

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Tuesday, February 27, 2024
Powers Hall and
Via ZOOM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89068374046>**

- 6:03 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Vice Chair Kevin Keane. Those present in person were Cathy Dowd, Marcus Nelson, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. Heidi Frail was present via Zoom. David Davison, Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance and Susan Metropol, Recording Secretary, were also in attendance.
- 6:03 p.m. Public Comment Period:
No hands raised for public comment.
- 6:04 p.m. Application for a Change of Manager for an All-Alcohol License – 365 Management Company, LLC d/b/a Resident Inn by Marriott Boston Needham
Presenter: Artem Dinov, Proposed Manager of Record
- Mr. Keane introduced Artem Dinov, Proposed Manager of Record for the Marriott Boston Needham, who participated via Zoom. The Residence Inn by Marriott Boston Needham, 80 B Street has applied for a Change of Manager. The review indicates that Artem Dinov meets the statutory requirements to serve as a manager of a facility licensed to dispense alcohol. Ms. Fitzpatrick confirmed that the requisite filing materials appear to be in order.
- Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Select Board, as Local Licensing Authority, approve and sign an application for a Change of Manager.**
Second: Mr. Nelson. Unanimously approved 4-0.
- 6:10 p.m. Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda:
Mr. Keane excused himself from powers Hall for the Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda vote, as he was the requestor for an item on the Consent Agenda.
Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Select Board vote to approve the Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda as presented.
Second: Ms. Frail. Unanimously approved 3-0.

APPOINTMENT CALENDAR

1.	Sue Barber	Stormwater By-Law Working Group Term Exp: 10/31/2024
2.	William Hebard	Conservation Commission Term Exp: 6/30/2025
3.	Kamryn Doerr	Climate Action Plan Committee Term Exp: 6/30/2024

4.	Fred Moder	Climate Action Plan Committee Term Exp: 6/30/2024
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CONSENT AGENDA

1.	Approve a Mobile Food Vendor License renewal application for Cousins Maine Lobster to vend year round, once weekly on Tuesdays during permitted hours in permitted Mobile Food Vendor spaces on 1 st Avenue between A and B Streets (pending completion of inspections by the Health and Fire departments).
2.	Accept the following donations made to Needham's Aging Services Division: • \$50 from Pamela Shuman • \$50 from William Concannon
3.	Approve a request from Kevin Keane, N2A Coordinator, to hold the road event "Needham2Arlington." The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2024, at 8:30am – 3:30 pm. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, and Public Works.
4.	Approve a request from Ashly Scheufele, Needham Baseball & Softball Special Events, to hold the road event "Needham Baseball & Softball Opening Day." The event is scheduled for Sunday, April 21, 2024, at 10:30am – 12:00 pm. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, Park & Recreation, and Public Works.
5.	Approve and sign Water Sewer Abatement #1324.

NOTICE OF APPROVED ONE-DAY SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSES

Hosting Organization	Event Title	Location	Event Date
Volante Farms	Grand Beer Fest	Volante Farms, 292 Forest Street	3/2/2024

6:11 p.m. Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Consultation:
Presenters: Laura Dorfman, Co-Chair of CPC, Lauren Spinney, CPC Administrative Coordinator, Cecilia Simchak, Assistant Director of Finance

Ms. Spinney outlined the appropriations of the CPA monies to each of the special reserve categories: community housing, open space, and historic resources. There will be appropriations to the following initiatives:

- Community Preservation Fund
- Needham Housing Authority Linden Street Redevelopment
- Needham High School Tennis Court Improvements
- DeFazio Fencing Improvements

The CPC has chosen to set aside 11% instead of 10% into each of the special reserve categories in order to cover for any variances between estimated and actual receipts. Since 2022, the Committee has elected to double the amount that is set aside for the community housing reserve to 22%. She noted that the Committee will likely vote

to continue this year. The Community Preservation Committee Public Hearing will be held on March 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Charles River Room at the Public Services Administration Building and via Zoom.

