

**Town of Needham
Select Board
Minutes for Tuesday, December 21, 2021
Needham Town Hall
Powers Hall
and
Via ZOOM
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85892782400>**

- 6:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Select Board was convened by Chair Matthew D. Borrelli. Those present were Daniel P. Matthews, Marianne Cooley, Marcus Nelson (via Zoom), Kevin Keane, and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick. Dave Davison, ATM/Finance, Katie King, ATM/Operations, Myles Tucker, Support Services Manager, Kristin Scoble, Administrative Specialist, and Mary Hunt, Recording Secretary were also in attendance.
- 6:00 p.m. Public Comment Period:
Andy Wizer, 7 Emerson Road spoke with the Board about the possibility of the Town of Needham joining the group Communities for Restorative Justice. She referenced two incidents occurring in Needham last week, saying these could be the initial cases for the Town to become involved with Communities for Restorative Justice. She said she anticipates speaking with John Schlittler, Chief of Police in the near future.
- Ross Donald, 25 Chambers Street spoke with the Board about the Needham Housing Authority, and issues of bullying, hazing, and mobbing. He referenced a resident survey in which one resident said there was lack of respect from staff, lack of concern and/or follow through when residents cause problems for other residents, substandard living conditions, fear, not feeling safe, and a lack of maintenance in common areas. He continued that living in the Needham Housing Authority is traumatizing, stressful, and people feel unimportant and disrespected.
- Mr. Matthews reiterated the Needham Housing Authority has many issues and that it has a management structure prescribed by law to address problems. He noted individuals have responsibilities and rights to appeal decisions. He said the best recourse is to work through the system on issues, rather than going to individual Town boards. Mr. Matthews acknowledged we are in one community, however, said each agency has its own set of responsibilities and the first recourse is to work within the system. Mr. Matthews encouraged Mr. Donald to speak with the Housing Authority board and staff.
- 6:16 p.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Energy Grant of Location - 16 Petrini Circle
Joanne Callender, Eversource Energy representative (via Zoom) spoke with the Select Board requesting permission to install approximately 11 feet of conduit in

Petrini Circle. She said this work is necessary to provide electrical service to 16 Petrini Circle, Needham.

Ms. Fitzpatrick commented work was performed prior to receiving a grant of location. She noted the building commissioner and the electrical inspector have not completed their inspection.

Lana Lukatsky, 16 Petrini Circle, homeowner, Aliaksandr Stselmakh, April Electric Corp., and Marvin Abdah, April Electric Corp., stated they did not realize a grant of location was required. They apologized for the misunderstanding, miscommunication, and said it would not happen again.

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

Discussion ensued and it was agreed to approve and sign the grant of location, subject to sign off by Needham's building commission and electrical inspector.

Motion by Mr. Matthews that the Select Board vote to approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install approximately 11 feet of conduit in Petrini Circle, subject to inspection by the Needham building commissioner and electrical inspector.

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

6:27 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:

1. Thaddeus Prorok	Council on Aging	Term Exp. 6/30/2023
2. Kathleen Whitney	Council on Aging	Term Exp. 6/30/2024
3. Dylan Attia	Council of Economic Advisors	Term Exp. 6/30/2024
4. Karen Morales	Needham Commission on Disabilities	Term Exp. 6/30/2024
5. Finlay McKeon	Needham Human Rights Committee	Term Exp. 6/30/2024

CONSENT AGENDA: *=Backup attached

- 1.* Approve minutes of November 23, 2021 (open session), November 30, 2021 (open session), October 26, 2021 (executive session), November 16, 2021 (executive session), November 30, 2021 (executive session), December 14, 2021 (open session) December 14, 2021 (executive session)**
- 2.* Approve Employment Agreement for the Chief of Police for 2021 – 2026.**
- 3. Accept a \$250 donation from the First Baptist Church in Needham for Needham Health Department's Gift of Warmth Program.**
- 4. Accept the following donations for the Center at the Heights; \$50 from Doris Jafferian, \$50 from Mr & Mrs. Burns and \$115 from the Byrne Family Trust.**
- 5. Accept a \$250 donation from the Christ Episcopal Church in Needham for Needham Youth & Family Services for the Crisis Donation Fund.**

6. Accept a \$1,500 donation from the Exchange Club of Needham for Needham Youth and Family Services.

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

6:28 p.m. Public Hearing: Restaurant Wine and Malt Beverage License - PM Story Corp. d/b/a Little Spoon
Apirak Chuenprapa, Corporate Director, Apichat Chuenprapa, Proposed Manager, and George Guinta, Jr. Attorney spoke with the Board regarding an application for a Restaurant Wine and Malt Beverage License for PM Story Corporation, d/b/a Little Spoon. Little Spoon is a restaurant located at 952 Great Plain Avenue. The restaurant consists of 1,662 square feet on the 1st floor and approximately 700 square feet in the basement that will be used for prep area, office, walk-in cooler, and freezer. Included on the first floor is a dining area, service bar, and kitchen. The restaurant has a total seating capacity for 60 patrons, one entrance, and two exits. There are three houses of worship located within a 500-foot radius of the proposed premises. M.G.L., Chapter 138, Section 16C requires a vote of the Board after a public hearing. The Board has received no written comment from any of the houses of worship with respect to this hearing.

