

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Tuesday, May 11, 2021
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89093905788>**

- 6:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair Matthew Borrelli. Those present were Marianne B. Cooley, Daniel P. Matthews, Marcus Nelson, Lakshmi Balachandra, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. In addition to the Select Board, Dave Davison, ATM/Finance, Katie King, ATM/Operations, and Sandy Cincotta, Support Services Manager also participated. Recording Secretary Mary Hunt recorded the meeting remotely.
- Mr. Borrelli 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. Borrelli stated the meeting will 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.
- Motion by Ms. Cooley that this meeting be continued to the Select Board's next scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, if a technical problem develops that makes it impossible for the Select Board to conduct the meeting in this format.**
Second: Mr. Nelson. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.
- 6:02 p.m. Public Works Proclamation Week:
Ms. Cooley read a proclamation recognizing the week of May 16th - May 22nd as National Public Works Week in the Town of Needham.
- Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board do hereby proclaim the week of May 16th through May 22nd as NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK in the Town of Needham and calls upon all citizens and civic organizations to acquaint themselves with the problems involved in providing our public works and to recognize the contributions which public works employees make every day to our health, safety, comfort, and quality of life.**
Second: Mr. Matthews. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.
- 6:03 p.m. Public Hearing: Alteration of Premises Residence Inn, 80 B Street
Michael Gendrin, General Manager and Mark Newman, VP of Food & Beverages, Needham 365 Bev, LLC spoke with the Select Board regarding the hotel liquor

license for the Residence Inn located at 80 B Street, which currently includes as licensed premises approximately 5,340 sq. ft. on the first floor of the hotel consisting of bar and dining/lounge seating on the side; dining/function room in the rear; service and food prep areas in the center, and storage in the rear, with a total seating capacity of 150 patrons. Mr. Newman has submitted a license amendment to increase the licensed premises to include the hotel rooms and the market area – the market area would provide retail options for the hotel’s customers. A legal notice was advertised in the Needham Times on April 29, 2021 and abutters were notified, as required by the ABCC.

Discussion ensued on the hours of operation, all front desk employees being TIPS trained, and the type of alcoholic beverages to be sold (beer, wine, and canned cocktails).

Mr. Borrelli invited public comment. No comments were heard.

Motion by Mr. Matthews that the Select Board vote to approve amendment for alteration of premises received from Needham 365 Bev, LLC d/b/a Residence Inn. If approved, vote to forward the approved Alcohol License application to the ABCC for its review and final approval.

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

6:04 p.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.

APPOINTMENTS: No Appointments were made at this meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA *=Backup attached

- 1. Accept a \$8,000 donation made to the Needham Health Division’s Traveling Meals Program from Needham Community Council.**
- 2. Accept a \$5,000 donation made to the Substance Prevention Alliance of Needham from the Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital of Needham.**
- 3.* Approve Minutes of April 14, 2021 and May 3, 2021**
- 4. Authorize the display of pride banners provided by Needham resident Rebecca Young and others for the Chapel Street Banner Showcase Program in accordance with the Banner Policy dated March 23, 2021.**
- 5. Accept a donation from Sherwin Williams of paint and supplies for the painting of the jersey barriers that will be used in the outdoor dining parklets. The total value of their donation is \$1,500.**

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

6:05 p.m. Hearing – Change of Manager Needham Golf Club
Michael Moffett, Proposed Manager spoke with the Select Board regarding an application submitted by the Needham Golf Club, 49 Green Street for a change in manager. A review indicates Mr. Moffett meets the statutory requirements to serve

as a manager of a Club facility licensed to dispense alcohol. Rick Zimbone, Needham Golf Club president was present.

Mr. Moffett gave a brief background of his work experience in the food and beverage industry.

Mr. Matthews noted Mr. Moffett's background, saying the golf club is in a residential neighborhood and over service of alcohol to patrons cannot be an issue.

Mr. Moffett acknowledged Mr. Matthews saying all staff handling alcohol are TIPS trained and certified.

Motion by Mr. Matthews that the Select Board vote to approve the application for a Change in Manager to Michael Moffett for the Needham Golf Club, 49 Green Street. If approved, vote to forward this application to the ABCC for its review and final approval.

Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0 by roll call vote.

