

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Friday April 3, 2020
By Zoom Video Conference
<https://zoom.us/j/607456201>**

3:00 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, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. Marianne B. Cooley did not participate. Also participating were Tim McDonald, Health and Human Services/Director, Dave Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance, and Denise Garlick, State Representative. 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 and, as such, the requirement of the open meeting law to have all meetings in a public, accessible, physical location has been suspended and members of all public bodies are able 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. He said all supporting documents used at this meeting are available on the Town's website.

3:03 p.m. COVID-19 Update - Emergency Operations Center and Health & Human Services: Tim McDonald, Health and Human Services/Director said the Needham Public Health department, Public Information Officer, and Emergency Management Administrator continue working from the Emergency Operations Center at the Rosemary Complex to help support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said much of the work now concerns public education, the importance of social distancing, and assisting first responder agencies and long-term care facilities in dealing with patients and combating the virus. He commented Barbara Singer, Health Director/Needham Public Schools has been helping the Needham's public health nurses with contact tracing and other assistance. He said the Emergency Operations Center is organizing donations of Personal Protective Equipment from the Exchange Club, public schools, Chinese Friends of Needham, and private citizens. Donations are going to BID Needham, first responders, and other parties to make sure people with exposure to the public have the appropriate equipment to remain safe. Mr. McDonald reiterated public education and the importance of social distancing must continue to be conveyed to residents in order to stop the spread of the virus. He said he understands the challenge, but said it is critical for residents to stay physically apart from their friends and neighbors.

Mr. Borrelli asked for an update on parks where people have congregated, as well as mortality modeling data as it relates to Needham so the hospital and off-site locations can be prepared.

Mr. McDonald said a number of steps have been taken discouraging people from congregating at parks, including closing parking areas and restricting access with caution tape. He encouraged people to get outdoor activity and exercise, as long as they do it without congregating in groups. He said group activities, such as basketball, cannot take place as close proximity is how the infectious disease can spread. Mr. McDonald said data specific to Needham is not available, but the public health nurse, Chief Condon, Chief Schlittler, Town Manager, the head of BID Needham, and the Infection Control nurse at BID Needham are in regular contact to better understand community conditions and what can be expected from patients that first responders may have to assist. Mr. McDonald spoke about take-out food service saying Needham has a number of responsible restaurant operators and an environmental staff who do inspections. He said inspections continue and guidance has been given on how to conduct safe food take-out operations. He said he has full confidence in food service establishments to provide food in a safe and effective manner. He suggested people take food out of the container, use their own silverware, and to wash hands after coming in from outside. He said curbside pickup and free delivery are being offered.

3:12 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 Minutes of March 10, March 13, March 24 and March 27, 2020 (open session) and March 10, 2020 (Executive Session)**
- 2. Grant extension of Spring Licenses (issued by Select Board due to Expire on April 30, 2020) until July 1, 2020.**
- 3. Accept the following donations to the Towns: \$100 worth of surgical masks from the Chinese Friends of Needham and \$532 worth of gloves from the Needham Exchange Club.**

Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

3:12 p.m. COVID-19 Update Continuity of Operations:
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager said it is an anxious time for everyone, thanking staff for continuing to show up to do the work of the Town and for the public.

Ms. Fitzpatrick commented on specific departments and the essential services provided to residents.

She said the Department of Public Works is on a split weekly shift to protect staff, stay healthy, and continue providing services. She said the Water and Sewer staff is working, along with a “skeleton crew” assisting with special tasks related to the Emergency Operations Center by moving in message boards, blocking parking

lots, and organizing school meal distribution by setting up temporary weather shelters. She said Recycling and Transfer Station employees are working on a split shift with the same amount of disposal volume. She said a new traffic pattern, effective immediately, will moderate the number of people entering the RTS at any given time and help with social distancing. She said bulky waste, swap shop, and Goodwill donation bins are closed. Ms. Fitzpatrick encouraged residents to drop trash at non-peak times, suggesting Tuesday-Friday as the best time. She said the Library is active with numerous online resources for children including ebooks, at home learning, and exploring the possibility of read aloud time, as well as on-line music performances. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Park and Recreation department is organizing the “Shine On Needham” program encouraging residents to decorate homes to provide cheer and will distribute chalk to children to write messages on the sidewalk for people out walking. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the CATH provides box lunch from Springwell which are delivered to participants who need it, weekly grocery delivery in partnership Trader Joe’s, a generous one-time delivery of 60 pasta meal kits from Twirl of Arlington for lunch box participants, and daily email and video updates from CATH staff to seniors to help with social isolation. She said social services continue offering counseling and case management by phone. She said high school students are also volunteering for a new phone chat program to call and check in on senior citizens. Ms. Fitzpatrick said Dan Gutekanst, Schools Superintendent asked students to write letters to senior citizens and drop them off at the Emery Grover Building. The pen pal letters will be delivered to the Aging Services division for distribution to Needham seniors. Ms. Fitzpatrick commented the Travelling Meals program continues. She said Youth and Family Services continues with clinics on-line and a new #selfcareneedham initiative to promote self-care in the community. Ms. Fitzpatrick said schools collaborated with town departments to provide the Child Nutrition Program of grab and go food service for children and teens free of charge, regardless of need. She said the service is available Tuesday and Friday at the High Rock School by drive through. Ms. Fitzpatrick recognized the work by the Police and Fire Departments. She said Personal Protective Equipment stock is acceptable, but the Town continues looking for more supply.

Mr. Bulian asked residents to keep large trash items at home for the time being, and continue using yellow bags, as it equitably divides the cost among residents and maintains the system.

Mr. Borrelli said yellow bags are available for delivery by local establishments. He asked about keeping the police and fire stations sanitized.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said regular cleaning is taking place, as well as cleaning vehicles. She said employee temperatures are taken when they arrive at work, social distancing continues, and full PPE is worn. She said PPE and personal hygiene is what will keep everyone safe.

Mr. Matthews reiterated that residents should go to the RTS Tuesday-Friday.

Mr. Handel said Harvey's Hardware is not delivering yellow bags, but has a table set up at the store entrance to purchase bags. He reiterated revenue from the sale of yellow bags is needed to run the RTS.

Dave Davison said Governor Baker today signed into law an act granting authority to municipalities to ease some requirements, including extending the property tax bill due date to June 1, 2020 from May 1, 2020, waive accrued interest penalties on bills due during the state of emergency from March 10 to June 30, 2020 as long as the bill is paid in full, and grants an extension of the filing deadline for some exemption applications from April 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020. He commented on the delay of the annual Town Meeting, FY2021 town budget, and the Massachusetts income tax deadline extension to July 15, 2020. Mr. Davison said there is some easing in regulations allowing restaurants with alcoholic licenses to serve sealed containers of alcoholic beverages (wine and malt beverages only) with a food order. He commented on not for profit meetings and retirees.

Mr. Borrelli asked for creative ways the Board can help small businesses, and said discussion is needed to establish a fund.

Mr. Bulian said the issue of helping small businesses is complicated.

Mr. Handel said the Council on Economic Advisors will meet to discuss the issue, noting there are ways to help both residents and businesses. He said when the crisis is over, people will need to get their business up and running as quickly as possible.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board ratify and support the actions of the Town Manager that are authorized by the Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities resulting from COVID-19,

and

Further, that the Select Board support and endorse the action to change the due date for FY2020 Fourth Quarter Property Tax Bills from May 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020,

and

Further, that the Select Board support and endorse the action to waive payment of interest and other late penalties on late payments for bills that were due after March 10, 2020 and paid before June 30, 2020 for Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, FY 2020 First Quarter Property Tax, Betterment Assessment, and Water or Sewer Bill.

Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

3:41 p.m. April Select Board Meetings:
Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended the Select Board change its scheduled meeting from April 15, 2020 to April 14, 2020.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to change the Select Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2020 to Tuesday, April 14, 2020.
Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

3:42 p.m. Call for Fall Town Meeting:
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked the Board to call for the Fall Town Meeting on Monday, October 5, 2020, with the possibility a second night would be scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2020.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to call for a Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, October 5, 2020, with a possible second night on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.
Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

Mr. Matthews noted the goal is to hold the Special Town Meeting on one night, but flexibility is needed, and Town Meeting Members should block out the two nights.

3:44 p.m. Town Manager:
Ms. Fitzpatrick proposed the next Select Board meeting be held on Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 4 p.m. by Zoom.

Mr. Bulian said times are challenging, but people are pulling together, practicing social distancing, and mostly conducting themselves appropriately. He thanked residents for their patience as the Town works to provide necessary and usual services in a safe manner.

3:45 p.m. Adjourn:
Motion by Mr. Handel that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting on Friday, April 3, 2020.
Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 4-0 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=>