Attorney Guinta noted the years of restaurant and liquor license experience of the applicants, saying they have had no suspensions, violations, or issues at any of their restaurants.

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

Mr. Borrelli said the Select Board is typically friendly toward granting restaurant liquor licenses because it wants businesses to succeed. However, he pointed out that over the last month or so, there have been violations by other businesses in Town that are of concern. He noted the favorable track record of the applicants, saying he is supportive of the application as long as the rules are followed.

Mr. Matthews reminded the applicants of Needham's status as a historically dry Town. He noted safety is most important and the Town wants the business to succeed, but the rules must be followed. He reminded Mr. Apichat Chuenprapa, Proposed Manager that he, under the law, is personally liable for any issues with the service of alcohol.

Ms. Cooley suggested asking all patrons for identification.

Motion by Mr. Matthews that the Select Board vote to:

(a) Approve the application for a Restaurant Wine and Malt License under the Town of Needham Rules and Regulations Applicable To The Sale of Alcoholic Beverages in Restaurants for PM Story Corporation, d/b/a Little

Spoon, Apichat Chuenprapa, Manager, and to forward the approved Alcohol License application to the ABCC for approval.

and

(b) Determine that the premises are not detrimental to the educational and spiritual activities of the First Parish of Needham Unitarian Universalist, First Church of Christ Scientist and First Baptist Church.

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

Mr. Guinta confirmed he has received no negative comments from any house of worship.

6:37 p.m.

Needham Housing Authority Update:

Reg Foster, Chair, Needham Housing Authority updated the Board on current issues at the Housing Authority, the on-going Modernization & Redevelopment Initiative, and CPA funding applications. Also participating by Zoom were Angie Medeiros, Executive Director, Needham Housing Authority, and Margaret Donnelly Moran, Cambridge Housing Authority. It was noted the Needham Housing Authority has contracted with the Cambridge Housing Authority for consulting services for its public housing initiative.

Mr. Foster commented on the Modernization & Redevelopment Initiative launched last summer by the Needham Housing Authority.

A PowerPoint presentation was viewed. Mr. Foster commented on the 2019 Management Summary and Guide to Facility Master Plan that lays out a vision for completely modernizing or redeveloping all of the Needham Housing Authority units.

Discussion ensued on five projects under consideration (Seabeds Way/Capt. Robert Cook, High Rock I, High Rock II, Linden/Chambers, and Seabeds/Cook, and potential funding sources. Mr. Foster indicated the plan will take 5-10 years to renovate 336 units (increasing to 457 units/36% increase) at a total cost of more than \$130 million. Mr. Foster noted the cost estimate does not include the huge increase in construction costs that has taken place in the last year, evolving funding sources including potential federal funding under the “Build Back Better” plan and CPC funding. Mr. Foster commented on the consulting services provided by the Cambridge Housing Authority. Mr. Foster commented on the CPA funding cycle beginning on December 1 and four applications recently submitted in order to get the plan moving forward. He thanked State Representative Denise Garlick for securing \$2.75 million for Linden/Chambers (ARPA funds bill and Partnerships for Growth bill/Economic Development Act). Mr. Foster also commented on 12 bungalows located on 3.5 acres on East Militia Drive, occupied by military families until 2019 and declared as surplus by the U.S. Army. In addition, Mr. Foster

commented on the possibility of funding to hire an Assistant Executive Director for the Needham Housing Authority.

Board discussion ensued on Linden/Chambers, East Militia Drive/swing space, funding for an Assistant Executive Director, the collaborative effort and communications with residents, the 2019 Capital Plan requesting \$5 million from taxpayers for improving affordable housing in Needham, and the cost increase for construction/supplies due to the pandemic.

Mr. Matthews said the Select Board can help with the difficult issues of building community support and leveraged funding. He said the Select Board can support, not supervise the work. He commented that a lot of work needs to be done by the Housing Authority and bringing in the Cambridge Housing Authority to consult is a great step. He noted his skepticism of the East Militia Heights property and not to rely on use of it as swing space. Mr. Matthews concluded saying the requests are reasonable and the commitment by the Needham Housing Authority is tremendous.