6:24 p.m. Town Manager:

Climate Action Committee Composition & Charge

Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended that the Board review and make comment on a proposed composition and charge for a Climate Action Committee to follow the work of the Climate Action Plan Committee. The new standing committee would advise the Town and the Select Board on the implementation of policies and practices to achieve the objectives of the Climate Action Roadmap. Discussion ensued regarding the composition of the committee. Ms. Frail asked why the proposed Youth Member was non-voting. Ms. Fitzpatrick replied that staff would investigate.

6:30 p.m. Great Plain Avenue Corridor Redesign – Concept Presentations:
Presenters: Carys Lustig, Director of Public Works, Tyler Gabrielski, Director of Streets & Transportation

Representatives from three prequalified engineering firms presented their concept plans for the Great Plain Avenue Corridor Redesign project, as solicited by the Department of Public Works. Carys Lustig introduced presenters from Fuss & O'Neill, Environmental Partners, and Weston & Sampson. Ms. Lustig highlighted that the focus of evaluation will be on vision, ability to take input, and community outreach and consensus-building plans.

Fuss & O'Neill Project Team

Presenters: Matthew Skelly, Sr. Project Manager, Eileen Gunn, Associate/Business Line Manager, Ian Law, Landscape Architecture/Urban Planning/Downtown Vibrancy, Arnold Robinson, Public Outreach and Engagement

Eileen Gunn, Associate/Business Line Manager, thanked the Select Board for the opportunity to present Fuss & O'Neill's proposal for the downtown redesign. She outlined the firm's core elements of approach in designing their proposal: community engagement, consensus building, informed decision making, value added, and communication. She emphasized the role of the Community Development Department in developing a redesign through a community-driven design process that is informed by analysis. Matthew Skelly, Project Manager, continued the presentation by outlining the firm's approach of project delivery as follows:

1. Project Scoping
2. Develop Conceptual Alternatives
3. PAC Assessment & Revisions
4. Public Design Charette #1
5. Alternatives Refinement

6. Public Design Charette #2
7. Design Refinement & Selection
8. Pilot
9. Final Design
10. Construction

Mr. Skelly highlighted the firm's work on Dedham Avenue and Webster Street. The team then discussed community engagement and its central role in developing ideas and solutions for the Town, the tools used to ensure that all voices are heard in the community outreach process, and the community design Charette Process.

Discussion ensued between Select Board members and presenters regarding the importance of building networks for feedback and communication in community outreach, accessibility for feedback, and the role of the consulting firm and the Town in all levels of the project.

Environmental Partners Project Team

Presenters: Margot Schoenfelder, Project Manager, Conrad Leger, Director of Growth/Principal, Karen Fitzgerald, Director of Landscape Architecture (Toole Design Group)

The Environmental Partners Project Team introduced their proposal for the downtown redesign by emphasizing the importance of people-centered design. Margot Schoenfelder, Project Manager, outlined the six key elements of the firm's vision: traffic calming, pedestrian accommodations, green infrastructure, bicycle accommodations, and transit. Furthermore, the three main stages of the firm's approach are as follows: community visioning, stakeholder engagement, and design and construction.

Karen Fitzgerald, Director of Landscape Architecture for Toole Design Group, emphasized that evaluating the existing neighborhood and the background and physical work already conducted, combined with the firm's expertise, experiences, and best practices in design will lead to the creation of a conceptualization and for the redesign. The vision will drive the rest of the project and therefore the community must be included in creating the vision. Ms. Fitzgerald noted that community visioning includes recognizing that any changes in the core of downtown would be a catalyst for changes throughout the surrounding neighborhoods and potentially further throughout the community. Ms. Fitzgerald also outlined the firm's plans for stakeholder engagement, including gathering information, consensus building, and keeping people informed. Other key topics discussed included tactical urbanism to test out new design elements before construction and funding.

