Town of Needham Board of Selectmen Minutes for March 11, 2014 Selectmen's Chambers Needham Town Hall

- 6:30 p.m. Informal Meeting with Citizens: Sara Lynn Reynolds, candidate for Massachusetts State Senate introduced herself to the Board, and said she is hosting a "meet and greet" at the Needham Historical Society on March 26, 2014 at 5 p.m.
- 6:30 p.m. Call to Order:

 A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened by Chairman Daniel P.

 Matthews. Those present were John A. Bulian, Maurice P. Handel, Matthew D.

 Borrelli, Marianne B. Cooley, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, and Recording Secretary Mary Hunt.
- 7:00 p.m. Commendation for RADD-SALSA Youth Leaders:
 Michael Morrissey, District Attorney appeared before the Board to recognize the contribution and commitment of Needham RADD-SALSA members by presenting a commendation to them.

District Attorney Morrissey said Needham is a leader in dealing with alcohol and substance abuse, noting Needham is one of the first towns in the county to have a drug take-back program at the police department. He commented students who are members of RADD and SALSA engage in peer education, wellness advocacy, and prevention initiatives supporting safe and healthy decision making, mental health wellness, and reducing substance abuse. He said the student members of RADD and SALSA encourage people to "do the right thing." He presented a citation to the students and said the work they do makes a difference in the community.

The Board thanked the students for their work.

7:07 p.m. Appointments and Consent Agenda:

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote to approve the Appointments and Consent Agenda as presented.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Marianne Cooley
Joanne (Jody) Feinberg
Kalpana Shaw

Large House Review Study Committee
Cultural Council (term expires 6/30/2017)
New Year's Needham (term expires 6/30/2015)

CONSENT AGENDA *=Backup attached

1.* Approve a Special One Day Wines & Malt Beverages License for Sara Lynn Reynolds to host a meet and greet on March 26, 2014 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event will be held at the Needham Historical Society, 1147 Central Avenue, Needham.

- 2.* Approve a Special One Day Wines & Malt Beverages License for Maria Freda of Walnut Hill School for the Arts, to host a faculty/staff appreciation event on March 21, 2014 from 7:15 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The event will be held at the Needham Bowl Away, 16 Chestnut Street, Needham.
- 3.* Approve a Special One Day Wines & Malt Beverages License for Robert Timmerman of the Needham Knights of Columbus to hold its St. Patrick's Dinner Dance on Saturday, March 15, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. The event will be held at the Needham Knights of Columbus, 1211 Highland Avenue, Needham.
- 4. Approve continuation of the experimental Traffic Regulation in accordance with the Needham Traffic Rules and Regulations Section 3-6 for Great Plain Avenue for the period March 18, 2014 to April 17, 2014: one Handicap Parking spot, and one 15 minute Parking spot, in front of the former Eaton Square Right of Way adjacent to MBTA Right of Way.
- 5.* Approve minutes from February 11, 2014, and February 25, 2014 Open and Executive Session meetings.
- 6. Accept the following donations made to the Needham Off Leash Dog Area account: \$20 from John & Suzanne Ennis; \$50 from Suzanne & James Bandanza; \$50 from Kerivan-Lane, Inc.; \$10 from Elizabeth Goldman; \$25 from Mark & Mary Busa; \$200 from Paul Dellaripa & Monique Roth; \$15 from Kathleen Kelly; and \$367.35 from the 3rd graders at Newman Elementary School.
- 7. Approve a 20(c) exemption request for Artie Crocker, Chair of New Year's Needham and sole proprietor of Crockergraphics. Crockergraphics provides service to the Town of Needham for a fee.
- 8. Accept the donation of conference table and chairs from the Needham Bank. Accept donation made to New Years Needham: \$300 from William Gallagher/Needham Running Club.

Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0.

7:08 p.m. Operational Override Recommendation - School Department Presentation, Public Comment, Board Discussion and Vote:

Joseph Barnes, School Committee Chairman and Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent appeared before the Board to outline the School Committee's proposed supplemental budget request included on the ballot for the 2014 Annual Town Election.

Mr. Matthews commented operational overrides are not common and always involve careful consideration as they are a permanent increase to the tax levy, and it is a question for voters to decide. Mr. Matthews said he anticipates the Board will recommend residents support the operational override, but said it is important to hear about the proposed override from the School Committee.

