

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Tuesday, March 26, 2024
Select Board's Chamber and
Via ZOOM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89068374046>**

- 6:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair Marianne Cooley. Those present were Vice Chair Kevin Keane, Cathy Dowd, Heidi Frail, Marcus Nelson, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. David Davison, Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance, Katie King, Deputy Town Manager/Director of Operations, and Susan Metropol, Recording Secretary, were also in attendance.
- 6:00 p.m. Public Comment Period:

Michael Diener, 30 Kenney Street, presented information he compiled on various funds utilized by the Town and his comments on how differing uses of these funds may affect the Town and its residents. He made several recommendations on the topic.
- 6:07 p.m. Citizens' Petition: Single Use Plastics Ban:
Presenters: Rob Fernandez, Petitioner, Kathy Raiz, Petitioner

Rob Fernandez and Kathy Raiz provided the Select Board with the basis for their citizens' petition. Their proposed single use plastic ban would occur in two phases:
- Phase 1 (effective January 1, 2025): ban on polystyrene and Styrofoam containers and plastic straws (unless requested by a patron), plastic stirrers, and splash guards.
- Phase 2 (effective January 1, 2026): ban on water bottles less than 1 liter.
- Presenters noted that enforcement would be the same as the plastic bag ban through the Needham Board of Health and that they are starting to gather feedback from businesses to understand their concerns and thoughts as well.
- Questions from Select Board members included topics such as what other towns are doing with regard to bans on plastic items, the cost differences for businesses between plastic water bottles and aluminum water bottles, and what is being done at the state level regarding plastic bans.

6:24 p.m. Citizens' Petition: Rescind Debt Authorization:
Presenter: Joe Abruzese, Petitioner

Joe Abruzese provided a summary of the basis of the petition to release the \$2.5 million previously held. Ms. Cooley confirmed that the Select Board also submitted a similar warrant for Town Meeting. Mr. Abruzese will confirm with the Moderator what the process for his citizens' petition will be as there is another article on the topic.

6:29 p.m. Citizens' Petition: Authorization to Expend Funds for Consultant for MBTA Communities Zoning:
Presenter: Gary Ajamian, Petitioner

Petitioner Gary Ajamian and fellow petitioners presented the basis for their citizens' petition, notably that they are seeking the appropriation and authorization of \$150,000 to prepare an analysis of the MBTA Communities Act with specific regard to infrastructure, public safety, and environmental impacts. These funds would be directed towards hiring a technical consultant in order to conduct an independent evaluation of these areas. Discussion included the timeline for this petition and the scope of this consultant as compared with the consultants already engaged with HONE.

6:50 p.m. Introduce Ellyse Glushkov, Treasurer/Collector:
Presenters: Cecilia Simchak, Assistant Director of Finance

Ms. Simchak introduced incoming Treasurer/Collector Ellyse Glushkov. Ms. Glushkov holds a bachelor's degree in plant and soil sciences from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture and a master's degree in accounting from UMass Amherst. Select Board Members expressed their excitement for Ms. Glushkov's start in this role. She is looking forward to working with everyone in the Town.

6:54 p.m. Police Department Annual Report:
Presenters: John Schlittler, Chief of Police, Kelsey Cournoyer, Crime Analyst

Chief Schlittler provided the Board with a summary of the 2023 Annual Report of the Police Department. The Chief was joined by Kelsey Cournoyer, who compiled the report. Chief Schlittler reviewed that there are 49 sworn officers in the Needham Police Department. The Department is currently budgeted for 53 officers and is working towards a full staff. Chief Schlittler emphasized that the officers in the Needham Police Department do not only enforce the law but play many roles in the community in a range of different and challenging situations. Of note, the Needham Police Department is currently participating in the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program. This is a voluntary step by the Needham Police Department to maintain certain standards established by the Accreditation Program, including regular assessments by Commission-appointed assessors to ensure compliance with professional standards.