Mr. Borrelli thanked Mr. Foster and the Needham Housing Authority for the plan, echoing Mr. Matthews support of the projects.

Mr. Foster thanked Ms. Medeiros for her willingness to tackle this priority on behalf of the Needham Housing Authority and the Town of Needham.

7:00 p.m.

Director of Public Works:

Carys Lustig, Director/DPW and Rhain Hoyland, Superintendent of Highway spoke with the Board regarding 2 items:

1. Public Works Sidewalk Program Update

Ms. Lustig said members of the DPW, schools, and police department met over the last few months to discuss and evaluate the current sidewalk program and snow removal routes. She noted an evaluation had not been completed in a long time, probably since before the Hillside School moved to the Sunita Williams School. Ms. Lustig commented the goal was to evaluate any route within one mile of a school and to see if all of the routes are being fully utilized or require reconfiguration. She said two small areas of less than one mile required reconfiguration. Ms. Lustig said the current plan focuses on school walking routes, rather than business and/or transit areas. Discussion ensued on the downtown pilot program, potential changes to the town's by-law for snow removal, and the possibility of adding a seventh route focusing on transit and commercial areas, which would require additional snow equipment and staff. Also discussed were community expectations and possible changes to the snow removal program. Ms. Lustig referred to her memorandum dated September 17, 2021, commented on the challenge of recruiting contractors to assist with snow removal, and the potential of redirecting town staff from sidewalk snow removal to road and lot efforts for road safety and to get schools open in the morning.

A map was viewed.

Discussion ensued on potentially hiring additional staff, pick up and drop off zones at the schools, clearing sidewalks, and the possibility of adding a seventh route.

2. Highland Avenue (Webster Street-Great Plain Avenue) - Traffic Improvement Program Submission Update

Ms. Lustig presented the work that the Department of Public Works has completed in order to submit an application for the Highland Avenue Corridor (Webster Street to Great Plain Avenue) for consideration in the state's Traffic Improvement Program that would provide funding for a potential reconstruction of this corridor in the future. She said the work would be an extension of work the state is currently doing between Webster Street and Newton Center. She explained the reason this project was chosen first is because it is favorable in how the state scores potential projects and that it connects with a project already invested in by the state.

Discussion ensued on the opportunity of making improvements at intersections along Highland Avenue and bringing State funds into Needham.

The Board thanked Ms. Lustig and Mr. Hoyland for the presentation.

7:46 p.m.

Town Manager:

1. FY2023 Budget Priorities

Ms. Fitzpatrick reviewed proposed budget priorities for the FY2023 Operating and Capital Budgets with the Select board on December 14, 2021. She recommended the Board approve of the statement of budget priorities.

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Board approve the statement of budget priorities for fiscal year 2023.

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

2. Approve the FY2023-FY2027 Capital Improvement Plan

Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended that the Board approve the FY 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan for transmission to the Finance Committee.

Motion by Mr. Matthews that the Select Board vote to approve the FY 2023 – 2027 Capital Improvement Plan for transmittal to the Finance Committee.

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

3. Town Manager Report

Ms. Fitzpatrick reported the Needham Health Department acquired 180 Covid test kits that were distributed to those with the greatest need including the Housing Authority, Community Council, Youth and Family Services, and the Council on Aging.

Ms. Fitzpatrick reported Governor Baker issued an advisory for people to wear masks indoors. She noted Needham's public guidance is that while masks are not

mandatory, they are helpful for people who are immunocompromised. She reiterated that people should get vaccinated, avoid crowds, and continue to wash hands. Ms. Fitzpatrick commented that the COVID banner at the top of the Town's website is a great resource and is frequently updated.

7:50 p.m. Board Discussion:

1. FY 2022-2023 Goal Setting Update

Mr. Borrelli discussed highlights from the Select Board's goal setting meeting held on Monday, December 20, 2021. He stated the meeting was very productive and that the Goal Statement adopted by the Board on August 17, 2021 is a roadmap for the Board moving forward.

Ms. Cooley clarified saying she thinks of the goal setting meeting as more of a review rather than "setting" as it implies the Board is starting from scratch when that is not the case. She said it is more of a refinement of goals, so people understand "where we are" moving towards Town Meeting.

2. Committee Reports

No Committee Reports were made.

7:52 p.m. Adjourn:

Motion by Ms. Cooley that the Select Board vote to adjourn the Select Board meeting of Tuesday, December 21, 2021.

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

Mr. Borrelli wished residents Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

The next Select Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

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

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