

Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Meeting

April 16, 2014

On the Above date the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. **Chairman John Duval** presided. Present were **Members Michael Ouellette, Arthur Harrington, Joseph Nowak and Richard Blanchard**. Also in attendance were **Town Administrator Jonathan Butler** and **Town Counsel Edmund St. John III**.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by **Chairman Duval**.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

READING OF THE MINUTES

No minutes presented

CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

Maple Grove Civic Club

Jeff Lefebvre announced that Maple Grove Civic Club met last week, and was well attended.

Hoosac Street Light

Jeff Lefebvre commented that he felt a traffic light at Hoosac and Park Street Intersections would be good.

Action List

Jeff Lefebvre asked the Select Board to put an Action List back in action so the citizens would know what was going on.

Candidates Forum

Jeff Lefebvre advised that the Candidates' Forum would be on TV, on Channels 17, 116.3 once per day until May 5th.

ACLU Notification

Jeff Lefebvre advised he called the ACLU regarding something he took offense to a couple meetings prior, and advised he has freedom of speech and wanted to be sure no public officials were calling him names or harassing him.

Town Administrator Butler disclosed that he was the Public Official that **Jeff Lefebvre** was referencing, and that in the last meeting he had an exchange with Mr. Lefebvre in which he commented about Mr. Lefebvre's behavior toward other public officials and Town Government in general. He noted that a complaint to the ACLU is not consistent with what was said, and he has never gone to the ACLU with the accusations that Mr. Lefebvre has made against the Town officials either in the present or past. He said if someone wants to come to meetings and make accusations about people and about town activities they ought to be able to receive feedback in return.

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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.
CLERK



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PUBLIC HEARINGS

Petition for Verizon

Motion made by Member Ouellette to open the Public Hearing

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

John DiMartino from Verizon explained that there was roadwork and Verizon would like to put in new poles.

Chairman Duval read the letter that Verizon had sent regarding Columbia Street, Petition #4AA4W7. He asked the Public if anyone had questions for Verizon or the Board.

Member Harrington inquired the center pole location on the map, because it didn't show a reason for the pole, because it doesn't show the roundabout, but it is referenced in the letter. He inquired who determines the location of the pole because is not directly in the center of the Roundabout. He expressed concern that this poses a traffic hazard that could be somewhat avoidable if it was directly in the center of the roundabout. He expressed he would prefer it be underground, but it would be too expensive. He said unless there is a barricade, those traveling North on Route 8 and those exiting Renfrew Street will be right in the path of this pole. He also noted that if it was placed directly in the middle of the Roundabout, the wire span would be over 120 feet for each length.

John DiMartino advised a Verizon Engineer and an Engineer from NGrid, but it would not be random. He looked at the spans and the pole in the middle is necessary, and if the pole wasn't there the distance would be almost 240 feet and would have a lot of sag, so the support is needed. He advised if the pole is out of line it would need an anchor and it would have the same problem with the pole.

Several members concurred and noted that the purpose of the ramp up on the roundabout is so the back wheels on the tractor trailer will ride up. Concern was expressed that tractor trailers will take the pole down, and the pole should be more in the center to avoid problems. Members expressed they felt it would be a safety hazard, and that the pole should be moved to the center of the cul de sac. The sketch doesn't explain where the roundabout is, but should be in the center of the roundabout or not be in the roundabout at all, but instead be off to the right on the corners on Renfrew Street.

John DiMartino advised what the Select Board was viewing was a basic design and the poles are in line with the other two, and the other two poles need to be moved back, but the suggestion given would require a pole on both sides of Renfrew Street. He explained he would bring back all feedback for the final design.



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Property easements that were required caused hesitation to allow poles put up where suggested because of existing driveways. The last thing the Town wants is a pole in the middle of the cul de sac. DOT ended up in the middle because other options were exhausted. Underground wires would be preferred but are not feasible, and if there didn't need to be a pole in the cul de sac that would be preferred.

Jeff Lefebvre inquired what the cost was to put wiring underground as opposed to on the pole, because safety is a factor.

