

**Town of Needham
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for December 19, 2017
Needham Town Hall
Selectmen's Chamber**

6:45 p.m. Informal Meeting with Citizens: Steven Frail, resident spoke with the Board about solar energy and increasing the Town's use of renewable energy at municipal buildings. He stated he has been working with Green Needham. The Board asked Mr. Frail to send educational information to the Office of the Town Manager for further study.

7:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened by Chair Marianne B. Cooley. Those present were Daniel P. Matthews, John A. Bulian, Maurice P. Handel, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, and Recording Secretary Mary Hunt. Matthew D. Borrelli arrived at 7:48 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Introduce New Fire Staff:
Dennis Condon, Fire Chief appeared before the Board to introduce newly appointed firefighter Thomas Andrews.

Chief Condon said firefighter Andrews come to Needham at a very exciting time with the construction of 2 new firehouses. He said firefighter Andrews has been an EMT for 7 years and a paramedic for 4 years, bringing knowledge and skill to the job.

Mr. Matthews welcomed firefighter Andrews to the service of the Town. He said he wants him to succeed and that during all types of situations firefighters are often the "face of the Town" and counted on by residents. He told firefighter Andrews he has the confidence of Chief Condon and the Board.

The Board congratulated firefighter Andrews and wished him well serving the Town of Needham.

A photograph was taken.

Chief Condon reminded residents of the winter "Clear a Hydrant" program, asking people to sign up on the Town's website.

7:06p.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Energy - Hunnewell Street
Maureen Carroll, Eversource Energy representative and Darius Kuper, homeowner/builder appeared before the Board requesting permission to install approximately 6 feet of conduit in Hunnewell Street. She said this work is necessary to provide underground electric service at 375 Hunnewell Street, Needham.

Ms. Fitzpatrick indicated all paperwork is now in order.

Ms. Cooley said she was dismayed to find construction took place prior to a public hearing. Mr. Kuper apologised, acknowledging there was a misunderstanding and that he is ultimately responsible for the project.

Ms. Cooley invited public comment. No comments were heard.

Mr. Matthews reinforced procedures are for the good of everyone, noting if there were problems with installation it would be costly to make it right. He thanked Mr. Kuper for meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install approximately 6 feet of conduit in Hunnewell Street. This work is necessary to provide underground electric service at 375 Hunnewell Street, Needham.

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

7:10 p.m.

Appointments and Consent Agenda:

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented:

APPOINTMENTS:

Human Rights Committee

Needham Community Revitalization

Trust Fund Committee

Nancy Fitton (term expires 6/30/2020)

Brad White (term expires 6/30/2020)

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approve a Special One Day All Alcoholic Beverages license request from Artie Crocker of New Year's Needham to hold its New Year's Needham Countdown party on December 31, 2017 from 9:15 p.m. to 12:15 a.m. in Powers Hall at Needham Town Hall.**
- 2. Accept a \$2,175 donation made to the Needham Park and Recreation Commission's Needham Accessible Reservoir Trail (NART) project from the Needham Golf Club.**
- 3. Approve and sign application for recertification as Tree City USA for 2018.**
- 4. Approve minutes of November 28, 2017, and December 5, 2017.**
- 5. Approve request from Village Club to extend operational hours on New Year's Eve for the Club (lower) portion only: Last call - 12:00 am; Members off premises - 12:30 am; and everyone (bartender) off premises - 1:00 am.**
- 6. Water and Sewer Abatement #1248**
- 7. Accept a \$100 donation made to the Needham Public Health Department's Traveling Meals Program from Hugh & Joan Sheridan, Needham residents.**

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

7:10 p.m. Public Hearing: Change of Manager - Great Plain Hospitality LLC d/b/a RFK Kitchen & Change of D/B/A
Francesco Melandri, Owner and Samantha Charpentier, proposed Manager appeared before the Board to discuss an application for a change in manager. A review indicates that Ms. Charpentier meets the statutory requirements to serve as a manager of a facility licensed to dispense alcohol. Additional filing material appears to be in order.

