Community Stormwater Mitigation Assessment to April 15, 2020. Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

7:56 p.m. Town Manager:  
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager appeared before the Board with 4 items to discuss:  
1. Approval of Appointment of Assistant Town Manager/Director of Operations  
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked the Board to appoint Katie King, the new Assistant Town Manager/Director of Operations. She said many applicants applied for the position. Per the Town Charter, the Select Board must vote to ratify the appointment.  
**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to approve the appointment of Katie King as Assistant Town Manager/Director of Operations effective June 1, 2020, in accordance with Section 20 (c) of the Town Charter. Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

The Board welcomed Ms. King to Needham and said they look forward to welcoming her at a public meeting in the near future.

2. Open Special Town Meeting Warrant  
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked the Select Board to vote to open the Special Town Meeting Warrant for May 11, 2020, recognizing Special Town Meeting may be rescheduled. She reviewed items contained in the Special Town Meeting.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to open the warrant for the May 11, 2020 Special Town Meeting. Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

3. Approve Memoranda of Agreement with Needham Police Union and Needham Police Superior Officers Association

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Town has reached agreement with both employee associations for a one-year contract extension and asked for the Board's approval.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board approve and sign the Memoranda of Agreement between the Town of Needham and the Needham Police Union and the Needham Police Superior Officers Association.**

**Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

4. Complete Streets Prioritization Plan

Ms. Fitzpatrick reviewed the Town's Complete Streets program and asked the Select Board to endorse the Complete Streets Funding Program Project Prioritization Plan document that is due April 1, 2020. If the prioritization plan is approved, the Town may seek funding for construction. Grant applications are due May 1, which gives the Town additional time to consider which project to submit.

**Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to endorse the Complete Streets Funding Program Project Prioritization Plan for submission to MassDOT.**

**Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

8:06 p.m.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Borrelli commented on the Tax Assistance Fund, noting the deadline to get the amount into the Warrant. The Board agreed to vote on the amount at their next meeting on Friday, March 27, 2020. Mr. Borrelli said he is inclined to increase the fund amount to \$50,000 based on the recommendation of the committee and especially in light of current world events.

Mr. Bulian said he is concerned as the Town may be called upon to assist people who do not qualify for senior tax relief, recognizing people will be under pressure, with some seniors seeing relief from the government. He said he does not know what requests will be made from the community and what money needs to be available.

Mr. Matthews said the presentation by the committee was very strong. He said there must be a metric for assistance. He said it makes sense to increase the amount to \$50,000 with the understanding it is the last big jump for the program as it moves to an inflation adjusted basis going forward. He commented private sector contributions must be built up in the next year.

Mr. Bulian said the next Select Board meeting will be by ZOOM on Friday, March 27, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

8:15 p.m.

Adjourn:

**Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting of Tuesday, March 24, 2020.**

**Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.**

A list of all documents used at this Select Board meeting are available at:

**<http://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx?AMID=99&Type=&ADID=>**