Town Administrator Butler advised it was approximately \$180,000 to put in underground wiring, and it was non-reimbursable, which means the Town would have to pay that amount. Underground utilities are not a State-reimbursable cost, and the only way it could be done is if the Town appropriated those funds. He advised the Town met with all of the utilities multiple times over a 6 month period and all the stakeholders were involved to try to prevent the poles from running in the manner that is outlined. The only option that was left was the underground utilities where the Town would have to pick up the cost.

John DiMartino agreed to bring back the concerns to Verizon, and another meeting will be scheduled in the future.

Motion made to come out of Public Meeting by Member Ouellette

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Amendments to Adams/North Adams Inter-Municipal Sewer Agreement

The document was renewed for 25 years in 2010, but needed to be amended to fulfill the purpose of the proposed new project on Route 8, at Cumberland Farms, the former Greenburg's Property. The specific properties allowed to tie into the Town of Adams sewer system are cited in the agreement, and that parcel was not cited in the most recent updates to the agreement. With a change of ownership and the project proposed they sought to have the property added, which would create efficiencies with the project. It allows them to not have to put in septic apparatus. The Board had the developer and legal counsel in three weeks ago to answer questions and to go over the proposed project. This amended document was reviewed by Town Counsel and signed off on, and North Adams has already adopted the amended version. The Town brings in about \$20,000 to \$25,000 annually in revenues through the Intermunicipal Sewer Agreement, which is expected to spike because of Walmart. It is based off of the assessed value of properties. The Town receives a \$20 connection fee for each new structure that ties into it, and this connection fee will add to the existing revenue the Town makes. It is a nice secondary revenue source for the Town and doesn't put a significant burden on the wastewater operation in terms of flow.



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Motion made by Member Harrington to approve the amendments to the Adams/North Adams Inter-Municipal Sewer Agreement.

Second by Member Ouellette

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

NEW BUSINESS

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

No reports given at this meeting

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Finance Committee Meetings

The Finance Committee meetings are moving along; 2 are done and one additional Town Finance Committee meeting and one additional meeting to review the School budgets. That process is set to be finished by the end of the month.

Interviews for Open Positions

Interviews have been conducted to fill the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator open position, and will be moving forward with interviews for another DPW Operator position that is also open.

Member Ouellette inquired when the DPW Director position will be filled.

Town Administrator Butler advised the candidates might be ready in the first half of May. Two people have been asked to come back for follow-up interviews before giving the final recommendation to the Board as finalists, but they have not been scheduled yet due to staff vacations.

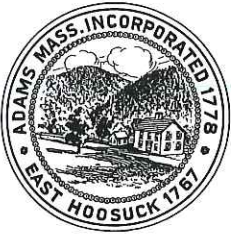
Collective Bargaining

The Clerical Union and the Police Union are working on their bargaining and making progress.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Ratification of Seasonal Employees

A list of 13 appointed Seasonal Employees had been previously given to the Select Board. On the list were Adams Residents Brian McKay, Dan Barrett, Gary Charron, Michael Durant, Norm Biron, Tessa Garcia, Mitch Gavazzi, Joseph Buonemani, Fred Charron, Jamie Hamilton, Matt Massaconi, and Baily Hisert, and Joe Ciuk from Pownal, VT. This process is handled by the Cemetery and Parks Superintendent, who does interviews and offers names to be appointed. Adams residents are appointed whenever possible, and also re-employ those who have done well in the past. 8 of these individuals have worked for Adams in the past with good reviews.



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Motion made by Member Ouellette to ratify the appointments of the 13 Seasonal Employees

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Ratification of Administrative Assistant

Subject to the Board's ratification through Section 10 of the Town Charter, Melissa Schaffrick has been appointed to the position of Administrative Assistant II in the Police Department. Melissa is a current Town employee who has requested a transfer to the Police Department to fill a vacant position. This position is a Grade 6, and it is anticipated that Ms. Schaffrick will begin working in the Police Department during the week of April 28, 2014. She will transition to the Police Department over a couple weeks and will continue to help with items in the Town Administrator's office until the position is filled in that office. It is anticipated that she will be full-time in the Police Department office by the second week of May. There were no other internal candidates that expressed interest in this position. Her current position has been posted.

