

Town of Needham

Select Board

Minutes for Friday, July 30, 2021

8:10 a.m. Call to Order:

A special meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair Matthew Borrelli at the Memorial Park Field House. Those present were Marianne B. Cooley, Daniel P. Matthews, Lakshmi Balachandra, Marcus Nelson, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, Assistant Town Manager Dave Davison, and Assistant Town Manager Katie King.

Chair Borrelli stated that the purpose of the meeting was to update the Board’s goals for the coming years by reviewing the items that remain from prior goal statements and considering new initiatives. He said that the purpose of the Select Board Goals is to effect positive change, set policy direction for Town government, and guide the development of the budget.

The Board discussed the concept of developing a vision for the Town of Needham. It was agreed by consensus that the vision should be deferred to a future year given the amount of time required.

The Board discussed Goal #1 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement with the addition of a bullet as follows: “Explores targeted opportunities for parcel acquisition.

GOAL #1: Livable Needham plans for and invests in safe, well-maintained and attractive buildings and infrastructure that accommodate a diverse set of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean and attractive place to live, work and play.
- Provides a variety of housing types with a full range of affordability.
- Provides high-performing, reliable and affordable public infrastructure and Town services.
- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development.
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and walkability for all members of the community.
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable and efficient public transit.
- Coordinates major infrastructure projects and communicates with impacted members of the Needham community.
- Prioritizes the reconstruction and repair of existing sidewalks before embarking on new sidewalk construction. The construction of new sidewalks will be offset by the removal of old, under-used sidewalks.

The Board discussed initiatives under Goal #1.

1.1	Seek Funding for Ridge Hill Building Demolition	Consensus to include
1.2	Seek Funding for DPW Facility Refresh	Consensus to include

1.3	Begin the Ridge Hill//Nike Assessment Phase 2 Project	Consensus to include and create a working group
1.4	Set new goals related to affordable housing and identify strategies to achieve them now that Needham has surpassed the 10% threshold under MGL Chapter 40B.	Consensus to amend goal to participate in the Planning Board's Study Committee
1.5	Sponsor a Housing Summit	Consensus to eliminate
1.6	Explore Senior Tax Relief	Consensus to eliminate
1.7	Evaluate RTS Operations to Guide Long-term Investment	Consensus to seek funding for a review of service delivery model and operations
1.8	Explore installation of kiosks in business areas	Consensus to eliminate
1.9	Explore options for reducing amount of public litter including General By-law re: Household trash & Funding for trash removal efforts	Consensus to include
1.10	Work with the NPS to ensure re-opening consistent with COVID-19 precautions	Consensus to include broad goal about managing response to the Pandemic
1.11	Seek Funding for School Administration Building	Motion: Mr, Matthews moved that initiative 1.11 be included in the goals. Ms. Cooley seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 -1 with Ms. Balachandra voting in the negative.
1.12	Identify funding for School Master Plan projects	Consensus to participate in the planning process
1.13	Update Parcel Acquisition List	Consensus to eliminate
1.14	Review Cheney St. Zoning Referred by TM	Consensus to consult with the Planning Board on its review
1.15	Evaluate use of ARPA Funding for Identified Infrastructure Projects	Consensus to include

The Board discussed Goal #2 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #2: Economically Vital – Needham has the economic opportunities and resources for residents and businesses to thrive in our community. Needham:

- Supports an environment for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

- Promotes a well-educated, skilled and diverse work force that meets employers’ needs.
- Fosters a collaborative and resource-rich regional business climate.
- Attracts, sustains and retains a diverse mix of businesses, entrepreneurs and jobs that support the needs of all community members.
- Supports financial security, economic opportunity and social mobility for all.

2.1	Evaluate Chestnut Street Zoning	Consensus to evaluate redevelopment on Chestnut Street
2.2	Identify Relief Programs for Small Businesses through ARPA Funding	Consensus to include
2.3	Evaluate Expansion of Snow Removal Efforts	Consensus to include
2.4	Support Zoning Proposals for Outside Seating	Consensus to include
2.5	Develop & Implement Regulations Guiding Outdoor Seating	Consensus to include

The Board discussed Goal #3 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #3: Accessible & Connected - Needham has a multi-modal transportation system that gets people where they want to go, when they want to get there, safely and cost-effectively.
Needham:

- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient and clean mobility options.
- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections.
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that will encourage diverse populations to connect to nature and the larger community.
- Promotes transportation options to ensure we remain an age-friendly community.

3.1	Seek Funding for a Parking Study of the mix of parking types and associated technology	Consensus to include
3.2	Evaluate the role and composition of the TMAC and the Transportation Committees	Consensus to include and add RTAC and Complete Streets Committees
3.3	Seek Funding for Noise Reduction/Quiet Zone Feasibility & Design	Consensus to include
3.4	Seek Funding for Feasibility Study of Alternative Transportation Options including Share Use Path and Rail Trail Extension	Consensus to include a review of the rail corridor from Dover to Newton

3.5	Review existing MBTA Bus Routes and Make Recommendations as Appropriate	Consensus to eliminate
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The board also discussed and included by consensus the implementation of the Downtown Streetscape Phase 2.

The Board discussed Goal #4 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #4: Healthy and Socially Thriving - Needham residents enjoy high levels of physical and mental well-being and abundant recreational, cultural and educational opportunities in an environment where human rights are respected, diversity is celebrated, and neighbors feel connected. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups.
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members.
- Fosters inclusion, diversity and equity.
- Promotes the installation of art and opportunities for community-led art projects.

