

# TOWN OF NEEDHAM



## SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

WEDNESDAY, February 10, 2016

7:30 P.M.

**Snow Date: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 7:30 P.M.**

JAMES HUGH POWERS HALL, NEEDHAM TOWN HALL

1471 HIGHLAND AVENUE

Additional information on particular warrant articles will be made available from time to time at [www.needhamma.gov/townmeeting](http://www.needhamma.gov/townmeeting) during the weeks leading up to the Special Town Meeting.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Norfolk, ss.

To either of the constables in the Town of Needham in said County, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Needham qualified to vote in elections and in Town affairs to meet at the Town Hall:

**WEDNESDAY, THE TENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2016**

At 7:30 in the afternoon, then and there to act upon the following articles, viz:

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**HUMAN RESOURCE ARTICLES**

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**ARTICLE 1: APPROVE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT –  
BCTIA/CUSTODIANS AND TRADES**

To see if the Town will vote to approve the funding of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Building Custodian and Trades Independent Association, and to appropriate a sum of money to defray the cost of salary and wages provided for under the agreement for fiscal year 2016; or take any other action relative thereto.

INSERTED BY: Board of Selectmen

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT: Recommendation to be made at Town Meeting

PERSONNEL BOARD RECOMMENDS THAT: Recommendation to be made at Town Meeting

*Article Information:* At the time of the printing of the warrant, the parties had not reached agreement on this contract.

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**GENERAL ARTICLES**

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**ARTICLE 2: AMENDMENTS TO THE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
AGREEMENT OF THE MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

To see if the Town will vote, consistent with Section VII of the existing “Agreement With Respect to the Establishment of a Technical and Vocational Regional School District” for the Minuteman Regional Vocational School District, to accept the amendments to said Agreement which have been initiated and approved by a vote of the Regional School Committee on December 21, 2015, and which have been submitted as a restated “Regional Agreement” bearing

the date of December 21, 2015 to the Board of Selectmen of each member town; or take any other action relative thereto.

INSERTED BY: Board of Selectmen

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT: Recommendation to be made at Town Meeting

*Article Information: This Article would approve revision of the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District Agreement. Ratification of the revised Agreement requires Town Meeting approval in all sixteen current member communities. The revision is part of an effort to advance a major capital project for Minuteman High School in coordination with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The current facility, built in the early 1970's, has serious building systems and capital maintenance issues, does not meet current code and architectural standards, and cannot optimally support Minuteman's vocational education program. The current MSBA timeline requires the District to secure necessary approvals for its share of capital borrowing by the end of June, 2016.*

*The changes in the revised agreement are intended to improve governance and cost sharing and facilitate realignment of the district, including allowing some communities to withdraw from membership before a decision has to be made on bonding the capital project, which will require assent of all member towns or a district-wide referendum. The recommended changes to the District Agreement have been proposed by the Minuteman School Committee based on the work of a study committee and substantial input from town officials and other stakeholders. Needham passed a similar proposed revision two years ago, but that agreement did not receive all sixteen necessary approval votes. Because this revision has some changes from the 2014 language, a second vote is required. Principal features of the revised Regional Agreement include:*

- 1. A new formula for sharing capital costs among member communities. The new formula includes factors for each community's enrollment at Minuteman, relative community ability to pay, and a minimum share for each community. The current formula attributes a five-student minimum to low-enrolling communities but is otherwise based only on enrollment.*
- 2. Reducing volatility in assessments by using a four year rolling average for enrollment-based charges, which are currently established by the previous year only.*
- 3. Weighted voting on the Minuteman School Committee based on each community's enrollment at Minuteman. The present agreement provides for one vote per town, even though some towns have much larger numbers of students at Minuteman and, even under the new agreement, will continue to carry a higher percentage of the costs. The new Agreement calls for weighted voting in most cases. Exceptions include votes to incur debt, which require approval by 2/3 of all School Committee members regardless of enrollment.*
- 4. Establishment of a policy, subject to state law, requiring per pupil charges for out of district students to be equal or greater than charges for in-district students.*
- 5. Appointment of Minuteman School Committee members by the boards of selectmen of the member town (or the mayor, in the case of a city), unless the town provides otherwise by bylaw or charter. It is hoped that a move to executive branch appointments, instead of moderators' appointments, will improve the level of accountability of the District to the member communities.*