Town Administrator Butler acknowledged that Melissa Schaffrick is leaving on good terms from her current position. He noted that she has handled herself well with difficult personalities, changing Board Members, and challenging situations and he wishes her the best in her transition to the Police Department.

Chief Tarsa welcomed Melissa Schaffrick to his department, and said he was positive about the transition and that she will do an outstanding job.

Motion made by Member Blanchard to ratify the appointment of Melissa Schaffrick to Administrative Assistant II for the Police Department

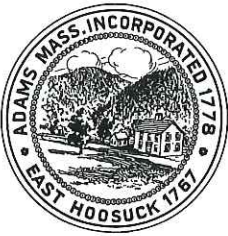
Second by Member Ouellette

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Vandalism

Chief Tarsa updated the Board about vandalism around Town with red spray paint, and said there are over 30 victims of the vandalism so far. He said it was an opportunistic crime, and is not a hate crime or targeting anyone specifically. He noted the party responsible sprayed anything they came in contact with along a travel path. Anthony Street, Richmond Lane, East Hoosac Street, Summer Street, Spring Street, Pleasant Street, and the Bike Trail were some of the locations that were vandalized. There are some leads, and surveillance videos are being reviewed. The suspect is likely a teenager or younger person. If the public has any information they are asked to call the Police Department at 743-1212.



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Application to Place a Sign on a Public Way

Kit & Kaboodle requested to place a 2' x 3' sandwich board sign on a public way at 3 Park Street in accordance with Zoning By-Law 15C.

Motion made to approve the sign application for Kit & Kaboodle to place a sign on a public way at 3 Park Street by Member Harrington

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Approval 2014 Town Election Warrant

Motion made by Member Ouellette to approve the 2014 Town Election Warrant

Second by Member Harrington

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

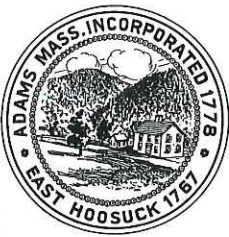
TOWN COUNSEL REPORT

Since the last report, Town Counsel reports he prepared documents for the closing on the Ostrowski Property. He met with Town Staff concerning work needed to comply with the Town Meeting votes; he reviewed the Inter-Municipal Sewer Agreement between North Adams and Adams and provided comment to the Town Administrator. He also prepared documents regarding an easement needed for the Town for Mr. Bishop and Ms. Krzeminski.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Harrington advised he met with Mike O'Brien from *North Adams Hospital*, and they have meetings at the *American Legion* in North Adams on Tuesday afternoons. Mike had asked if the Northern Berkshire Community Boards of Selectmen would come to next week's meeting at 5:00 p.m. The Board is not expected to say anything but just listen to their concerns and ask questions if there are any.

Member Nowak announced the *Solarize MASS Project* is available for people who are interested in signing up; there is no commitment, but Solarize MASS will come evaluate your property to see if solar access is a possibility. If unable to purchase outright, there is a lease program that would not bind anyone financially. Those interested can contact Lynette Bond in Community Development at 743-8300 or 743-8317.



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Member Ouellette advised anyone who wants the competitively tiered system of *Solarize MASS* needs to sign up by June 30, 2014. The tier structure works by the number of people who sign up, and there are cost breaks where the cost goes down depending on the number of people who are signed up.

APPROVALS

There were no other approvals at this meeting

OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Items

Library Project

Town Administrator Butler asked that the Library Project be put on the list, and noted he has held it back for the engineer to finalize specifications and also for more information on the HVAC piece; before making a decision to spend a couple hundred thousand dollars to transition to natural gas, he wants to make sure it has a payback period. There is no date yet, but wants to go to the Board with a recommendation when it is ready as soon as possible as he doesn't want to advertise the project past the first week of May.

Sprinkler System

Member Ouellette would like to get all the data and discuss the Sprinkler System.

Designation of Federal Lands

Member Nowak asked to add a workshop meeting with Tom Matuszko regarding the designation of Federal Lands. This was discussed for one of the first meetings in May.