2023 Year End Review

Chief Schlittler then provided a summary of the 2023 Year End Review, including notable changes in specific criminal activities, including thefts from motor vehicles, unemployment fraud, assault and battery, as well as traffic and bylaw violations. He also emphasized the Department continues to track data related to four specific areas of citizen concerns:

- Mental health
- Drug overdose (In 2023, there were 24 total overdoses; four had Narcan administered by either Police or Fire. 20 overdoses did not require the use of Narcan. Three overdoses led to death.)
- Handcuffing (Handcuffing was used 88 times in 2023, one less occurrence than 2022. 70.4% of these instances were arrests. 13 of them were warrant of apprehension, 5 for mental health related reasons, three for officer safety, four for protective custody, and 1 for another reason.)
- Domestic violence (There were 89 domestic disturbance/violence related calls in Needham in 2023, a 17% increase from 2022.)

There were seven instances in which force was used in 2023, which is a decrease from 12 instances in 2022. There were 4,900 motor vehicle stops, which is more than 2,000 more stops than 2022, however the percentages related to race and resident status remain stable. 95% of these stops were non-residents. There was a total of 64 arrests in Needham in 2023, four more than the number of arrests in 2022. The overall number of crashes per month was 37, most accidents occurring between 2-3pm. There were 22 motor vehicle involving pedestrian accidents, eight of which were at a crossing location.

Chief Schlittler also reviewed the processes for training that the Needham Police Department has been conducting. Specific Massachusetts Police Training Committee includes training on trauma informed response, responding to interpersonal violence, hate crimes, officer wellness, CPR, and firearms training, among others.

Discussion ensued regarding police use of the data presented, the importance of the Community Outreach Officer in responding to appropriate calls, and concerns about drugs and work with surrounding towns on this issue. There were also questions from Select Board members about mail theft, crashes involving pedestrians and hands-free enforcement, as well as maintaining a positive social media presence in the community.

7:33 p.m. Marcus Nelson exited the Select Board Chambers.

7:34 p.m. Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda:
Motion by Mr. Keane that the Board vote to approve the Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda as presented.
Second: Ms. Dowd. Unanimously approved 4-0.

APPOINTMENT CALENDAR

1.	Paul Molta	Regional Transportation Advisory Committee Term Exp: 6/30/2026
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CONSENT AGENDA

1.	In accordance with Section 20B (v) of the Town Charter and as recommended by the Town Manager and the Personnel Board, adopt compensation tables for non-represented employees for fiscal year 2025 and fiscal year 2026.
2.	Approve a Mobile Food Vendor License application for Goldberg Food Enterprises LLC d/b/a How's Your Meat to vend on May 11, 2024 at the Needham History Center & Museum (pending completion of inspections by the Health and Fire departments).
3.	Approve the following donation to the Needham Health Division: \$733 from Susanna Whitman for Needham's Gift of Warmth Program \$10,000 from Needham Community Council for Needham's Gift of Warmth Program
4.	Approve the following donation to Needham Youth & Family Services: \$200 gift card from Wegman's towards future programs
5.	Approve the following donation to Needham's Aging Services Division: \$30 from Margaret Clarridge
6.	Approve the following donation to the Needham Free Public Library: \$21,488 from the Friends of the Needham Free Public Library
7.	Sign the Warrant for the Annual Town Election to be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024.
8.	Approve a request from Jill Barber, YMCA, to hold the road event "Charles River YMCA Independence Day 5K." The event is scheduled for Thursday, July 4, 2024, at 8:30 am – 9:30 am. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, and Public Works.
9.	Approve and Sign Water Sewer Abatement #1326.

NOTICE OF APPROVED ONE-DAY SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSES

Hosting Organization	Event Title	Location	Event Date
Temple Beth Shalom	Purim Spiel	Temple Beth Shalom, 670 Highland Avenue	3/23/2024

7:35 p.m. Marcus Nelson reentered the Select Board Chambers.

