

Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Meeting

September 3, 2014

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

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

READING OF THE MINUTES

- **May 21, 2014 Select Board Meeting Minutes**
- **August 20, 2014 Select Board Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Member Snoonian to waive and approve minutes from May 21, 2014 and August 20, 2014

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Motion made by Member Duval to add the proposed transfer of control of the Cable Television Renewal License held by Time Warner Cable Northeast, LLC to the agenda under Approvals

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

Sign Placement

Mike Robert of Custom City Cycle requested permission to place a sign on Route 8 at Bowe Field on *September 28th* to advertise the *Fall Run*, which supports the Shriner's Hospital. Special thanks to Chief Tarsa and the Events Committee for support.

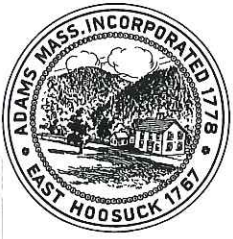
Motion made by Member Nowak to allow the sign placement on September 28th

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

RECEIVED-POSTED
14 SEP 18 AM 9:06
TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.
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Town Administrator Search

Alfred Diesz of Orchard Street wanted the Town to choose a Town Administrator who tours the town, is hands-on, and knows what is going on in town. Mr. Diesz was invited to give input to the Town Administrator Search Committee on September 9, 2014 at the Visitor's Center at 6:30 p.m.

Status on Projects

Jeff Lefebvre inquired when the *Park Street* and the *Roundabout Projects* would be completed. End of Calendar Year for Park Street and Roundabout is next year's construction season.

Executive Minutes

Jeff Lefebvre asked for an update on executive meeting minutes that have not been released. Mr. Lefebvre was requested to fill out a form formally requesting them.

Town Counsel St. John III advised the minutes have been reviewed and the Select Board must plan an executive session to decide whether to approve and release the minutes that he has recommended for release.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

FY2012 Block Grant Program Public Hearing

7:10 p.m. a motion was made by Member Blanchard to open the FY2012 Block Grant Program Public Hearing

Second by Member Duval

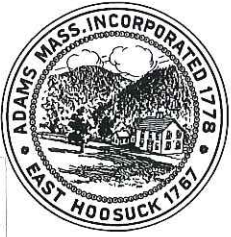
Unanimous Vote

Motion passed

Lynette Bond, the Adams Community Development Grants Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the Town's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, and a review of the accomplishments under the FY2012 Grant Cycle; \$582,039 was awarded for public facilities activity and \$17,961 was awarded for general administration. \$567,234.34 has been expended to date. A drawdown request will be submitted to the Commonwealth for the remaining amount of the grant to spend down all funds prior to September 30, 2014, when the grant will be closed out.

The objective of the funding was to replace more than 35,000 square feet of the Memorial School roof area at 30 Columbia Street, which was leaking and causing damage to interior spaces, which would stabilize and secure the building through two phases. The phases were the removal of the existing roof, and the replacement of a new roofing system. Monday, August 18, 2014 a walk-through of the roof was completed and the interior of the building was dry and air quality has dramatically improved. A certificate of substantial completion was executed that day, and the Town anticipates a certificate of final acceptance upon receipt of the roof decking warranty information and the drawdown of the final administration costs.

Jeff Lefebvre expressed concern about the Memorial School having major structural issues.



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7:17 p.m. Member Snoonian made a motion to close the FY2012 Block Grant Program Public Hearing

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Classification Hearing

7:17 p.m. Motion made by Member Blanchard to open the Classification Public Hearing

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Town Assessor Donna MacDonald explained statistical data to the Select Board so they could determine whether the Town will have a classified tax rate structure which means splitting the rate, prior to approval by the Commissioner of Revenue. Analytical data was provided to the Board so they could determine whether to have a single tax rate or classified tax rate for the Town under the Tax Classification Law, Chapter 797 of the Acts of 1979. Choices were to go with a 115% or a 140% shift.

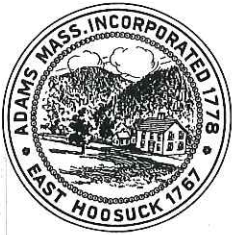
Alfred Diesz inquired what the total value of new additions in town were, and expressed concern that for every student lost the state deducts the cost of the student from the budget, which offsets taxes.

Jeff Lefebvre expressed that taxes are out of control, up 28% on the tax rate in the last 5 years, and that the Town cannot afford to keep going up in taxes. He suggests leaving the tax rate the same. Adams is \$70,000 away from another proposition 2 ½ override.

Mr. Cowie inquired how tax rates have historically impacted the businesses in town, and how many businesses are left since Adams is shrinking. In his opinion, if the stock market crashes the Town will be in bad shape. He also inquired if Developer Mr. Cohen has provided a check for the Railway.

