

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Thursday, August 6, 2020
By Zoom Video Conference
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81139690129>**

8:30 a.m. Call to Order:

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

Mr. Handel 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. Handel 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 www.needhamma.gov.

8:32 a.m. Change Polling Locations for Precincts E & H:

Ms. Fitzpatrick said using the Public Administration Building as a polling location is problematic due to space constraints. She proposed precincts E & H use the Needham Golf Club for the September 1, 2020 state primary and November 3, 2020 general election.

Mr. Bulian said he will not support use of a private facility as a polling location. He said all voting should be done in public buildings.

The Board agreed with Mr. Bulian. However, it was noted the Town is facing a variety of challenges this year, and that the proposal is a carefully considered recommendation that will solve significant operational issues.

Ms. Cooley suggested Theodora Eaton, Town Clerk needs more poll workers. She encouraged people to step up and help if they want free and fair elections.

Mr. Handel said the election will be challenging due to the number of mail-in ballots and commented the Town Clerk needs all the help she can get.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said voters in precincts E & H will be notified of the change of polling location.

Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to change the polling location for precincts E & H from the Public Services Administration Building to the Needham Golf Club, 49 Green Street for the September 1, 2020 and November 3, 2020 elections.

Second: Mr. Matthews. Approved 4-1 by roll call vote. Mr. Bulian voted nay.

8:38 a.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:
Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.

Appointments: No Appointments were made at this meeting.

Consent Agenda:

- 1. Approve State Primary Warrant - September 1, 2020.**
- 2. Approve the hours for in-person early voting for the September 1, 2020 primary in the Select Board Chambers, Needham Town Hall on:
Saturday & Sunday, August 22 & 23, 2020: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Thursday, August 24 - 27, 2020: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Friday, August 28, 2020: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**
- 3. Designate the Town Manager to implement emergency mandatory non-essential outdoor water use restrictions in accordance with Section 2.2.5.5.2 of the General By-laws.**
- 4. Sign Proclamation declaring August 7, 2020 as Purple Heart Day in Needham.**

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

8:40 a.m. Change Date for Special Town Meeting:
Ms. Fitzpatrick said after discussion with the Town Moderator it is recommended the date of the Special Town Meeting be rescheduled to Sunday, October 4, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. from Monday, October 5, 2020, so that the meeting can be held outside at the Memorial Park parking lot. Ms. Fitzpatrick recommends a rain date of Sunday, October 11, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Borrelli that the Select Board vote to change the date of the Special Town Meeting previously called for Monday, October 5, 2020 to Sunday, October 4, 2020 at 1:00 p.m., with a rain date of Sunday, October 11, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. to be held at the Memorial Park Parking Lot, subject to final approval of the Memorial Park Trustees.

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

8:41 a.m. Purple Heart Community Proclamation:
Mr. Borrelli read a proclamation that the Select Board of the Town of Needham does hereby proclaim that Needham is a Purple Heart Community and that August 7, 2020 be considered Purple Heart Day in Needham.

Mr. Handel noted the proclamation has already been adopted as part of the Consent Agenda.

8:42 a.m. Discuss Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles:
Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Select Board will open the Special Town Meeting Warrant at its August 18, 2020 meeting. She said guidance is needed on items under consideration, as well as articles recommended for deferral to May 2021. She commented on several articles including West Street Zoning, Citizens Petitions (zoning and trash receptacles on sidewalks), Walker Lane Sewer Project, Property Tax Assistance, Grant Program for businesses who have expended funds to move operations outside due to the pandemic,

billing and collection software, COVID-19 expenses, Transportation Network Fees, CPA articles (Affordable Housing Trust and other articles), and Workers Compensation Fund.

Mr. Borrelli commented on Community Preservation Articles for the First Baptist Church and the Parish Church, expressing concern as to the urgency and what will happen at Town Meeting when debate begins. He suggested the articles be deferred, acknowledging it is a question for the Community Preservation Committee.

Mr. Handel asked about ongoing capital projects and COVID-19 expenses.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said COVID-19 expenses would be related to maintenance or upgrades required to keep facilities running consistent with social distancing guidelines, appropriate ventilation, or additional cleaning that may be required for the schools to reopen.

Mr. Matthews said while holding Town Meeting outside, it is important to minimize the time spent in session as there are numerous and limiting factors (weather and daylight). He said it is important the agenda not have anything more than is absolutely essential. He suggested planning for alternative formats and/or options for Town Meeting, noting it may not be possible for Town Meeting to physically meet next May.

Discussion ensued on articles deemed essential or those that should be deferred.

Mr. Matthews commented on Citizen's Petition articles, saying the proponents must be advised that the same obstacles the Town faced in the spring of 2020 are still with us, recommending deferral of the articles until Town Meeting can be back together and operating in a more traditional format. He said, regardless of anyone's opinion, Town Meeting must be able to have a fair and equitable discussion in order to make a decision on the issue.

Mr. Bulian concurred with Mr. Matthews, saying the proponents should be presented with the same offer that was made in the spring, but noted weather and daylight of Town Meeting being held outside in October could be a factor in postponing the articles again to May 2021. Mr. Bulian suggested the chair and vice chair ask the proponents to agree to move the articles to May 2021, noting the same pandemic circumstances could exist.

Mr. Handel said it is worth asking the proponents, stating they must volunteer to go along with the Select Board's suggestion. He said "otherwise, we are breaking our word."

Mr. Matthews said if the proponents insist on going forward, then they will be able to do so. He said, however, he would not put them at the top of the warrant. He said he feels there is no particular urgency in either article, except that the stake in the zoning petition is a long term change in evaluation of real estate that is permanent and is not going to be affected if adopted this year or next. He said he thought the trash receptacle petition had better, cheaper, and simpler solutions that may be readily available that he had hoped to see. Mr. Matthews said his statements are only for the purpose of managing Town Meeting.

Mr. Matthews referred to Ms. Cooley's point about the Town Clerk not having enough staff for the election. He asked whether there are any steps the Select Board could take to help make the primary and election a success, including recruiting poll workers or other actions. He said the Town Clerk should know the Board is supportive of her and her staff while they work under some very difficult conditions.

9:05 a.m.

Adjourn:

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting of Thursday, August 6, 2020.

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

It was noted the next Select Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 18, 2020.

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

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