4.1	Explore use of ARPA for public Art projects	Consensus to include
4.2	Seek additional funding for youth behavioral health needs	Consensus to include, clarify that the initiative includes mental health, and expand efforts in this area
4.3	Identify and implement strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization.	Consensus to include
4.4	Continue to provide diversity, equity and inclusion professional development opportunities for all staff geared towards deepening understanding and becoming culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased members of the Needham community.	Consensus to include
4.5	Measure efforts to recruit and retain BIPOC individuals and provide annual updates on progress.	Consensus to consolidate with 4.3
4.6	Create a framework for how community members can effectively engage in conversations around race, diversity, equity, and inclusion, to build relationships and a stronger	Consensus to include

	understanding of different perspectives and lived experiences.	
4.7	Actively monitor progress on the law enforcement recommendations that NPD Chief Schlittler presented to the Select Board on June 8, 2021.	Consensus to consolidate with 5.1
4.8	Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees.	Consensus to include
4.9	Measure efforts and progress on efforts to make Boards and Committees more diverse.	Consensus to consolidate with 4.8
4.10	Continue NUARI meetings, reviewing and providing guidance on recommendations	Consensus to include for another year
4.11	Develop a plan for use of ARPA funding to continue public health response to COVID-19	Consensus to include
4.12	Encourage Needham non-profit organizations, civic groups, and businesses to adopt or endorse, as appropriate, the vision statement.	Consensus to include
4.13	Include a question in the bi-annual Town survey to gauge residents' perceptions of how welcoming and inclusive the Needham community is.	Consensus to include and explore additional survey and polling opportunities
4.14	Provide support to other Boards & Committees on how to apply NUARI principles to their work.	Consensus to include
4.15	Develop a discrimination complaint process and provide forums where individuals feel comfortable discussing their concerns related to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion.	Consensus to include

The Board discussed Goal #5 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #5: Safe - Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety and ensures that all residents are secure and cared for during emergencies and natural disasters. Needham:

- Enforces the law while considering the needs of individuals and community values.
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters.
- Fosters a climate of safety for individuals in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools and public places.

- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.
- Utilizes Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize pedestrian safety on our roadways.
- Prioritizes emergency planning and trainings for Town staff and the community to increase our collective preparedness and resilience.

5.1	Actively monitor progress on the law enforcement recommendations that NPD Chief Schlittler presented to the Select Board on June 8, 2021.	Consensus to include
5.2	Monitor the progress of the POST Commission	Consensus to eliminate

The Board discussed Goal #6 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #6: Responsibly Governed - Needham provides excellent customer experience, responsibly manages the Town’s assets and makes data-driven decisions that are also informed by community engagement. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town’s financial, human, information and physical assets.
 - Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable and accurate data and analysis.
 - Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness and quality customer service in all municipal business.
 - Supports, develops and enhances relationships between the Town and community/ regional partners.
 - Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance.
 - Reviews and updates Town policies and regulations.
 - Identifies opportunities for departmental consolidation and efficiency improvement.
 - Identifies opportunities for streamlining permitting processes.
- Provides open access to information, encourages innovation, enhances communication and promotes community engagement

6.1	Hold meetings with community stakeholders	Consensus to eliminate
6.2	Explore banning small alcohol bottles (“nips”)	Consensus to eliminate
6.3	Meet regularly with other boards and committees	Consensus to include
6.4	Expand the number of boards and committees that can host hybrid meetings by investing in technology	Consensus to include

	and facility improvements (potentially ARPA funded)	
6.5	Seek additional package store licenses by filing a Home Rule petition to match the State quota system	Consensus to include
6.6	Consider amending the charter to allow board members to take office after Town Meeting	Consensus to eliminate
6.7	Evaluate reinstating the informal session at Select Board Meetings	Consensus to create a public comment component of the formal agenda
6.8	Develop a Select Board orientation package	Consensus to include
6.9	Develop a Select Board/Committee code of conduct – policy manual	Consensus to include
6.10	Expand community engagement efforts including growing the newsletter distribution, and implementing micro-polling and restoring the citizen satisfaction survey	Consensus to include
6.11	Review the status of legal services	Consensus to eliminate
6.12	Update the Town website	Consensus to include
6.13	Evaluate the start time of Select Board meetings	Consensus to eliminate
6.14	Renew all three cable franchise licenses	Consensus to include
6.15	Explore need for public meeting tablets/devices for Select Board meetings	Consensus to eliminate

The Board discussed Goal #7 and agreed by consensus to the goal statement.

GOAL #7: Environmentally Sustainable – Needham is a sustainable, thriving and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth’s resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Maintains a sense of urgency around climate change.
- Promotes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy.
- Ensures the efficient use of natural resources.
- Protects and enhances the biodiversity and productivity of ecological systems.

7.1	Develop a Climate Action Plan	Consensus to include
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7.2	Explore funding a sustainability manager	Consensus to eliminate
7.3	Identify parcel acquisition to comply with LWCF requirements	Consensus to include

The Board discussed the need to meet again to address the list of items for consideration and the date of August 5th was agreed upon by consensus.

12:05 p.m. Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Nelson that the meeting be adjourned. Second: Ms. Balachandra. Unanimously approved 5-0.

A list of all documents used at this Select Board meeting is available at:
<http://needhamma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/8948>