Ms. Charpentier told the Board of her work experience in the food industry and serving alcohol.

Ms. Cooley reminded Ms. Charpentier of Needham's status as a historically dry town.

Mr. Matthews acknowledged Mr. Melandri has worked hard to get the restaurant up and running. He told Ms. Charpentier the Town wants her to succeed, but that rules must be followed when serving alcohol.

**Motion by Mr. Handel that (a) the Board of Selectmen approve and sign an application for a Change in Manager to Samantha Charpentier for Great Plain Hospitality d/b/a RFK Kitchen, 30 Dedham Avenue, Needham and to forward this application to the ABCC for approval; and b) Move that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign an Amendment Application for a Change of DBA and to forward application to the ABCC for approval.
Second: Mr. Bulian. Unanimously approved 4-0.**

Ms. Cooley invited public comment prior to the vote. No comments were heard.

7:14 p.m. Sira Naturals, Inc., (formerly Sage Cannabis, Inc.) Community Benefit Agreement Consultation:
Roy Cramer, Attorney, Michael Dundas, CEO, Sira Naturals, Inc., Amber Hill, proposed Manager, and Margot Blair, Manager, Sira Naturals, Cambridge facility appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed Manager of Sira Naturals, Inc. The medical marijuana facility to be located at 29-37 Franklin Street, as per section 6 (d) of the Community Benefit Agreement states that "The Operator agrees to consult with the Board of Selectmen at a public meeting prior to the initial and replacement hiring of manager of RFD facility."

Mr. Dundas said construction of the medical marijuana facility in Needham is approximately 80% complete, and he is hoping to be open for business in the beginning of the first quarter 2018. He introduced Amber Hill, proposed Manager who has been working with Sira Naturals, Inc. since May 2017. Mr. Dundas also introduced Margot Blair, Manager of Sage's Cambridge facility, as she may be called upon to serve temporarily as Manager of the Needham facility in the event of illness, vacation, etc.

Ms. Cooley asked for comment from the Board.

Mr. Bulian acknowledged that while the industry is new, it is similar to the alcohol industry. He commented as long as a stated full-time manager is approved by the Board of Selectmen, he does not need to know who will be covering due to sickness or vacation.

Mr. Matthews said it is good for the Board of Selectmen to get to know the people working in this new, highly regulated industry. He acknowledged the challenges and wished Mr. Dundas good luck.

Ms. Cooley thanked Mr. Cramer, Mr. Dundas, Ms. Hill, and Ms. Blair for coming before the Board and welcomed them to Needham.

7:24 p.m.

Human Resources Update - Employee Engagement:

Rachel Glisper, Director of Human Resources, Chuck Murphy-Romboletti, Assistant Director of Human Resources, Kristen Wright, Administrative Specialist, Park & Recreation, and Juanita Hearn, Retirement Administrator appeared before the Board with an update on the first year of the Employee Engagement program and projects currently in development.

Ms. Fitzpatrick commented Employee Engagement teams were created based on comments and data from a survey completed three years ago. She asked the presenters to talk about their involvement and future plans for the Employee Engagement process.

Mr. Murphy-Romboletti explained the results of the survey lead to the formation of three teams of employees developing strategies for improved communication, comprehensive onboarding of new employees, and enhanced training opportunities for all employees. A series of slides were viewed.

Ms. Wright explained her involvement as team leader of Professional Development and Training, and the development of the “U Drive” and management training plan. She commented on discussions at leadership meetings noting in particular, the solutions group for Standard Operating Procedures, working to ensure standard operating procedures across Town departments. Ms. Wright commented on the mentoring program, customer service training, and diversity, inclusion, and harassment training. Ms. Wright said she is also leader of the Employee Performance Evaluation group, explaining the importance of setting goals, peer reviews, and self-evaluations.

Ms. Glisper said as leader of the Succession Planning group, she is tasked with identifying and developing new leaders. She said her responsibility is to determine which positions require targeted training, licensure, or specialized skills, and designing a knowledge transfer program critical for employees with a leadership role. Ms. Glisper said she worked on creating the “new hire” orientation packet

welcoming new employees and enhancing their sense of connection and purpose within the larger organization, not just their new department. Ms. Glisper said the mission is to encourage employee retention and satisfaction.