6:18 p.m. Public Hearing – Continuation Gordon's Fine Wines New Retail All Alcohol License – 150 Gould Street (continued from April 27, 2021)

Mr. Borrelli gave a brief history of granting liquor licenses and that the Town now has one All Alcohol License remaining. He commented on criteria over the years for issuing licenses including the business model and experience, the benefits to the Town, and the proposed location. Mr. Borrelli noted residents indicated they wanted the Town to move slowly when granting licenses, noting there are now niche businesses and developments that might cause residents to desire an increase in the number of licenses. Mr. Borrelli noted Volante Farms also submitted an application for a license, saying he is interested in the possibility of expanding the number of licenses so that they do not become such a valuable commodity.

David Gordon, Proposed Manager and Steven Miller, attorney, Miller, Quilty, and McDermott explained Gordon's Fine Wines has submitted an application for a new retail all alcohol license to be located at 150 Gould Street, noting the business will be a collaboration of two family businesses (Baker's Best and Gordon's Fine Wines).

Mr. Gordon gave a brief history of his family business, which was established in 1934. He clarified the business is not "big box," but rather an e-commerce business, noting this is an opportunity to keep 2 family owned businesses thriving. Discussion ensued on the facility, operations, delivery, marketing, "give backs" to the community, and consultative sales.

Mr. Borrelli asked the Select Board for questions.

Mr. Nelson commented on early deliveries, asking how traffic in the area of schools will be affected, and adjusting deliveries around events in Needham.

Mr. Gordon said most delivery vans will head toward Route 128, leave prior to school opening, and not routed near schools. He said distributors will be informed of events or construction, and deliveries will be adjusted.

Ms. Balachandra commented on the current space being used for alcohol distribution and asked about its partnership boxes with Baker's Best.

Mr. Gordon explained the use of the building, and that partnership boxes are independent, where Gordon's delivers the alcohol and Baker's Best delivers the food.

Ms. Cooley asked about the nature of the month to month lease.

Mr. Miller said if the project is approved the lease will be long term, and that the floor plan cannot be changed without approval of the Select Board. He noted approval is needed for everything.

Mr. Borrelli voiced concern about a distribution warehouse and whether the business will be "Needham centric."

Dave Volante, owner Volante Farms commented on its current wine and malt license received 2 ½ years ago, and his application for an All Alcohol License. He asked for Volante Farms to have the opportunity to make a presentation to the Select Board.

Carol Urwitz, 164 Greendale Avenue said Mr. Volante makes a good point, suggesting both businesses have valid points and should be considered for a license.

Mr. Borrelli closed the public hearing.

Mr. Borrelli asked the Select Board if it is interested in having Volante Farms make a presentation?

Ms. Balachandra suggested it behooves the Select Board to consider Gordon's application.

Mr. Nelson commented on Mr. Gordon's presentation and the scholarship for Needham students. He also asked about a portion of proceeds going to charity.

Mr. Gordon explained the scholarship is based on merit, and that he believes any great business must engage in the community.

Ms. Fitzpatrick noted the process to consider the application from Volante Farms is more involved due to current Select Board regulations for food stores.

Mr. Matthews commented he is unwilling to issue the last license unless the Town makes the decision to initiate increasing the quota. He noted once a license is issued it becomes “property,” noting new development could limit the Board's influence on economic growth in a positive way. He said he is interested in the discussion.

Mr. Borrelli commented on discussion from prior years, noting the possibility of developing the Muzi property. He said Gordon's Fine Wines is a terrific business, but he is concerned with the location and warehouse. He said Town Meeting could or could not approve increasing the quota. He said he is not convinced issuing the license to Gordon's is the best use for the last license, and would vote no.

Discussion ensued on “underserved” and “concept related” businesses, the benefits to Needham, and criteria.

Ms. Cooley said she is frustrated, noting two very good options are before the Board. She said it is time to resolve the restrictions on licenses put in place in 2012/13 so the Board can make sensible future decisions on alcohol licenses. She said she believes it is time to move to open up the licenses and is in favor of moving forward.

Ms. Balachandra said there is no reason not to move ahead in trying to obtain more licenses. She said it is not fair to hold up a business and that Gordon's model is differentiated. Ms. Balachandra said it is the responsibility of the Select Board to move forward.

Mr. Nelson concurred with Ms. Cooley and Ms. Balachandra, commenting it makes sense to push forward to obtain more licenses, noting there is no guarantee. He said the Board should not prohibit or limit a business from wanting to serve a community.

