

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Friday April 9, 2020
By Zoom Video Conference
<https://zoom.us/j/919337444>**

4:00 p.m. Call to Order:

A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair John A. Bulian. Those participating were Maurice P. Handel, Matthew D. Borrelli, Daniel P. Matthews, Marianne B. Cooley, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. Also participating were Tim McDonald, Health and Human Services/Director and Dave Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance. Recording Secretary Mary Hunt recorded the meeting remotely.

Mr. Bulian announced this open meeting is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 due to the current state of emergency from the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. He noted all public gatherings have been suspended as advised and directed by the Commonwealth. And, as such, suspending the requirement of the open meeting law to have all meetings in a public, accessible, physical location while encouraging and allowing members of all public bodies to participate remotely. Mr. Bulian stated the meeting will not include public comment and the Needham Select Board and all attendees are convening by Zoom, as posted on the Town's website identifying how the public may join. He said all supporting documents used at this meeting are available on the Town's website.

4:03 p.m. COVID-19 Update - Emergency Operations Center and Health & Human Services: Mr. McDonald updated the Board saying the Centers for Disease Control revised its guidelines, recommending Americans wear a cloth face covering or mask in public settings. He emphasized a cloth mask does not replace the need for social distancing, and that medical grade masks (N95) are to be reserved for health care workers and first responders. He explained a cloth mask is primarily designed to protect other people from germs, not the person wearing the mask. He thanked a number of Needham residents who have donated cloth masks, which have already been distributed to front line Town workers (DPW workers, building maintenance staff, school personnel, and public health staff, and inspectors). He said grocery stores have also received masks. Mr. McDonald said guidance on how to wear a mask properly will be posted later today on social media and in the Town's daily update. Mr. McDonald stated the National Guard is stationed in Needham to distribute Personal Protective Equipment to first responders, as well as to do testing at long term care facilities if help is requested. Mr. McDonald said public health staff communicates regularly with the long-term care facilities and BID Needham, on both an operations and strategic level. Mr. McDonald highlighted that many volunteers have stepped forward to help senior citizens, as well as volunteering for the Medical Reserve Corp. He encouraged anyone interested in volunteering to sign up on the Town's website.

Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager spoke about the generosity of the community and people stepping up to donate time and goods. She said a donation bin at the Rosemary Pool Complex collected 260 masks, the Chinese Friends of Needham donated 1000 surgical masks, and the schools, Exchange Club, and MEMA have donated gloves, masks, gowns, and caps. She said the BID Needham hospital is also accepting donations, noting a bin near the emergency department. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted the generosity of a resident who planted pansies in the flowerpots at Town Hall.

Ms. Fitzpatrick spoke about the successful reconfiguring of traffic to minimize social contact at the RTS, noting residents have said it is much safer for them to dispose of waste. She said while the business community is being severely impacted by the pandemic, they are stepping up in many ways with donations and helping local organizations (first responders and the hospital). She said their efforts will be recognized and the Town is looking at ways it can help the business community. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted Wegman's and Cafe Fresh provided meals for seniors. She said a webinar held with the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce provided helpful links for business owners participating on the call. Ms. Fitzpatrick thanked the police, fire, public works, and town staff for their efforts, noting the many difficulties in trying to work during this pandemic.

Mr. Bulian asked for comments from the Board.

Mr. Matthews thanked everyone for their work and for the update.

Mr. Borrelli asked about the opening of Rosemary Pool as the summer nears.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the current plan is to open the pool on time, recognizing social distancing regulations may have an impact. She said a decision will be made once more information is known from the Governor.

Mr. Handel reiterated the first responders and Town employees are working under very adverse conditions, noting they have the support of the Select Board.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said public safety continues working under challenging circumstances, saying people feel much better knowing there is an adequate supply of PPE in Needham.

Ms. Cooley asked about masks for local pharmacy workers, and whether the Town has access to decontamination efforts.

Mr. McDonald said pharmacies, as medical facilities, have access to surgical masks through a different supply chain. Mr. McDonald said the current focus of decontamination efforts is for health care workers, and it is currently unclear if decontamination efforts will be expanded for first responders.

Mr. Bulian said it is good that grocery stores are getting masks for their employees. He asked how hospitals are faring and their ability to handle COVID-19 cases?

Mr. McDonald said BID Needham is a community hospital, therefore not in the same predicament as an academic medical center. However, he said BID Needham has been very proactive in thinking about plans to extend beyond the hospital to do screening and to support health care workers. He said he appreciates the partnership between the hospital and the Town. He said grocery stores have made modifications, and residents can feel assured the 3 grocery store operators in Needham are taking the guidelines very seriously.

Discussion ensued on grocery store maximum occupancy capacity.

4:25 p.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:
Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.

APPOINTMENTS - No Appointments were made at this meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approve change of public hearing continuance on two public hearings opened at the Select Board meeting of March 24, 2020 from Wednesday, April 15, 2020 to Tuesday, April 14, 2020. The two hearings are: Change of Ownership, Beneficial Interest and Manager for Spiga Restaurant and Community Stormwater Mitigation Assessment.**
Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.

4:26 p.m. Board Discussion:
Mr. Bulian recognized the passing of retired Admiral James Steele Gracey, 17th Commandant, United States Coast Guard, who passed away on Sunday, April 5, 2020 in Falls Church, Virginia at age 92. He said Admiral Gracey was a member of the Needham High School graduating class of 1945. He read a statement received from the United States Coast Guard Commandant. Mr. Bulian asked the Select Board consider ordering Town flags to be lowered to half-staff for 3 days at a time to be determined by the Town Manager to honor Admiral Gracey.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to approve that Town flags be lowered to half-staff in honor of Admiral James Steele Gracey for 3 consecutive days at a time to be determined by the Town Manager.
Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.

Mr. Bulian closed the meeting by wishing residents a Happy Passover and Happy Easter.

Ms. Fitzpatrick reminded the Board the next Select Board meeting is Tuesday, April 14, 2020.

4:30 p.m.

Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting on Friday, April 9, 2020.

Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.

A list of all documents used at this Select Board meeting are available at:

<http://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx?AMID=99&Type=&ADID=>