Needham Transportation Committee

Minutes of January 29, 2019 Meeting

(7:30pm – 8:45 pm in the Highland Room of Needham Town Hall)

Members in attendance: Chair Steve McKnight (SM), Secretary Justin McCullen (JM) Richard Creem (RC), Duncan Allen (DA), David Montgomery (DM)

7:30 Call to order 8:37 Adjournment

1) Minutes of October 3rd 2018

Minutes read and accepted unanimously with no abstentions with 2 small revisions.

2) Election of Committee officers

Committee discussed member intentions of officers for 2019/2020. DM expressed interest in Chair along with SM expressing interest as Vice Chair. JM agreed to stay on as Secretary as no one expressed interest in that position. **MOTION:** Nominations of Chair (DM), Vice Chair (SM), and Secretary (JM) were voted on and approved unanimously with no abstentions. Term to commence at adjournment of Jan 29th 2019 meeting.

3) <u>Discussion of Transportation Issues in the Board of Selectmen's FY2019-2020 Updated</u> Goals

SM introduced the Board of Selectmen's (as of May 16th the board name was changed to 'Selectboard', but as of this meeting will be referenced as 'Board of Selectmen')
FY2019/20 goals. [ATTACHED] SM led discussion around drafting a letter to the BOS communicating the committee's support of town transportation goals and initiatives using some of the BOS priorities outlined in document. DM suggested that the committee should first seek BOS feedback on transportation committee charter and charge before taking a position or making recommendations on transportation matters. The committee then discussed the transportation related goals from the BOS goals document and decided the best approach was to draft a memo to the BOS informing them of the committee's willingness to help explore further, support or drive any of the goals outlined. MOTION: DM and SM to draft a letter to BOS and circulate to committee for feedback prior to submission. Motion approved unanimously without abstention.

4) Other Transportation Issues

RC and DA noted that the on-time performance of the Needham Line has marginally improved, (it was noted that the new schedule helped to improve the on-time

performance by building in buffer time). It was noted that there is still some concern with short trainsets and single level cars on rush hour trains leading to overcrowded trains and increased station dwell times and late arrival times at South Station. It was noted that the station platforms have seen some improvements, however there are still uneven surfaces that are in need of repair. In addition it was noted that a number of trees at the Needham Center station have died and should be replaced. **ACTION:** Motion to DM and SM to draft a letter from Needham Town Manager to MBTA and Keolis addressing these station and service concerns. Draft to be circulated to committee for feedback prior to submission. Motion approved unanimously without any abstentions.

5) Other business

DM reminded the committee members to take the Commonwealth of MA Conflict of Interest online training and submit certificate of completion to Town Clerk in a timely fashion.

Adjournment 8:37pm

Attachments: BOS FY2019-2020 Updated Goals



Select Board TOWN OF NEEDHAM AGENDA FACT SHEET

MEETING DATE: 1/8/2019

Agenda Item	Discuss Update of FY2019 – FY2020 Goals	
Presenter(s)	Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager	

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED

The Town Manager will update the Board on the status of the Board's FY2019 – FY2020 goals.

2. VOTE REQUIRED BY SELECT BOARD

Discussion Only.

3. BACK UP INFORMATION ATTACHED

(Describe backup below)

a. FY2019 - FY2020 Board of Selectmen Goals Update, 1/8/2019

Board of Selectmen/Town Manager FY2019 – FY2020 Board of Selectmen Goals

August 7, 2018, Revised October 23, 2018, January 8, 2019 Update

Board Goals		
1. Maximize the use of Town assets and ensure that Town and School services are housed in buildings that provide suitable and effective environments.		
Goal	Status	
Work with the School Committee and Finance Committee to develop a plan for the implementation of full-day kindergarten. (continuing strategy)	The School Committee's initial budget request includes funding for full-day kindergarten.	
Conduct an environmental assessment to facilitate discussion about the future use of Ridge Hill/Nike; determine the future use or disposition of Ridge Hill buildings. (continuing strategy)	Weston & Sampson provided a final report on its analysis. The Town Manager will recommend additional funding to continue the evaluation of use of the parcels including two active uses, the dog park, the Community Farm and some type of road access, as well as the demolition of structures.	
Secure design funding for Fire and Police Stations at October 2018 STM and November 6, 2018 ballot. (continuing strategy)	The STM and voters approved the funding of the project. Bidding is underway. The Town continues to work with Dedham with respect to communications, and will seek special permits for monopoles/structures for the communications system from the Planning Board this winter.	
Evaluate options for funding a DPW facility on Dedham Avenue and complete construction of a storage facility on Central Avenue. <i>(continuing strategy)</i>	The project is funded and bidding is underway. The Town Manager will ask the Board to consider naming the building.	
In conjunction with the Memorial Park Trustees, complete the construction of a new fieldhouse at Memorial Park. <i>(continuing strategy)</i>	The project is funded and under construction with a planned opening in the summer of 2019.	
Consider evaluation of options for accelerating ownership of Stephen Palmer land. (new initiative)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.	
2. Ensure appropriate Regulation and Assessmen	nt of, and Investment in Infrastructure.	
Goal	Status	
In conjunction with the City of Newton and MassDOT, monitor progress toward the renovation of Highland Avenue from Webster Street to the Charles River. (continuing strategy)	MassDOT reports that the project will be ready for advertising in August of 2019.	
Monitor implications of the Add-a-Lane project	This project is substantially complete.	