Mr. Matthews reiterated his view, however, he said if this is the last license to issue, Gordon's is a fine business with a good business model. He said his questions about a long-term lease and the ratio of the sales area have been answered, and that he will vote “yes.”

Motion by Ms. Balachandra that the Select Board vote to approve the application for a new All Alcohol Retail Package Store License under the Town of Needham Rules and Regulations Applicable to Package Stores for Gordon's Fine Wines of Needham, Inc., d/b/a Gordon's Fine Wine David Gordon, Manager. If approved, vote to forward the approved Alcohol License application to the ABCC for its review and final approval.

Second: Mr. Nelson. Approved 4-1. Mr. Borrelli voted nay.

Ms. Cooley said she looks forward to discussing a license for Volante Farms and changing regulations for the future.

Mr. Borrelli wished Mr. Gordon well in his collaboration with Baker's Best.

6:50 p.m.

Equal Justice in Needham Public Safety Report:

Smriti Rao, Rebecca Waber, and Vijay Fisch presented their report and answered questions for the Select Board.

Ms. Rao said if 2020 year has been about anything, it has been about revisiting assumptions about pandemics, politics, and the progress toward racial justice. She said in Needham revisiting assumptions about people who are black, indigenous, and people of color really feel safe in the community. She commented on the newly adopted NUARI vision statement "promises that people of color will feel safe, validated, and treated equitably with respect to public safety." Ms. Rao said it is a significant recognition that not everyone in Needham feels equally safe, noting it is now a promise made to residents, visitors, and employees of color. She said the promise will take work to fulfill, requiring openness and a willingness to question existing policies and structures of governance related to public safety. She said she, along with Ms. Waber and Mr. Fisch, represent a larger coalition of constituents who agree with NUARI that public safety is a priority. She said inspiration came from courageous students, employees, and residents of color in Needham who spoke about their experiences of feeling and being unsafe in Needham. Ms. Rao said after multiple inquiries to the Town Manager, it was realized there is no systematic data-based overview of public safety accessible to residents. Hence, she said, the creation of the public safety reports gathered through public record requests to the Needham Police Department. She concluded saying the reports came from a desire to learn more and fully engage in future Town decision making through conversation and community forums. She said the voice of the people must be taken seriously. Ms. Rao commented on the Town's Use of Force policy, saying she is so glad to have been invited to present the report tonight, as it begins the conversation. She commented on the Marvin Henry case, asking that the conversation tonight focus on the Equal Justice Needham: Public Safety Reports.

Ms. Waber commented on the public records request and the goal of understanding policing in Needham. She said the work of gathering information was done by residents with graduate degrees in research and reviewed by Northeastern University. She pointed out the questions asked were about people who are arrested, how many people are arrested, race, students, weapons, and training. Ms. Waber said the questions are basic and took the Police Department time to gather answers, noting most work was done manually. Ms. Waber said it was difficult for the police to answer the questions, suggesting it must be difficult for the department to monitor their own data and even more difficult for the oversight bodies. She noted transparency, oversight, and accountability are needed for a baseline. She commented on the policing policy of an Annual Bias Report, which she said has

not been done. Ms. Waber said the difficulties in having oversight and transparency is risky, referring to the number of handcuffing instances and the Marvin Henry case, noting it is better to have monitoring rather than being blindsided after the fact.

A snapshot of quantitative data was viewed, noting Needham is in line with national data. Ms. Rao commented on likelihoods involving Black and Hispanic police-civilian interaction vs. White police-civilian interaction. She said the more severe and consequential interactions are the ones that are the most disproportionate representation of Black and Hispanic people, noting the number of stops, citations, charges, arrests, and convictions are more likely. She said the data is indicative and needs regular and systematic exploration to form the basis for a longer, annual evaluation.

Ms. Waber highlighted points for inclusion in the discussion of reimaging public safety. She commented on possibly moving from an officer centric mindset to a community and safety centric mindset. Ms. Waber commented on mental health, handcuffing, training and de-escalation, and transparency, noting there is opportunity to answer many questions.

Mr. Fisch, Needham High School junior, spoke about his experience of police reform in Needham. He commented he had agreed for years that the police in Needham were unbiased, but after his research he found many of the national problems also apply in Needham. He commented on the Use of Force policy, union contracts, Campaign Zero, and his petition, which led to him joining the Equal Justice Needham committee. He commented on core issues of transparency, policies, accountability, the Massachusetts Police Reform bill, and beginning the process of accreditation by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission. Mr. Fisch suggested a full audit would be welcomed. He said he is hopeful the Select Board and the Police Department will engage in open discourse with EJJ and the community about database recommendations.

Ms. Rao thanked the Select Board for the opportunity to make the presentation. She said the reason for the report is because people believe that Needham can be a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

Mr. Borrelli asked for comments from the Select Board.

Mr. Nelson asked when the last Annual Bias Report was completed?

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the police chief has been before the Select Board on multiple occasions to report on metrics based on race, but she is not aware of when a written report was completed.

Mr. Borrelli said the police chief spoke with NUARI regarding training.

Mr. Nelson said he would like to know when the last Annual Bias Report was completed.

Ms. Balachandra concurred with Mr. Nelson, asking for the last time the Annual Bias Report was completed. She asked about the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission and steps being taken toward accreditation? She asked what reporting does the Police Department provide the Select Board?

Ms. Rao commented on surrounding accredited communities and standards set by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission, and ongoing discussions of those standards.

Mr. Borrelli said the police chief has been before the Select Board to discuss the work of the department and answer questions if there were concerns. He said up until a year or so ago the concerns were not there for some type of data driven analysis. Mr. Borrelli acknowledged embarking on different metrics to gather data to report back to the community. He said while it is new for many people, it is ultimately up to the police chief to answer to the Select Board on these issues.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the police chief reports total data in the Town's Annual Report and that other data is included in the annual Citizen's Survey with respect to satisfaction regarding the Police Department and safety within the community.

Mr. Borrelli pointed out community satisfaction with the Police Department has been very high, noting the Citizen's Survey.

Ms. Cooley said prior police reports can be reviewed, saying the Select Board has heard regularly from the police chief since she joined the Board. Discussion has included work done with students, diversion program, and mental health challenges. She said many of the issues raised tonight are not completely unfamiliar but have sparked questions and the data will be useful. Ms. Cooley said it is easy for a town that shows up as one of the safest towns in America, with very high satisfaction from its citizens overall with the police force, to be on a certain track, but the answer is we are not perfect in all dimensions and clearly have some work to do. She discussed accreditation. Ms. Cooley said understanding police reform is a critical first step. She said there are many lenses to use in understanding the good and the bad.

Mr. Matthews said EJA has done a lot to mobilize people and has done good work. He commented on information, newsletters, and materials on the EJA website, referring to defunding the police, saying people here tonight believe policing in the United States, Massachusetts, and in Needham needs reappraisal and change. However, he said the Defund Police rhetoric makes the job harder, in his opinion. He said there is a cost in trying to improve a public service, but there must be a commitment to step up to get things right, and to give people certain expectations without being politically charged, while trying to have the hard conversations that

are necessary. Mr. Matthews noted EJM would like a presence in on-going discussions, saying the group has not yet incorporated or organized in any standard political model. He said it is problematic and difficult for Town agencies and the public to work with EJM, saying there is an absence in transparency in decision making. He suggested adopting a more conventional form of organization. Mr. Matthews concurred people can't assume since the state adopted the police reform bill that the discussion will end. He said while the bill is well-intentioned, it is loaded with many goals and objectives that may have unintended consequences. He said it is important for Needham to chart its own course while following the law. He said Needham has a good Police Department with people who work hard for the community, acknowledging it is not perfect as evidenced in the Tidwell Report. Mr. Matthews said he believes the police chief works hard and that the men and women of the department try to provide good service, are loyal, and take on hazards on behalf of residents. He said he hopes people remain mindful of that while trying to bring about change.

Mr. Borrelli concurred with Mr. Matthews' concluding comments, saying Needham has an exceptional police chief willing to engage and discuss the difficult issues. However, he is concerned that the negative information does not help, and that a lot of good can come from metrics that make sense to everyone. He cited the data and raw numbers in the report. Mr. Borrelli said as a Town there must be metrics that work and decipher what they say and make improvements. He said he is troubled with the defund police rhetoric on the EJM site, saying it is not beneficial when working toward a common goal.