Discussion with Select Board members included topics such as communication and engagement fatigue on the part of the Town's residents, as well as the top design elements that the Town may want to consider, including reallocating space to places

that can be enjoyed by non-motorists and ensuring that there are connections to the downtown throughout the community.

Weston & Sampson Project Team

Presenters: Alyssa Peck, Client Manager, Johnathan Law, Project Manager/Lead Designer, Jeffrey Santacruce, Transportation Practice Leader

Alyssa Peck, Client Manager, introduced the presenters, highlighting the experience of Weston & Sampson working with the Town, with a track record of over 235 successfully completed projects for state departments of transportation and municipalities throughout New England.

Johnathan Law, Project Manager and Lead Designer, introduced the firm's process of project engagement, emphasizing the role of the community from the inception of a project. This project engagement approach includes interactive, collaborative engagement with both virtual and in-person opportunities for communication with stakeholders. The presenters referenced two previous projects that are comparable to the Great Plain Avenue redesign, with the aims of increasing multimodality and community-building. Of particular note was the ability in one project to complete work during the day with businesses running as usual, which will be important for this project as well.

Select Board members asked questions related to the collaborative process with DPW, sustainability with specific regard to costs and maintenance, and the potential for hydrology analysis in order to understand factors contributing to flooding in the downtown area. Ms. Peck emphasized the importance of flexibility in communicating with a wide range of Town departments, including but not limited to departments working on planning and conservation.

8:25 p.m. Town Manager (Continued):

2024 Annual Town Meeting Update

Ms. Fitzpatrick discussed the following updates to the draft warrant for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting:

- The Town By-Law and Charter Review Working Group recommended that the Board insert an article dealing only with by-law reviews. The proposal is for the creation of a seven-member committee, including designees of the Select Board, Planning Board, School Committee, Finance Committee, the Moderator, Town Clerk, and one Town Meeting member appointed by the other six. Ms. Dowd noted that the designee of a committee must be a former member of that committee.
- The Finance Committee requested changing the funding source for public health technical consulting from one-time funds to the tax levy.
- With respect to the Town and School IT Consolidation, there has been additional language added adopting MGL Chapter 71 Section 31 M. School

Labor Counsel and Town Counsel agreed that this would be beneficial to include in the Warrant Article.

- With regard to the Operating Budget, the Finance Committee submitted its proposed budget. Work continues on how to include the IT consolidation.

Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Select Board vote to approve updates to the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Second: Mr. Nelson. Unanimously approved 4-0.

May 13, 2024 Special Town Meeting Update

Ms. Fitzpatrick updated the Board on preparations for the May 13, 2024 Special Town Meeting. The Board is scheduled to call for the May 2024 Special Town Meeting and open the warrant at its meeting on March 12, 2024.

Town Manager Report

The Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government held its first hearing on the Municipal Modernization Act on February 27. Ms. Fitzpatrick testified on the portion of this act that would set up a commission on Other Post-Employment Benefits and funding of unfunded liabilities.

8:36 p.m.

Board Discussion:

Committee Reports

Ms. Frail presented updates on the Housing Needham (HONE) Working Group, finalizing the details of the base compliance map and strategizing for the creation of the neighborhood housing map. The final public meeting will be held on March 28th.

Mr. Keane reported on progress of the Town Seal and Branding Committee. At their most recent meeting, the committee viewed other towns' seals and will be meeting again to brainstorm at their next meeting.

Mr. Keane also met with the Needham High School Greater Boston Project class on town government and town meeting.

8:39 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Nelson that the Select Board enter into executive session pursuant to Exception 3: to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Needham Independent Town Workers Association (ITWA) and Needham Independent Public Employees Association (NIPEA), where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares, and the chair so declares.
Second: Ms. Dowd. Unanimously approved 4-0.

Note: The Executive Session portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

A list of all documents used at this Select Board meeting is available at:
<http://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx?AMID=99&Type=&ADID>

The next Select Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.