

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Regular Meeting
Minutes for Tuesday, April 15, 2025
Select Board Chambers and
Via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82601013229>

6:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A Regular Meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair Kevin Keane. Those present were Vice Chair Heidi Frail, Cathy Dowd, Joshua Levy, Marianne Cooley, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. Katie King, Deputy Town Manager, and David Davison, Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance, were also in attendance.

6:02 p.m. Public Comment Period: None at this time

6:02 p.m. Select Board Reorganization

**Motion by Mr. Keane to nominate Heidi Frail as Chair of the Select Board.
Second: Mr. Levy. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

**Motion by Ms. Frail to nominate Cathy Dowd as Vice Chair of the Select Board.
Second: Mr. Keane. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

Motion by Ms. Frail to nominate Marianne Cooley as Clerk of the Select Board.

Second: Ms. Dowd.

Discussion:

Ms. Cooley stated that she is up for this position, but she does not plan to run again. She declined the nomination and instead put forth Mr. Levy.

**Motion by Ms. Cooley to nominate Josh Levy as Clerk of the Select Board.
Second: Ms. Frail. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

**Motion by Ms. Dowd to adopt the Select Board Meeting Schedule, as listed.
Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

**Motion by Ms. Frail to nominate Miles Tucker as Committee Secretary for the Select Board.
Second: Ms. Dowd. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

Motion by Ms. Cooley to nominate Susan Metropol as Recording Secretary for the Select Board.

Second: Ms. Dowd. Unanimously approved 5-0.

The Board recognized Mr. Keane for his service as Chair of the Select Board.

6:13 p.m. Appointment Calendar and Consent Agenda

Motion by Mr. Keane to approve the Consent Agenda.

Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0.

Motion by Ms. Cooley to approve the Appointment Calendar.

Second: Mr. Keane. Unanimously approved 5-0.

APPOINTMENT CALENDAR

1.	Cindy Chaston	Stephen Palmer Reuse Development Committee Term Exp: June 30, 2027
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CONSENT AGENDA *Supporting Documents in Agenda Packet

1.	Approve Select Board Open Session Minutes of March 11, 2025; March 25, 2025; March 28, 2025; and April 1, 2025 and the Subcommittee for Town Manager Negotiations Open Session Minutes of April 9, 2025. (Subcommittee minutes to removed – to be adopted by Subcommittee)
2.	Accept the following donation made to Needham Park and Recreation: • \$25 from Claire Blum for Spring tree plantings
3.	Accept the following donations made to Needham’s Aging Services Division: • \$20 from Helen Terry Checket • \$20 from Susan Allen • \$20 from Kaimana Komulainen • \$20 from JFS of Metrowest • \$20 from Anne Essaran • \$20 from Eleanor Jaspersohn • \$20 from Ya Chun • \$20 from Louise Tardif • \$20 from Harriet Lazarus
4.	Accept the following donations made to Needham Public Health Division: • \$500 from Friends of Needham Board of Health & Traveling Meals Program for Needham’s Gift of Warmth program • \$25 from Claire Bloom for Needham’s Gift of Warmth program
5.	Accept the following donation made to the Needham Community Revitalization Trust Fund: • \$1295 from Michael Bailit of Bailit Health Purchasing, LLC
6.	Approve a request from Paula Jacobson, Executive Director of Charles River YMCA, to hold the road event “Annual Charles River YMCA Independence Day 5K” in Needham. The event is scheduled for Friday, July 4, 2025, starting at 8:30 a.m. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, and Public Works.
7.	Approve a request from Ashly Scheufele, Special Events Coordinator for Needham Baseball & Softball, to hold the road event “Needham Baseball & Softball Opening Day Celebration” in

	Needham. The event is scheduled for Sunday, May 4, 2025, starting at 11:00 a.m. The event and route have been approved by the following departments: Fire, Police, and Public Works.
8.	Extend the approval for the Needham Art Association's "Art Outside" to display eight banners at Nehoidan Street at May Street and Rosemary Street at Highland Avenue through August 30, 2026.

NOTICE OF APPROVED BLOCK PARTIES

Name	Address	Party Location	Date	Time	Rain Date
Jamie Silverberg	55 Rybury Hillway	55, 62, and 52 Rybury Hillway	5/31/2025	12pm-5pm	N/A

NOTICE OF APPROVED ONE-DAY SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSES

Hosting Organization	Event Title	Location	Event Date
Needham Community Council	Party for the Pantry	Powers Hall, Needham Town Hall, 1471 Highland Avenue	3/29/2025
Knights of Columbus Needham	CRUDEM Trivia Night	Knights of Columbus Hall 1211 Highland Avenue	4/11/2025

6:14 p.m. Town Manager
 • Town Manager Report

- Regarding the Emergency Nonessential Outdoor Water Use restriction, Ms. Fitzpatrick explained that, on April 8th, the Drought Management Task Force recommended placing the southeast region in a Level 1 drought category. Therefore, she declared the emergency and began notifying the public about the impacts, of which the Board previously voted several exemptions to. The Town's website will continue to provide information and education. The emergency is declared until the Drought Management Task Force removes the area from its Level 1 status.
- Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that on May 3rd from 5pm-8pm there will be an all-ages dance party, Spring Fling, at Greene's Field.
- Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that staff has heard feedback from residents and businesses regarding the Envision Needham Center project and is working to organize early morning and evening meetings for businesses in early May. A public hearing is recommended on May 13th with the Board in order to further inform the public.