Ms. Balachandra said the presenters came to present data on public safety and was not meant to be an investigation or indictment of EJM. She said based on comments, she is confused on the direction. Ms. Balachandra said she is involved with EJM and takes offense at some comments, as it was not the intent. She said the suggested action items should be discussed and that the Select Board should consider what it can do moving forward to serve the constituents and community.

Mr. Nelson said it is important to answer EJM questions before ending discussion.

Mr. Matthews said the topic is serious and his comments were intended to be constructive, noting the primary focus is on how to improve public safety. He said there is common ground such as race equity, which he would like to build on.

Mr. Borrelli said all comments tonight will be taken under advisement and that there will be further discussion.

Ms. Waber said the source of the information is the Needham Police Department, noting all the data is available for anyone to pursue and that she is willing to discuss any of the data. She acknowledged there is a lot of opinion, but the source of the data is Needham and is completely transparent. Ms. Waber said it is the job of the

Select Board and the Town to do the work of oversight, accountability, and transparency.

Mr. Borrelli questioned the data and discussion ensued on the jump in some percentages.

Ms. Rao said it is the job of the Select Board and police chief to dig into the data, as there may be some really useful information to learn. She said the questions must be asked. She commented EJM is a decentralized group of random residents who volunteer their time. Ms. Rao commented on data, the Tidwell Report, and the overlap of issues from the EJM report.

Mr. Borrelli said the data in the report, along with the Tidwell Report is taken under advisement to move forward. He said he appreciates the information and that the story is telling and gives an opportunity to answer some questions. He thanked the presenters for the information.

7:50 p.m.

Public Hearing: MBTA Weekend Commuter Rail Service

Mr. Borrelli gave a brief background of the MBTA schedule to and from Boston. He said in March 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, weekly service was reduced, and Saturday service was eliminated. He said the MBTA approached the Town asking about Saturday and Sunday service, offering 2 options for the Town to consider. He said many correspondences have been received about train noise and quiet zones, saying further discussion and a public hearing will occur at a later time. He said the focus of tonight's discussion is on Option 1 or Option 2 as offered by the MBTA.

Mr. Borrelli asked for input from the Select Board.

Ms. Balachandra said the news of opening up public transportation for the Town is exciting. She suggested future conversation concerning the possibility of overhead railways be explored, acknowledging her idea is somewhat futuristic.

Mr. Matthews said many of the emails indicated a desire for quiet zones. He said the issue is complicated with many federal safety considerations and policies. He said nobody would design urban architecture in the way Needham is laid out now, with 5 grade crossings within 1 mile. He said many things have changed, including commuting patterns, within the last year as many people are working at home or in a hybrid environment. He commented on affordable housing and many of the best locations identified are near trains. Mr. Matthews said discussion needs to be reopened on quiet zones and train horn noise.

Ms. Cooley said she is interested in hearing from the public on Option 1 or Option 2. She recognized in reading the comments that there is a split between each option, with no definitive answer. She suggested asking the MBTA to open their parking lot for free on the weekends if the train stops at Needham Junction. She also

commented the train is not just for residents, but many people rely on it to get to and from work.

Mr. Borrelli reviewed Option 1 and Option 2 in the Agenda Fact Sheet.

Nordo Nissi, 450 Chestnut Street said residents living near Needham Junction need more information from MBTA, i.e. if they plan to idle trains in the Junction area and where, timetable, and use of track to Dover. He noted idling trains in the Heights is an issue. He acknowledged the goal of the MBTA is to increase service but wondered if the track to Needham Heights is compatible with an increased service goal or if terminating trains at the Junction a test pilot in longer term MBTA plans. He suggested the Select Board get more information on how the MBTA plans on meeting increased service.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said railroad operations emailed her, saying trains would remain at the Junction station for approximately 16 minutes and not pull down the track. She said the MBTA has always maintained it needed to reserve the track to Dover to turn trains around.

Jay Spencer, owner French Press said he is happy to hear Sunday service is “on the table.” He said he supports Option 1 primarily driven by the fact that restaurants in Needham Center and the Heights need workers in on time to serve customers. He suggested a later evening train for people eating dinner after 8:00 p.m., and either a free morning or evening service for riders. He said income and equity must be considered for employees. He concluded train service is incredibly helpful as Needham is a dining destination.

Kunal Randery, 217 Hillside Avenue noted trains are virtually empty during peak hours, but he understands the need for service. He questioned the use of tax dollars and environmental impact (train noise, diesel exhaust). He said the bus option is less wasteful and would address the issues pointed out by the prior speaker. He said he would prefer Option 2.