6. *A more workable process for communities to withdraw from the district. The revised agreement provides several (mostly low-enrolling) communities the option to withdraw as part of the ratification process. Going forward, a member town may withdraw from the District by town meeting vote on reasonable notice, subject to an obligation to pay its share of outstanding capital, and with approval from the State Education Commissioner, unless at least half of the other members' legislative bodies vote to disapprove. The current agreement requires an affirmative vote by every member town to allow a community to withdraw.*

*Needham's student enrollment at Minuteman is in the median range among member communities, running approximately 30 students per year on average. The new agreement will have relatively minimal near term impact for Needham in terms of operating assessments or district participation. Moving forward, revision to the Regional Agreement is seen as critical to the capital project effort. If the capital project is not approved, the District will face difficult challenges operating and maintaining its existing facility. All member communities will share those costs, which, without MSBA assistance, may be higher than the cost to build a new school. Minuteman High School is the primary vocational education resource for Needham residents and is an important option for students who either seek or will be better served by vocational education.*

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## CAPITAL ARTICLES

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### **ARTICLE 3: APPROPRIATE FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and/or transfer and appropriate \$90,000 for a feasibility study for the repair, renovation and/or addition to the Police Station & Fire Station #1 to be spent under the direction of the Permanent Public Building Committee/Town Manager, and to meet this appropriation that said sum be transferred from Overlay Surplus; or take any other action relative thereto.

INSERTED BY: Board of Selectmen

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT: Recommendation to be made at Town Meeting

*Article Information: The Police/Fire Station #1, originally built in 1931, was reconstructed in 1988 – 1989. The amount of space that was originally allocated within the building for the Police and Fire Departments is no longer sufficient to accommodate changes in operations, changing personnel needs, technology upgrades, and security improvements. Areas for review during the feasibility study in the Police Department include: locker space for female officers is not adequate to meet existing and future needs; the evidence and property storage space is not sufficient; interview space and interview recording requirements must be expanded and improved to comply with current standards; there is limited space available for members of the Department to meet with the public; space is insufficient for a combined public safety dispatch center; and holding cells do not meet standards. Areas for review in the Fire Department include: apparatus bays are too small for modern fire trucks; the maintenance garage is too*

*small to perform routine maintenance work; certain areas are not accessible to the public; the existing office space is insufficient for the needs of administrative staff; and storage space is not sufficient. The study will include a review of the operational needs of both departments, facility assessments, assessment of spatial needs within the existing or an expanded facility, an alternative study for demolition and rebuilding of a new facility, consideration of phasing/swing space, and a cost comparison of addition, renovation or rebuilding. The proposed study will be conducted in conjunction with the feasibility study for Fire Station #2 which was approved by Town Meeting in November, 2015.*

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And you are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting copies thereof in not less than twenty public places in said town at least fourteen (14) days before said meeting.

Hereof fail not and make due return of this warrant with your doings thereon unto our Town Clerk on or after said day and hour.

Given into our hands at Needham aforesaid this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January 2016.

**MAURICE P. HANDEL, *Chairman***  
**MATTHEW D. BORRELLI, *Vice Chairman***  
**MARIANNE B. COOLEY, *Clerk***  
**DANIEL P. MATTHEWS**  
**JOHN A. BULIAN**

*Selectmen of Needham*

A TRUE COPY

Attest:

Constable:

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**Town Clerk's Office  
Needham, MA 02492**

**ATTN: SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT**