

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Friday, August 21, 2020
By Zoom Video Conference
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89093905788>**

8:30 a.m. Call to Order:
A 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. 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.

8:30 a.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:
Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Select Board vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.

APPOINTMENTS:

- 1. Elizabeth Kaponya, Registrar of Voters (Republican) (term ends 6/30/2023)**

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. The Board authorizes and confirms the Town Manager's action to execute the intermunicipal agreement between the Town of Needham and the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant for municipal street light system and parking lot lighting systems maintenance and repair services.**

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

8:31 a.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Energy Grant of Location - 12 Bancroft Street
Christine Cosby, Eversource Energy representative appeared before the Board requesting permission to install approximately 7 feet of conduit in Bancroft Street. This work is necessary to provide underground electric service to 12 Bancroft Street.

Ms. Fitzpatrick indicated all paperwork is in order. However, it was noted the work was completed prior to approval from the Select Board.

Mr. Handel invited public comment.

Joe White, builder said this is his first time building a house in Needham and that was unaware approval of the Grant of Location was necessary prior to doing any work. He apologized to the Board saying the error was unintended.

Mr. Matthews explained the reason for approval is to allow abutters time to weigh in on the project. He said it is important for neighbors to have a say in the work, before completed. Mr. Matthews suggested the Select Board review the permitting process to make sure builders and contractors are aware of the Grant of Location process, prior to installation.

Mr. Bulian said it is good practice for builders and contractors to reach out to neighbors prior to commencing work. He said there have been situations in the past where work was completed prior to approval that lead to unintended consequences that could have been resolved early in the process. He said he thought the building permit application clearly stated approval is required prior to starting work.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said she believes the process is clearly stated on the street occupancy permit.

Ms. Cooley said, presuming the builder pulls his own permit, the language should be noted on the permit. She also said perhaps particular focus should be on builders new to Needham, as that is a common thread.

Mr. Borrelli said ultimately it is the builder or developer who is responsible. He commented the paperwork might not be clear on the building permit, however the town has made an effort to have the language in other places so there is an alert. Mr. Borrelli said now that the process is on line, it may be easier to ask the builder “are you looking for underground service?” prompting other text or questions, while also including a fine schedule. He said there must be a resolution to the issue.

Mr. Handel asked whether Eversource Energy has any role in the issue?

Mr. Borrelli said he does not know if Eversource Energy has any responsibility.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said a list is kept, and the Board has discussed fines for second offenses.

Mr. Handel invited public comment.

Todd Skelton, homeowner spoke positively on behalf of the builder and thanked the Select Board for calling this special meeting.

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Select Board vote to approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install approximately 7 feet of conduit in Bancroft Street. This work is necessary to provide underground electric service to 12 Bancroft Street, Needham.

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

8:21 a.m.

Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting of Friday, August 21, 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=>