Jeff Kaufman said he appreciates the value of the train to the quality of life in Needham. He pointed out if you lose the train it will not come back. He favors Option 1 and a well-developed system for workers that integrates with future development at the Muzi site. He said consideration should also be given to development on Oak Street.

Bruce Howell, 99 Maple Street commented on trains repositioning at 4:00 a.m. He is concerned Option 1 equals more noise and sleep disturbance seven days a week. He said he understands workers need to get to work and commented Needham Junction is not miles from Needham Center. Mr. Howell suggested coordinating Bus 59 with train arrivals on Saturday and Sunday.

Kim Marie Nichols, 12 Crescent Road said she strongly favors Option 1, noting access to trains is one reason she purchased a home in Needham. She commented on environmental concerns should the train terminate at Needham Junction surmising people will drive to the station adding traffic to roads. Ms. Nichols commented on economic equity and access, saying Needham Heights tends to have more subsidized apartments and elderly housing. She said many people do not drive or have a disability and must be able to walk to the Needham Heights and Needham Center stations.

Rebecca Keller-Scholl, 115 Fair Oaks Park, said she prefers Option 1, as the trains were a huge reason she moved to Needham from Dover 15 years ago. She said it was important for her children to access the trains on weekends to get to museums, games, and entertainment in the city. Ms. Keller said it is not easy for people to walk to Needham Junction, noting it is important for senior citizens to access trains from the senior center. She acknowledged the horn noise, noting she purchased her home knowing about the noise, but feels train access is more important. She said she favors expanding train service.

Jackie Scholl, 115 Fair Oaks Park noted the trains have been running to Needham Heights for 160 years and that everyone knows the train is there. He said he is happy about Sunday service, and that he will be able to get to the city to see his friends. Mr. Scholl noted there is a significant difference in the walk to Needham Center and Needham Junction. He said he prefers Option 1.

Betty Vogel, 160 Hillside Avenue asked if the trains at the Heights could stop at West Street, rather than pulling all the way up to the other side of the bridge, noting people now must walk the entire length to get to the ramp and on to the train. She asked why the change was made years ago to move trains past the bridge, rather than leave them at the station? She said much of the noise and idling would be eliminated. Ms. Vogel said she prefers Option 2 but understands the need for Option 1.

Molly Holm, 128 Garden Street said she commutes and understands all the reasons for public transportation. However, she said the noise pollution is harmful, detracts from property values, and impacts the quality of life. Ms. Holm said she is concerned 6:00 a.m. weekend trains are really 4:00 a.m. and not desirable. Ms. Holm said a better proposal needs to come forward, saying she prefers no weekend service until quiet zones can be established. Ms. Holm said her preference is Option 2 in the absence of other choices, noting it's unfortunate to have to choose between noise and public transportation.

Bjorn Steffansen, 11 Dunster Road said he travels everyday by train and it is a question of time before people return to taking the train. He said the issue is access and that noise is a different issue. He said he is concerned the "slippery slope" of reducing stations could lead to reduced weekday service. He said he prefers Option 1.

Tom Mungovan, 232 May Street said if weekend service is to be reinstated then “do it all,” noting he prefers Option 1. He said Option 2 does not make a lot of sense.

Daniel Peaceman, 140 Garden Street said if noise were not an issue nobody would be asking Option 1 or Option 2. He said if the horn noise were not so obnoxious, everyone would choose Option 1. He commented the mere fact people are being asked to choose between Option 1 or Option 2 demonstrates how bad the noise really is. He said he knew when he moved to Needham that the train would be loud, however trying to train a 3-month-old to sleep when a train is coming at 4:45a.m. is really hard. He said he favors Option 2; however, consideration should be given on how to move the trains into the 21 century with better access for all of Needham.

Hillary Rice, 115 Garden Street, prefers Option 2 saying the noise is excessive.

Dave Miller, 95 Dana Place said we’re trying to solve the wrong problem. He said the system needs to be updated and he strongly prefers Option 2. He said electrification should be considered.

Mattia Landone, 21 Crescent Road prefers Option 2, as he bought his house six months ago for access to the train but said he would prefer to drive to Needham Junction than to hear the trains on the weekends.