and assure that Needham's interests are

addressed. (continuing strategy)		
Conduct an organizational study of the Building Maintenance operations. (continuing strategy)	The Town received no bids from the second procurement process. The Town Manager will refine the scope and issue a targeted request for quotations.	
Establish a working group to gain a better understanding of the impact of commercial and residential growth on the Town's infrastructure, including but not limited to traffic, transportation, water, sewer, drains, roads and bridges, and school facilities, and to identify options for managing that impact. (continuing strategy)	The RFP for the N2025 study will be issued in early winter, 2019.	
Develop a plan for NPDES compliance including a Stormwater By-Law and Regulations. (continuing strategy)	The Stormwater By-law was approved at the October 10, 2018 Special Town Meeting and is awaiting approval of the Attorney General. The Town Manager will recommend that action on the development of regulations be deferred until the new By-law has been in effect for several months.	
Evaluate options for participation in the MassDOT Complete Streets Program and implement pedestrian safety initiatives. (continuing strategy)	The Board reviewed the initial report of the pedestrian safety audit at its meeting on November 13, 2018. Design for the installation of pedestrian activated flashing beacons is underway, and procurement for the installation will begin this coming spring. The Town Manager will work with the consultant to identify safe and legal traffic calming measures that can be implemented in the shorter term. The Town used grant funding to purchase 10,000 reusable shopping bags that are being distributed in public buildings and in supermarkets. The bags include the pedestrian safety logo from the "Walk Aware Needham" campaign,	
3. Maintain and improve the vitality and economic success of the Town.		
Goal	Status	

Goal	Status
Work with Newton to implement the economic development plan for the N ² corridor; Evaluate the relationship between Needham Crossing and the N ² Innovation District and recommend a branding strategy for Needham Crossing. (continuing strategy)	The Board reviewed options for signage/branding and agreed on a logo design (Option2).
In conjunction with the Planning Board,	The Board discussed this issue with the Planning

evaluate options for the redevelopment of Chestnut Street and Industrial Zones along Route 128. (continuing strategy)	2018. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the zoning on January 29, 2019,
Evaluate options for locating information kiosks in Needham Center. (new initiative)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.

4. Expand energy efficient and environmentally sound operations for the Town and its residents and businesses.

Goal	Status
Continue to pursue options for limiting the use of plastic bags at certain retail establishments. (continuing strategy)	Most of the target retailers are complying with the voluntary ban. The Town Manager and Board members will continue to seek voluntary compliance from the remaining retailers.
Consider policy implications for including solar infrastructure in new construction. (new initiative)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Consider establishing an energy committee. (new initiative)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.

5. Maintain and develop amenities that contribute to the desirability of Needham as a place to live and work.

and work.	
Goal	Status
Consider the merits of a tree preservation by- law. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Coordinate with DCR to encourage access to Cutler Park. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Establish fishing areas at ponds and on the Charles River. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Evaluate options to reduce train horn noise. (continuing strategy)	The Town is waiting for final word from the MBTA about the option of eliminating the grade crossing at the golf course. The Town Manager will recommend that the Board make a decision about quiet zone status in the near future.
Develop a pilot program to address trash concerns Town-wide. (continuing strategy)	The Town will implement a Big Belly pilot program at parks this spring.
Evaluate options for regulating private trash pick-up on public ways. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Participate in the development and implementation of the Open Space plan. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
In conjunction with the Planning Board, evaluate the possibility of recommending accessory dwelling unit zoning. (continuing	The Board discussed this concept with the Planning Board and School Committee on December 19, 2018. The Planning Board's hearing on this matter