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Dr. Gutekanst showed a Powerpoint presentation titled "Time for Innovation and Extended Learning in the Needham Schools" dated March 11, 2014. He explained the 3 key goals of the school district, and said the proposal from the School Committee will restore programs, provide innovative learning opportunities, extend the K-8 grade school day, and ensure educators have sufficient time to deal with tasks, mandates, and challenges. Dr. Gutekanst discussed the School Committee's budget priorities noting 4 critical factors that have influenced the proposal, including student/teacher ratio, the need for programmatic and instructional improvements, innovative programming and learning time, and expanding Federal and State mandates. He said many parents believe innovative programming and more time on learning are essential, per the Informal Parent Survey 2013. Dr. Gutekanst pointed out recent Federal and State mandates around curriculum development and educator accountability that continue to expand, citing bullying, concussion, nutrition intervention and training, adoption of the Common Core Curriculum, and PARCC test implementation. He noted the "needs" and "wants" of the school district must be balanced. Dr. Gutekanst discussed changes envisioned at the elementary level including expansion of wellness and physical education programs in grades 1-5, introduction of kindergarten music, new Spanish programs in grades 1-5, new science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) in grades 1-3, up to 75 hours of new programming, and additional preparation and planning time for teachers. Dr. Gutekanst also explained proposed changes envisioned at the secondary level, including an additional 30 hours of instruction at the middle schools, additional meeting and collaboration time for middle school teachers after school, and additional meeting and collaboration time for high school teachers each Wednesday morning before students arrive. Dr. Gutekanst commented on the time changes to the school day. He discussed the cost of the proposal, stating the school committee is requesting \$1,548,410 for new teachers, administration, salary adjustments, benefits, and crossing guards. Dr. Gutekanst said he believes the plan is right for Needham and is aligned with the core values and goals of the district. He noted if the plan is approved by the residents it will be implemented in September 2014.

Mr. Matthews invited public comment.

Steven Rosenstock, 44 Bess Road said he hopes the Board of Selectmen do not recommend approval of the proposal as presented. He said that while he is not against school overrides, the additional school time should address science, math, and reading. He referenced the most recent Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, completed in 2012 and the US News and World Report Survey of American High Schools. He stated he is not in favor the proposal.

Andrea Carter, 18 Colonial Road, Co-chair "Yes' for Needham Schools." Ms. Carter thanked the Board of Selectmen for putting this question on the ballot, the School Committee for recommending the changes, Superintendent Gutekanst, and the teachers and administrators who developed the proposal. Ms. Carter said she supports the override. She stated she thankful for the wisdom and thoughtfulness of

school leaders to do the very best they can for Needham students. Ms. Carter said extended hours would allow for direct classroom instruction on some days, and would address some of the points made by Mr. Rosenstock. Ms. Carter said teachers should be able to work together on curriculum and instruction, but it is almost impossible given the current schedule.

Elizabeth Mercer, resident said she is against the proposed override. She believes taxes are high enough and does not believe the teachers and students will accomplish much by adding 15 minutes to the school day. She commented the Town should return to basic classes including reading, writing, and math. She commented the override proposal should be included in the tax budget as it currently exists.

Alison Rivers, 332 Hillcrest Road feels residents should trust that Dr. Gutekanst and the school administration have interests of children and the community at heart.

Heather Salerno, 302 Nehoiden Street agrees with the comments made by Ms. Rivers. She said she respects the work of the School Committee and Dr. Gutekanst, and urged the Board of Selectmen to support the override proposal.

Ford Peckham, 26 Lawton Road said he opposes the override. He said he is concerned a school budget increase of 7.7% will double in less than 10 years and wonders how people will afford to live in Needham. He commented on the future construction of 2 new schools, renovation of the public safety building, upkeep of Pollard Middle School, and increases in department budgets "just to keep the lights on and the doors open in Town government." Mr. Peckham wonders why the Town's 5 year plan is never brought to Town Meeting for discussion and evaluation. Mr. Peckham cited an article from Baron's evaluating the indebtedness of States in the country. He said there are 45 States in better condition than Massachusetts and surmised the State will not help us out. He said until the 5 year plan is brought to Town Meeting for discussion, residents should not approve any more operating or school overrides.

Cliff Hayden, 12 Crescent Road, Co-chair "Yes' for Needham Schools" said he supports the proposal. He pointed out Proposition 2 1/2 is designed to force towns to occasionally approve overrides because 2.5% per annum is not enough to keep up with inflation, particularly inflation as experienced by a school system which is primarily relying on human resources. He commented the proposed plan is modest. He noted the burden of mandates placed on the school system over the past several years has been enormous, and more time is needed to meet requirements. Mr. Hayden said the proposal is a good one and financially responsible for Needham.

Tony Sisto, 55 Meetinghouse Road said he opposes the proposed override and feels taxes are too high. He said he is surprised the Town is considering an override at this time, and feels it is wrong for Needham.

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Susan Altman, 53 Carey Road, said she moved to Needham for the school system and feels the administration does a wonderful job for children socially and emotionally. She said Needham is blessed to have a school system and educators who care so much about the children.

Mr. Matthews closed the public hearing and asked Dr. Gutekanst and Dr. Barnes for comment.

Dr. Gutekanst thanked everyone for their comments, noting an override affects all residents, but that the School Committee feels it is the right thing to do for Needham Public Schools. Dr. Gutekanst commented new programs will complement and support reading and math courses. He said he believes the academic program will be stronger and enriched as curricula will be tied together. He commented on future construction and renovation of Hillside and Mitchell schools, saying the Town has been very thoughtful and has planned ahead for long term needs.

Dr. Barnes commented the School Committee realizes it is part of a larger community with other needs, which are also very important. He noted however, members of the School Committee were elected to advocate for the students and to provide the very best for the school community. He said he feels strongly about the time necessary to do the work expected of teachers. The extra time will allow teachers to collaborate and share best practices.