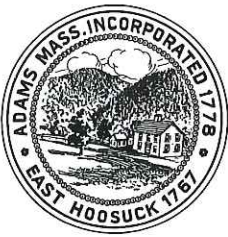
Community Center

Member Blanchard requests a meeting topic of discussion about the Community Center, since all Town entities have moved out with the exception of the Youth Center, for about a year. He said if the Youth Center waits to move into the Memorial School it may take another year, and he doesn't feel the Town should hang onto the property for that long.

Memorial School

Member Nowak said it was time for the Town to decide what to do with the Memorial School, and said he is still waiting for the report from the State. He said he went there and walked around it, and there are 200 windows in the wing portion, and the roof is in tough shape. He said the façade looks good from the outside, but the Town has to get moving on it. He asked to expedite it.

Town Administrator Butler advised that the roofing project for the Memorial School starts this week, and is a \$600,000 project to replace the roof on about 80% of the building. It will cover the whole gymnasium, and about 40% of the classroom section, which ties into other parts of the building. The Town is still working on what the Board asked to be done the previous summer, and they are working on the proposed steps as outlined; they procured a \$600,000 grant to do the roof, have been working with Mass Development, and have been working to identify a source to pay for the heating component.



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The two major capital costs are the roof and the heating system. One has been identified and they are still working on the other. If the Board wants to go in another direction, he will do as the Board instructs. He advises that there is progress being made, and this project is going to be a slow process. Due diligence was done to find out if anyone wanted to purchase the building, and there were no responses. To tear it down will cost more than to fix it up. There are organizations that want to reuse the building, but they may be about a year out.

Member Nowak said unless there is a good reuse for the wing, he would like to demolish that part to make a fenced-in play area for the kids. He said the longer it is held onto the more it costs the people of Adams, and asked for a cost analysis on the reuse of the building versus tearing it down. He said his concern is that the Town cannot keep paying for the upkeep of the building.

Chairman Duval noted that it is important to have all of the reports in from Mass Development before having a meeting to make a decision on what direction to go with the project.

Cable Rates

Member Harrington has received complaints about the continued spiraling of the cable rates. He said he doesn't understand why cable rates are going up so much, and doubling in many cases, with no additional services. Bills are coming in with new charges and no explanation. He suggested having a person from the cable company come in to explain some of these increases. He said it may be a public hearing or a workshop, or something where the public can get the information.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Voting

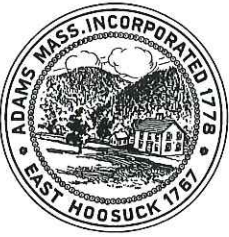
Members Ouellette and **Nowak** encourage people to get out and vote on May 5th.

Pick Up After Pets

Member Blanchard advised that if a dog is making a mess on your lawn or in an inappropriate area and if a picture is captured and the owner is identified, the Animal Control Officer will write a citation of \$50. There is not currently a fine for pet messes in the cemetery, but he advised he will attend the Cemetery Department meeting as a private citizen and request that a fine be put in place for cemeteries as well.

Citizen's Conference

Chairman Duval stated he believes in the Citizens' Conference and that people should be able to give their input, but when citizens and Town Staff or Select Board are going back and forth and making accusations, innuendoes, or spreading rumors, this is not the forum. He asks if citizens have an issue with anything the Town or Board is doing, to contact the Chairman of the Select Board before going to a State office or the Ethics Commission. The Chairman will speak with both parties to come to a resolution before it gets raised to the State level. That doesn't make the Community look good and as meetings are televised not just Adams sees it. If there are any issues please contact the Chairman of the Board. If you don't feel that works, then raise it up further. He asks everyone to take care of these things by communicating to each other before it is done in a public meeting.



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EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session at this meeting.

Motion to Adjourn made by Member Ouellette

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

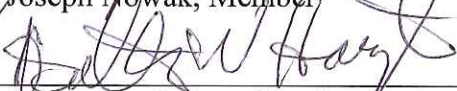
Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Dunlap for Melissa Schaffrick,
Recording Secretary



Joseph Nowak, Member



Arthur Harrington, Member

Michael Ouellette, Member



Richard Blanchard, Member



John Duval, Chairman