Juanita Hearn said as leader of the Onboarding and Offboarding Solutions group she created a standard procedure for departments to follow, including a departmental checklist now posted (along with welcome packet information) on the common drive of the Town's website. She said ensuring a successful transition for new employees cuts down on the adjustment period, ultimately increasing productivity and job satisfaction. Ms. Hearn said the first six employees hired since implementation of Onboarding procedures all gave the Town nine out of ten points, except for one, who had not been onboarded. The new hire, she admitted, felt a bit disoriented during the first few critical days of employment. Ms. Hearn commented on the Offboarding checklist for departments to follow when an employee retires, separates service, receives a promotion, resigns, or dies.

Mr. Murphy-Romboletti thanked the Board for their time and for their support. He said he is proud of the work and that results show people are more engaged in creating their own solutions and being part of a changing culture.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the teams worked on projects during the first year of their own choosing, and those they saw as most critical.

Ms. Cooley said a variety of items came forward from the survey, particularly around employee empowerment. She commented on the organizational work chart, and said the issues of onboarding and offboarding are huge. She thanked everyone for their work.

Mr. Handel said satisfied employees make for a good relationship with the public.

Mr. Bulian said it is imperative Town employees treat residents with respect, and as customers they want to keep.

Mr. Matthews said follow up is important and that he is impressed with the work.

7:45 p.m. Director of Public Works:
Richard P. Merson, Director of Public Works appeared before the Board with five items to discuss:

1. Extinguish Sewer & Drain Easement - Clarke Circle to Brookside Road
Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board vote to approve and sign Order No. 2017-01 to extinguish a portion of a Sewer and Drain Easement at 103 Brookside Road.
Second: Mr. Bulian. Unanimously approved 4-0.
2. Sign Traffic Regulation for West Street

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board vote to approve and sign the Notice of Traffic Regulation Permit #P17-12-19 for West Street, Time Limited in Designated Places, North side, from the westerly sideline of Hunnewell Street a point 300 feet west - 2 Hour Parking.

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

3. Snow and Ice Preview

Rhain Hoyland, Highway Superintendent presented an overview of Needham's Snow and Ice Program. He said the program is dedicated to public safety and commerce. Slides detailing Needham's preparation for snow events, four stages for dealing with a major snowstorm, snow reporting in Needham, and a map of sidewalk snowplow routes were shown.

Mr. Merson commented information on Needham's Snow and Ice Program can be found on the Town's website.

4. Donate Truck

Mr. Merson told the Board that on Sunday morning, December 10, 2017, following a snow fighting event that began the previous day and continued overnight, and after the crews had left for home, the Sandisfield, MA highway garage suffered a devastating fire that destroyed the highway garage and the entire fleet of five (5) vehicles. On Wednesday, December 13, 2017, Baystate Roads, the Technology Transfer Center for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sent a blast email to all cities & towns to make everyone aware of the situation. He said DPW staff quickly informed the Director of an opportunity to assist and set the process in motion regarding making a donation of a recently replaced piece of snow fighting equipment. Mr. Merson asked the Board to approve the donation of dump truck, plow, and spreader to the Town of Sandisfield.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board of Selectmen designates DPW Unit #866, 2007 Ford F550, 4x6 Dump Truck with Fisher Plow and Stainless Steel Material Spreader for donation.

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

5. Downtown Infrastructure Improvement Update

Mr. Merson updated the Board on outstanding punch list items relative to the traffic system activation. He said the Town continues working on a small list of items and is hopeful for completion very shortly.

8:10 p.m.

FY2017 Financial Audit:

Dave Davison, ATM/Finance Director and Scott C. McIntire, CPA, Melanson & Heath & Company, P.C. updated the Board on the recently completed audit of the Town's general purpose financial statements for FY2017 and their recommendations.