Mr. Matthews asked for comments from the Board.

Mr. Bulian thanked everyone for their comments. He stated there has not been an operating override in Needham in 7 years. He said the proposal is not unreasonable, and pointed out there is a massive distinction between capital overrides and operating overrides. He said he supports the request and will work with the override committee to see that it passes.

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board vote to support the operational override for the Needham Public Schools shown as Question 2 on the 2014 Annual Town Election Ballot.

Second: Mr. Handel. Approved 4-1. Mr. Borrelli voted nay.

Mr. Borrelli said he was surprised by the request for an override when he heard about it last fall. He said it is evident people want the best schools whether you favor or oppose the override proposal. He stated that over time and with more collaboration, some of needs in the override proposal could have been satisfied within the budget. He said he has received comments from parents, teachers, and constituents who want the value for the entire system, not just on the elementary or middle school level. He noted discussion about the length of the school day and the vetting process, and said he is concerned. Mr. Borrelli said this request is no different from other requests and must be looked at based on the Town's current

needs and obligations that will require overrides. He said he will not support the override, but realizes the decision will be made by the voters on April 8, 2014.

Mr. Handel said he does not take an override lightly, but the voters must decide. He commented Needham has a competitive school system and the value reflects the core mission of the community. He said the value of ones property is directly related to the quality of Needham schools and must remain competitive.

Ms. Cooley said she supports the override and feels learning Spanish is very important, noting the benefits of learning a foreign language at a young age. She said as a taxpayer she will also benefit from the override, but recognizes the burden placed on some people.

Mr. Matthews thanked everyone for participating in the public hearing. He said Needham has terrific schools and a wonderful administration that does a great deal for children and families. He concurred taxes are high in Needham, but not as high as some other communities that do not get nearly as much value for their money. He said he supports the proposed override, as it fits in with a sound long term financial plan for the Town.

The Board recessed for 2 minutes.

8:10 p.m. Community Preservation Committee - Proposals Under Review:
Janet Bernardo, CPC Chair, Patty Carey, Director of Park and Recreation, and Lita
Young, CPC Vice Chair appeared before the Board to discuss the projects currently
under review by the Community Preservation Committee for the 2014 Annual
Town Meeting.

Ms. Bernardo reviewed four projects under consideration including Ridge Hill Swamp Trail Boardwalk and Charles River Trail Bridge replacement projects, Town Common Historic Re-Design, Memorial Park turf and drainage improvements, and Archival Vital Records Preservation.

Ms. Bernardo stated CPC Finances for FY2014 indicate the total available to be appropriated by June 2014 equals \$5,637,374, noting should the 2014 eligible projects move forward the total appropriation is \$512,719. She reiterated there is enough money from the funds available to cover the cost of the 4 projects, if approved.

The Board thanked Ms. Bernardo for the update.

8:35 p.m. Town Manager:

Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager appeared before the Board with 1 items to discuss:

1. Mitchell School & Pollard School Renovation - Statement of Interest

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Ms. Fitzpatrick told the Board that at the March 4, 2014 School Committee meeting, it voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit the MSBA Statements of Interest for the Mitchell School and the Pollard School. She said the Statements of Interest for these two schools were filed in calendar year 2013 along with the Statement of Interest for the Hillside School, which was accepted for participation in the MSBA process. Ms. Fitzpatrick said a vote of the Board of Selectmen is required for the submission.

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote as follows:

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 11, 2014, the Board of Selectmen of Needham, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated March 4, 2014 for the Mitchell School located at 187 Brookline Street. Needham, Massachusetts, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future: Priority No. 2: Elimination of severe overcrowding, and Priority No. 7: Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 11, 2014, the Board of Selectmen of Needham, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated March 5, 2014 for the Pollard School located at 200 Harris Avenue, Needham. Massachusetts, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future: Priority No. 2: Elimination of severe overcrowding, and Priority No. 7: Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0.

8:35 p.m. Board Discussion:

1. <u>Board Position on Ballot Question - Sale of Alcoholic Beverages in Restaurants</u> with Fewer than 100 Seats

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board vote to support Question 1 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant authorizing the issuance of licenses for the sale of all alcoholic beverages to be drunk on the premises to restaurants with a seating capacity of fewer than 100 persons.

Second: Mr. Bulian. Unanimously approved 5-0.

2. Committee Reports

No Reports were made.

Mr. Borrelli thanked the Needham Bank for offering a large table for use in the Selectmen's Chambers. Mr. Matthews said it is a wonderful piece of furniture and thanked the Needham Bank for their generosity.

8:45 p.m. Executive Session - Exception 3 (potential litigation):

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote to enter into Executive Session.

Exception 3 - To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public body and the the chair so declares. Not to return to open session prior to adjournment.

Second: Mr. Borrelli. Mr. Matthews polled the Board. Unanimously approved 5-0.

A list of all documents used at this Board of Selectmen meeting are available at:

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

Second: Ms. Cooley. Unanimously approved 5-0.

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