7:35 p.m. Babson College Scholarships:
Presenter: Kevin Keane, Select Board Vice Chair

The Select Board awards scholarships to Needham residents and alumni of Needham High School from a fund made available to the Town by Babson College.

Meredith Stover, Director of Financial Aid at Babson College, Board Vice Chair Kevin Keane, and Support Services Manager Myles Tucker met recently and reviewed the applications. Mr. Keane congratulated the recipients, all of whom are Needham residents.

Motion by Ms. Frail that the Board votes to award the Town of Needham Babson Scholarships to the following applicants:

- 1. Alberto Colon – Rising Junior, Renewal Recipient**
 - 2. Danielle Friedline – Rising Junior, Renewal Recipient**
 - 3. Rachel Kuzmin – Admitted Freshman**
 - 4. Henry London – Part-Time Graduate Student, Babson Alumnus**
 - 5. Albina Miloshi – Rising Senior, Renewal Recipient**
- Second: Mr. Keane. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

7:36 p.m. Town Manager:

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

- The Quiet Zone working group met and recommend that \$750,000 be included for design. The Town was previously holding \$1.3 million for this item. The difference has been allocated to the Public Works Infrastructure Article.
- The estimate for Town and School IT Consolidation has been reduced to approximately \$593,000.

Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Board vote to amend the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant subject to minor technical corrections to be made by the Town Manager, Town Counsel and/or bond counsel.
Second: Ms. Frail. Unanimously approved 5-0.

Close May 13, 2024 Special Town Meeting

Ms. Fitzpatrick noted the following changes:

- The line items for water and sewer will be removed upon the determination of the Director of Finance (Articles 3 and 4).
- The Bows and Arrows Article does not require action at Town Meeting. Of note, State law allows hunting on private property unless it is posted that hunting is not allowed.
- There is an article that will include abandoned and unregulated motor vehicles in the non-criminal disposition.

Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Board close the warrant for the May 13, 2024 Special Town Meeting subject to minor technical corrections to be made by the Town Manager, Town Counsel, and Bond Counsel.
Second: Mr. Keane. Unanimously approved 5-0.

Town Manager Report

- A short ceremony will be held to honor Needham's Fallen Vietnam veterans at the Town's Vietnam Memorial on March 29 at 11:00 a.m.

- The Moderator has confirmed that the Special Town Meeting for the Fall will be held on October 21, 2024.

7:45 p.m. Board Discussion:

Committee Reports

Ms. Frail reported that the HONE Committee will be holding their final public meeting on Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m. in Powers Hall and Zoom. The meeting will cover the results of the fiscal analysis, finalized maps, and an opportunity for public comment.

Mr. Keane reported on the Climate Action Planning Committee and the work Town Sustainability Manager Gabby Queenan who is currently working on several relevant grants. Community Conversations will hold an event on racism on May 2, location TBD. The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities will be holding a hearing regarding municipal aggregation. The Needham Muslim Neighbors hosted an iftar and welcomed members of the wider community to join them on March 24.

Ms. Cooley noted that the Quiet Zone Working Group met and has settled on \$750,000 to be included in the warrant article for the initial feasibility study.

Select Board Transitions

The Board then discussed the upcoming Select Board transitions in anticipation of the upcoming Town Election on April 9. Vice Chair Kevin Keane and Select Board members recognized and thanked Chair Marianne Cooley for her service as Chair.

The Board members also thanked Marcus Nelson for his service on the Select Board. Ms. Cooley thanked him for what he has taught the Board about seeing and recognizing each person in our community. Select Board members highlighted Mr. Nelson's positivity, approachability, and the unique trust he has built with members of the Needham community. Mr. Nelson shared his own reflections on the past three years, expressing his appreciation for all those he has had the opportunity to work with and all he has learned in the role.

8:12 p.m. Adjourn:

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 ITWA and NIPEA, where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares [the chair so declares] and; Exception 6: To discuss the purchase of real property and not to return to Open Session prior to adjournment. Second: Mr. Keane. Unanimously approved 5-0.

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, April 16, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Note: The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.