strategy)	is scheduled for January 29, 2019,
Revitalize the Property Tax Assistance Program. (continuing strategy)	The Property Tax Assistance/Taxation Aid Committee will meet with the Board of Selectmen on January 8, 2019.
Work with the Park & Recreation Commission to create recreational opportunities in the downtown. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.
Discuss multi-modal transportation on the greenway between Newton and Needham. (new initiative)	The Town Manager will reach out to the Mayor of Newton to set up a chairs meeting to discuss this and other topics.
In conjunction with the Planning Board, develop an overall strategy for review of housing projects that are proposed. (new initiative)	The Board discussed this topic with the Planning Board and School Committee on December 19, 2018. Members agreed to review the 2012 Chapter 40B Guidelines as a model framework for future consideration.
Evaluate ways to improve parking at the Needham Center Post Office, on Hillside Avenue, and at other locations. (new initiative)	The Town installed "No commuter Parking" signs on Great Plain Avenue and the Town Manager is working with the PO to encourage their staff not to park in the customer lot. The Town will change the parking meters directly in front of the PO to limit them to short term parking. The Town Manager has asked the staff in Planning and Community Development to evaluate all of the special permits and ZBA decisions in the Hillside Avenue area to get a sense of the parking demand before convening a working group to strategize options.
In conjunction with the Park & Recreation Commission, support the expansion of hours of operation of the Pools at the Rosemary Recreation Complex from Memorial Day to Labor Day, if practicable.	Funding that would provide for an extended season is included in the Park & Recreation Department budget submission for FY2020.
6. Maintain and enhance the Town's Financial	Sustainability.
Goal	Status
Evaluate stabilization fund targets. (new initiative)	The Assistant Town Manager/Director of Finance has begun a conversation about this topic with the Finance Committee.
Evaluate hours of operation at the RTS. (new initiative)	The Town has engaged a consultant to evaluate the efficiency of the RTS facility and staffing will be a component of the study.
Evaluate senior property tax relief options. (new initiative)	The Town Manager and Board members will conduct research on this topic.

Develop a staffing plan for the Memorial Park Fieldhouse. (new initiative)	A request for funding for staffing the facility is included in the initial FY2020 budget request.	
7. Evaluate Town Operations and Administration.		
Goal	Status	
Develop and implement a policy guiding the use of banners on poles in the business districts. (continuing strategy)	Action on this goal is planned for FY2020.	
Review the Town Manager evaluation process. (continuing strategy)	The Board adopted an interim form and the Town Manager and immediate past chair will continue to refine the form and process and make a recommendation to the Board.	
Develop a funding strategy to meet the staffing needs of the Police and Fire Departments in the context of the current and planned growth in Needham Crossing. (continuing strategy)	The FY2020 budget includes a proposal for funding 8 new firefighters (75% of which will be funded by a grant), and one new police officer. The Town Manager proposes to recommend an additional 2 police officers in FY2021. One police officer position was funded in FY2019.	
Update the fee structure for facility rentals, and work with the Schools to consider limiting access over the summer to accommodate capital improvements and preventive maintenance. (continuing strategy)	The Board voted to approve the revised policy and fees at its meeting on October 23, 2018.	
Investigate options for moving permit application and inspection processes to electronic and/or web-based platforms. (continuing strategy)	The Town Manager has asked a team of stakeholders to review options.	
Evaluate structure and efficiency of consolidated HHS Department. (new initiative)	A chairs meeting was held on January 3, 2019 to discuss this topic as well as FY2020 budget priorities.	
In conjunction with other stakeholders, discuss ways to streamline presentations at Town Meeting. (new initiative)	This goal is complete.	
Review policy implications of the allocation of liquor licenses. <i>(new initiative)</i>	The Board continues to discuss the number of available licenses and their uses, as well as implications for license violations.	
Consider the merits of joining the opioid lawsuit. (new initiative)	The Board determined that it is not in the Town's interest to participate in the lawsuit at this time.	
Consider criteria for reviewing proposed zoning changes. (new initiative)	This topic was discussed with the Planning Board and School Committee on 12/19/2018 and discussion will continue in 2019.	
Evaluate the creation of a Public Information Officer to expand the Town's communications	This position was included in the Town Manager's initial budget request for FY2020.	

In developing its statement of goals for the coming fiscal years, the Board identified both initiatives that may be addressed in future years, and general governing principles that guide the goal setting process. This list will continue to be updated and refined:

Future Initiatives

- Develop a plan for NPDES Compliance.
- Work with the Planning Board to consider a street naming policy.
- Consider a plan for snow removal in the business districts.
- Evaluate the concept of constructing a hockey rink in a public/private partnership.
- Evaluate options for locating alternative transportation options (e.g. ZipCar and bike share services) in Needham.
- Explore the creation of a stormwater enterprise fund.

Governing Principles

- Targeted options for property acquisition will be explored.
- The Town will work to develop a consensus with Newton regarding transportation options along the Highland Avenue/Needham Street corridor.
- Appropriate coordination of all the major road projects affecting the Town is a priority.
- Town policies and regulations will be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis.
- The Town will prioritize the reconstruction and repair of existing sidewalks before embarking on new sidewalk construction.
- Opportunities to install community art will be explored.
- The Town should be an age friendly community.
- The number of pedestrian accidents is concerning and should be addressed.
- The Town will conduct a Capital Facility Summit on a biennial basis.
- Emergency preparation and planning is a high priority.
- Opportunities for departmental consolidation and efficiency improvement will be identified and implemented.
- Opportunities to enhance communication with the public will always be considered.
- Opportunities to collaborate on additional programs and services that will benefit Needham's veterans will be explored and implemented.
- Opportunities for streamlining the permitting process will be explored and implemented.
- Opportunities to expand the distribution of notices of public hearings will be explored and implemented.