6:15 p.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Grant of Location – 124 Edgewater Drive
 • Joanne Callender, Eversource Energy

Ms. Callender explained that Eversource is seeking a Grant of Location to install approximately 44' of conduit into Edgewater Drive to provide new service to a home at 124 Edgewater Drive.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install approximately forty-four feet of conduit in Edgewater Drive.

Second: Ms. Dowd. Unanimously approved 5-0.

6:20 p.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Grant of Location – 1266 South Street
• Joanne Callender, Eversource Energy

Ms. Callender explained that Eversource is seeking a Grant of Location to install approximately 24' of conduit into South Street to provide underground service for a new home at 1266 South Street.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Ms. Dowd that the Select Board approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install approximately twenty-four feet of conduit in South Street.

Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0.

6:23 p.m. Board Discussion
• Committee Reports

Ms. Cooley reported on the Large House Committee. There is broad agreement that the goal of the Committee is to understand the mass of a building and there has been discussion on what this should include. The Committee previously met with the Wellesley Planning Board chair. The Committee's process will likely be long with multiple opportunities for the public to weigh in. There is no proposal yet.

6:28 p.m. Flood Plain Zoning Warrant Articles
• Planning Board
• Lee Newman, Director of Planning and Community Development

Lee Newman, Director of Planning and Community Development, along with members of the Planning Board, explained that there are two proposed Zoning Articles for Special Town Meeting which are required in order for the Town to maintain its compliance under FEMA and to ensure that residents have access to flood insurance. FEMA recently released updated maps, and Needham is one of the communities that has been updated. The Town is required to recognize these updated maps and reflect them in its zoning framework. The first Article recognizes the maps and revises some of the regulations within the Floodplain

District to meet current requirements. DCR, FEMA's representative, has reviewed the draft zoning and assured that it is compliant as presented. The maps will be accepted in July 2025. The second Article is a map change to reflect the new elevations on the Town Zoning maps.

Tom Ryder, Town Engineer, explained that the map changes are very small throughout Town. He concurs with the changes.

Ms. Dowd asked if these items need to be adopted in order for homeowners in Town to purchase flood insurance. Ms. Newman agreed that this is correct.

Mr. Levy asked if homeowners were notified regarding these changes. Ms. Newman stated that notification has been similar to zoning notifications in general, including publishing in the paper. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that all homes within the floodplain will be personally notified. Mr. Ryder stated that staff is creating letters to be sent to these properties.

- 6:37 p.m. Police Department Annual Report
- John Schlittler, Chief of Police
 - Chris Baker, Deputy Police Chief
 - Kelsey Cournoyer, Crime Analyst

Police Chief Schlittler reviewed the Police Department's Annual Report.

Ms. Dowd noted that many of the counterfeiting and forgery concerns are still mailbox phishing. Chief Schlittler stated that the Department recommends mailing checks or other money items only at the Post Office. These types of theft crimes tend to be sporadic from year-to-year. It is recommended that people lock their vehicles.

Ms. Dowd noted that there was no overdose deaths reported in Town. Chief Schlittler stated that this likely is partly due to education, including around Narcan and its use.

Ms. Dowd asked about domestic violence calls and the process after these calls. Chief Schlittler stated that the Community Outreach Team completes follow-ups to discuss resources after these calls.

Mr. Levy noted that arrests to date this year have been higher than normal. Chief Schlittler stated that there seems to be an uptick in hostility and aggressiveness.

The Board congratulated Chief Schlittler and the Department for its MPAC accreditation.

Regarding immigration, Chief Schlittler stated that there has been a decision in Massachusetts that outlines what the Department can do in terms of civil detainees.

The Department cannot enforce federal law. It is important for the Department to keep communication with immigration authorities to make sure that the residents are safe and treated fairly. Those who are undocumented should not fear that the Department will enforce federal law.

- 7:11 p.m. Nuclear Disarmament Resolution Citizens Petition
- Joseph McCabe, Lead Petitioner

Joseph McCabe, petitioner, explained that this Article is meant as a follow-up action to an Article adopted by Needham Town Meeting in 2019. That Article called upon federal leaders to prioritize nuclear disarmament in national policy. The proposed article deals with specific requests that can be made and calls upon the United States to adopt the proposals described in the article.