Mr. Davison said he is happy to report the audit has been completed within 180 days of the close of the fiscal year. He commented the governance letter from Melanson & Heath indicates there are no areas of concern requiring special attention, however some recommendations the Town should be addressing include staff resources, process, a timing issue, and developing written policies relative to expenditures of federal funds.

Mr. McIntire said the audit of the June 30, 2017 financial statements are clean and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for local government in the United States. Mr. McIntire said the audit went very well, with key accounts being reconciled on a timely basis. He said audit standards require him to communicate to the Board accounting estimates that may exist ie. net pension liability and net OPEB asset. He said FY2017 as a whole represented the third year of GASB, in which the financial statements have presented a net pension liability. He said the net pension liability used to be in the back of the financial statement, but is now presented on the face of the long term prospective balance sheet. He said FY 2017 also represents the first year of another new and significant accounting standard, known as GASB 74, dealing with net OPEB liability.

Mr. McIntire reviewed the opinion on pages 1-3, followed by management's discussion and analysis on pages 4-19. He focused on pages 20 and 21 which is the Long Term Prospective Financial Statements. He commented on the net pension liability balance as of June 30, 2017 of just over \$64,000,000 (up approximately \$4,000,000 from the prior year.) Mr. McIntire said the increase is because the Town lowered its discount rate/expected future earnings for the plan. He commented on the OPEB asset account balance as of June 30, 2017 of approximately \$2,300,000, indicating the Town contributed more to the plan as of June 30, 2017 than the actuarially determined contribution required. Mr. McIntire said the number will look very different next year, as the current actuarial required contribution will disappear after FY2017, and in FY2018 will be far more consistent with the net pension liability, and will become part of the long term prospective balance sheet. Mr. McIntire referred to page 22 of the report focusing on the governmental funds balance sheet. Discussion ensued on current assets and current liabilities. He said the Unassigned Fund Balance as of June 30, 2017 is \$19,434,000, a figure most readers will focus on, is down slightly (\$1.3 million) from the prior year, and represents approximately 14% of general fund expenditures. He commented Needham is in "good company" with communities similarly rated. He noted the Assigned Fund Balance of approximately \$12.7 million, representing predominantly the amount of Certified Free Cash being used for FY2018, and a committed fund balance of approximately \$12.7 million, mostly Stabilization Accounts, and a small restricted fund balance for future debt service costs. Mr. McIntire referred to page 26, the Budget and Actual Comparative page of the General Fund. He noted revenues came in roughly \$6.1 million greater than anticipated for FY2017, mostly due to licensing and permitting. He commented total expenditures are just over \$4 million, down slightly from the prior year and other financing sources such as Free Cash and what is was used for. Mr. McIntire

commented collectively the positive revenue performance and positive expenditure performance lead to positive budgetary operations of approximately \$3.4 million. Mr. McIntire noted solid and consistent Enterprise Funds. He referred to the Management Letter containing recommendations on two follow-up issues from the prior year and two current year issues. He asked whether the Board had any questions.

Mr. Borrelli noted the hard work by the Finance Director and team Needham, all who work together. He noted OPEB, asking where Needham stands compared to other communities? Mr. McIntire said Needham has been addressing the liability for a number of years, putting reserves in the trust fund to help mitigate the larger, total OPEB liability. Mr. Davison said it is important to note the Town is following a funding schedule to actuarially eliminate the liability.

The Board thanked Mr. Davison, staff, and Mr. McIntire for their work.

8:35 p.m. Town Manager:
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager appeared before the Board with three items to discuss:

1. FY2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board approve the FY2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan for transmittal to the Finance Committee.

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

2. FY2019 Budget Consultation: Best Practices & Budget Priorities

Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended that the Board approve the fiscal year 2019 statement of best practices and budget priorities.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board vote to approve the fiscal year 2019 statement of best practices and budgeting priorities.

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

3. Committee Reports

No Committee Reports were made.

8:45 p.m. Executive Session: (Exception 3)
Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Board of Selectmen vote to enter into Executive Session.

Exception 3 - To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Not to return to open session.

Second: Mr. Handel. Ms. Cooley polled the Board. Unanimously approved 5-0.

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

Note: The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.