Matt Coen, 148 Plymouth Road said there are very few people riding the train after 7:00 p.m. He said she has spoken with the MBTA many times about the aggressive train noise. He said the noise is a serious issue and property values will be affected if it continues on the weekends.

Barbara Ryan, 17 Crescent Road said she has been a resident for 50 years, is used to the train noise, and likes it. She said she supports Option 1 and said it is convenient to board trains at West Street instead of Hunnewell Street, which is not conducive for people who handicapped. She said she does not have a car and could not get to Needham Junction.

Cynthia Lulcheva, 217 Hillside Avenue reiterated every train idles for half an hour and is a significant public health hazard. She said she is breathing in toxic fumes and very few people are riding the trains. Ms. Lulcheva said other modern options should be considered.

Michael Ruddy, 69 Melrose Avenue prefers Option 2 as the noise is obnoxious. He commented that Bus 59 will get people to Needham Heights just as quickly as the train. He said he rides the train regularly on the weekends, but not many people are using the service.

John Lucey, 261 Garden Street said more people will ride the train once the pandemic subsides. He said he favors Option 2. He said if the noise were not the problem, tonight's discussion would not be needed. Mr. Lucey said the train conductors have too much discretion in using the train horn.

Lars Unhjem, 56 Meadowbrook Road thanked the Board for the conversation. He said smart growth should be a priority, noting the issue is complicated. He said he supports Option 1.

Ismail Moumni, 389 Hillside Avenue concurred with the previous speaker saying the trains should be electrified and noise should be removed as much as possible. He commented he would not have a problem with service seven days a week, but in the current form (idling and horn noise) the quality of life is affected. He said the noise is affecting his work.

Mr. Borrelli closed the public hearing. He asked Ms. Fitzpatrick if a vote needed to be taken tonight, suggesting the many comments must be considered.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said the MBTA asked for a reply by May 14, 2021 and that they are looking to implement a new schedule in early July.

Mr. Borrelli suggested delaying the vote tonight in order to consider all comments.

Mr. Matthews pointed out the MBTA will make a decision based on other factors. He suggested Needham could weigh in now or ask for more time to decide.

Ms. Balachandra concurred with Mr. Matthews, suggesting the MBTA should provide answers to the resident's questions. She said an approval by the Town could come with conditions around idling, noise, etc.

Mr. Borrelli said the MBTA can make its decision with or without input from Needham. He said it does not hurt to ask the MBTA questions. He said if the public hearing is continued to the next Select Board meeting, additional comments can be emailed to the Select Board.

Ms. Cooley tallied the opinions, noting the Town is divided with a few more people favoring Option 2 over Option 1. She said people appreciate access to trains and was a factor in why they moved to Town. Ms. Cooley said she hopes the MBTA will restore service, noting it has been challenging to get answers.

Mr. Nelson concurred with the Board, saying it makes sense to get answers before making a decision. He said making a decision tonight would be a disservice to the community.

Mr. Borrelli concurred with Mr. Nelson. He noted 70 attendees took part in tonight's meeting.

9:00 p.m. Town Manager:

1. Town Manager Report

Ms. Fitzpatrick reminded the Board the Memorial Day services will take place on Monday, May 31, 2021. She said it will be a more traditional event than last year, but not to expect a full parade. She said more information will be available on the Town's website.

Ms. Fitzpatrick reported that Katie King, ATM/Operations has been working with the Exchange Club on trying to arrange a July 4th parade. She said the parade will probably be scaled down, but still exciting. Ms. Fitzpatrick said fireworks will not take place but will hopefully return in 2022.

Ms. Fitzpatrick suggested the Board watch the presentation on YouTube of Boston College students discussing their research with the Council of Economic Advisors on development possibilities in the mixed-use Route 128 area. She said the presentation is excellent, and that the YouTube channel can be found on the front page of the Town's website at the bottom.

Ms. Fitzpatrick recognized Town Moderator Michael Fee's nice comments about Ms. Sandy Cincotta who will retire at the end of June. She said it will be hard without Ms. Cincotta, but part of her legacy is the organizational binder Ms. Cincotta put together to assist her replacement.

9:02 p.m. Board Discussion:

1. NUARI Update

Ms. Cooley reported the next NUARI meeting will be held at the end of May.

2. Committee Reports

No Committee Reports were made.

9:03 p.m. Adjourn:

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting of Tuesday, May 11, 2021.

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

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

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