Mr. Levy asked the impact of the proposal. Mr. McCabe stated that he believes people should be able to express their wishes in order to enact change. Ms. Frail suggested that this is also a way to be true to oneself.

- 7:35 p.m. Revolving Fund Warrant Article
- Hank Haff, Director of Building Design and Construction
 - Gabby Queenan, Sustainability Manager

Hank Haff, Director of Building Design and Construction, and Gabby Queenan, Sustainability Manager, explained that the proposed Article would establish an Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Capital Program Revolving Fund. The objective of the revolving fund is to allow the Town to use funds from three types of programs (state, federal, and utility programs) that are being received for completing qualifying guaranteed efficiency and clean energy capital projects, towards future clean energy and energy efficiency capital projects. If adopted, the language would be reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and then an annual spending limit would be established at Town Meeting. This would be effective July 1, 2026, for fiscal year 2027. This will help the Town to fund certain projects that come before it. Funding received from these projects currently goes into the General Fund. If these funds are available in a revolving fund, it will allow better efficiency in order to prepare for future projects.

David Davison, Director of Finance, explained that any revolving fund can be closed at the end of a fiscal year, with monies then being moved back to the General Fund. There is no cap for the fund, but Town Meeting determines how much can be expended in any one fiscal year. The Town receives energy rebates each year and these types of monies could go into the Revolving Fund.

Mr. Levy suggested leaving these monies in the General Fund, as a way to allow for Town Meeting to approve their use, and for additional flexibility. Ms. Cooley stated that there is flexibility in the Warrant Article to specify large credits to be

held for certain projects. This would allow for funds to be placed into either the General Fund or the revolving fund based on the project and the monies involved.

7:57 p.m. Town Manager
 • Positions on Warrant Articles

Annual Town Meeting

	Motion to recommend adoption	Second	Passed	Vote Breakdown
Article 3	Levy	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 4	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 5	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 6	Cooley	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 7	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 8	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 9	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 10	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 11	Cooley	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 12	Dowd	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 13	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 14	Cooley	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 15	Cooley	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 16	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 17	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 18	Cooley	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 19				
Article 20	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 21	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 22	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 23	Levy	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 24	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 25	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 26	Dowd	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 27	Keane	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 28	Levy	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 29	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 30	Keane	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 31	Keane	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 32	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 33	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 34	Levy	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 35	Dowd	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 36	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 37	Cooley	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous

Article 38	Levy	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 39	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 40	Dowd	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 41	Cooley	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 42	Dowd	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 43	Keane	Dowd	5-0	Unanimous
Article 44	Keane	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 45	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 46	Defer action to next meeting			

The Board took a five minute recess.

Special Town Meeting

	Motion to recommend adoption	Second	Passed	Vote Breakdown
Article 1	Dowd	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 2	Keane	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 3	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 4	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 5	Dowd	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 6	Dowd	Cooley	5-0	Unanimous
Article 7	Dowd	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 8	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 9	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous
Article 10	Defer action to next meeting			
Article 11	Dowd	Keane	3-2	Levy, Cooley Opposed
Article 12	Dowd	Keane	2-3	Frail, Levy, Cooley Opposed
Article 13	Cooley	Levy	5-0	Unanimous
Article 14	Cooley	Keane	5-0	Unanimous

- 9:00 p.m. Board Discussion
- Meeting Schedule (Updated Attachment)

There was agreement to meet jointly with the Park & Recreation Commission on June 23rd, tentatively at 7pm, regarding the off-leash dog area pilot.

Avery Newton, member of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, confirmed via the chat feature on Zoom that she could attend the proposed May 6th, 6pm, meeting of the Trust Fund.

There was agreement to hold a goal setting workshop on July 26th from 9am-12pm.

• Committee Reports

Mr. Levy stated that the Stormwater Committee continues to meet. There will be a public listening session and presentation with the Select Board around that time. The regulations will likely be drafted over the summer in order to have a draft ready for October Town Meeting.

Mr. Keane stated that the Negotiations Subcommittee has been meeting in Executive Session. Also, the Envision Needham Center Working Group met on April 7th and will continue to have meetings.

Ms. Dowd stated that the number of Needham students going to Minuteman Regional Vocational High School has increased in the past five years. There are some concerns as the State may impose some regulations on their admissions process to make it more of a lottery.

Ms. Frail stated that she attended the Needham Diversity Initiative Stand Out and also attended an Interclub Service event, at which all six service clubs in Needham built birthday boxes for families. She acknowledged the election results and thanked everyone who participated. She wished Happy Passover and Easter to those who celebrate. She wished good luck to those participating in the Boston Marathon.

9:17 p.m. Adjourn

**Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board adjourn.
Second: Ms. Dowd. 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 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

A video recording of the April 15, 2025 Select Board Meeting can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c21j7xda9Hw> or at <https://www.needhamchannel.org/2025/04/needham-select-board-4-15-25/>.