Peter Coussoule advised a tax increase would strap his budget and requests a breakdown of finances to explain how much sewer fees are so people may be more understanding about the tax rate.

Assessor MacDonald advised new additions in town were \$4 Million, which were close to equal with what was lost. \$14,199,317.00 was the approved budget, down from last year, and the total to be raised from taxation equaled \$10,375,162.00. The next evaluation of homes is next year. On the total tax rate the average bill per house was approximately the same throughout the county, and this year is in the same range. If house values go up and sell at a higher rate, taxes could go down.



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No check has been recorded as received to date from Developer Cohen. Discussion ensued regarding whether sewer fees and water fees should be broken out. A strategic plan review is suggested prior to the next budget season to find out why Adams is the highest tax rate in the county and in the top 5 for the whole state.

Motion made by Member Blanchard to adopt the 115% shift factor

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Motion made by Member Blanchard to close the Classification Public Hearing

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Cultural Council Items

Motion made by Member Blanchard to table the Cultural Council items until the September 17, 2014 Select Board Meeting

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

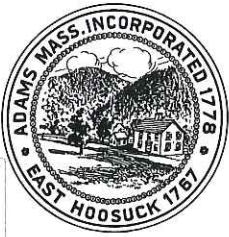
Motion passed

Post Office Square Lights

DPW Director Joe Bettis advised a stuck switch had been identified and replaced, and another faulty switch required parts which are on order. Repairs should be done within a week. Water entering the components may be to blame, and this issue is very common.

Approval and Acceptance of Easements for Roundabout Project, Route 8, Friend Street

Interim Town Administrator/Community Development Director Donna Cesan advised that easements must be obtained to allow the work to happen. She requested approval and acceptance of easement agreements, and approval of the *layout alteration in order of taking* which would be recorded at the registry with the easement map so the State would be able to advertise the Roundabout Project on Saturday, September 6th. Thank you to Burke Construction and McAndrews King who have been cooperative at no cost to the Town. Callahan Oil will receive \$12,000, with payment made to corporate 7-Eleven®. Easements for Boston and Maine are needed because of the State's purchase of the Adams line, but the Department of Transportation



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(DOT) is doing a licensing agreement with the Railroad Company, so no easements from Adams are needed for that.

Member Snoonian made a motion to accept and approve the easements as outlined

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Motion made to approve the Town of Adams Layout Alteration in Order of Taking by Member Snoonian

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

Member Nowak reported he met with the principal at BART Charter School and the project is on time. He also met with the Council on Aging Director Girgenti, and was impressed with their efficiency.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Phone System – New phone system has been ordered, and Interim Town Administrator Cesan is meeting with Valley Communication on Friday.

Library Project – Allegrone is mobilizing for the Library Project, and determining an appropriate location for equipment and storage. They are working on the exterior until cold weather comes then moving indoors for the ADA work on the project.

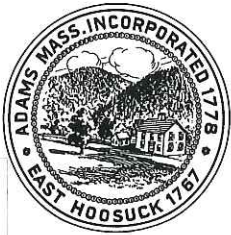
Station Project – Pre-bid is scheduled for Friday at 11:00 a.m. on September 5th, and Bid for horizontal (landscaping, paving, and sidewalk) work due September 12th at 3:00 p.m.

Park Street Improvements – The crew found surprises underground, and the 2 crews working are mindful to finish at the end of the calendar year. They will be moving to the East side of the street. A Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 16th at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall to give better information on the sequencing of the project.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Change to Landfill Hours

Landfill hours were requested to be changed from Wednesday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to accommodate the Landfill Operator schedule. A 2 week notice will take place before it goes into effect to get the signs in place.



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Motion made to approve the Landfill hour change by Member Blanchard

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Chapter 90 Funds

Town DPW appropriated \$52,803 funds through Chapter 90 for a *Wacker Neuson* sidewalk machine loader and \$14,440.50 from the DPW Budget, below the \$20,000 appropriated amount, for snow blower and snow plow attachments. Purchasing new would cost \$200,000, and items cost only \$67,243.50.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Reverse 911 Emergency Notifications

Berkshire Sheriff's Office is offering a self-registration site for the new Geo Cast Web Emergency Reverse 911 Notification System. This is available for residences and businesses without a traditional landline phone who wish to receive emergency notifications in their area by cell phone and text, or email, but this does not replace the current Code Red system. To sign up for this service go to <https://bcsoma.onthealert.com> Chief Tarsa requests this information be put on the Town Website.

Church Vandalism

Two juveniles have been arrested and arraigneded regarding the recent church vandalism.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

No report by Community Development Department

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

No reports by other Town Departments

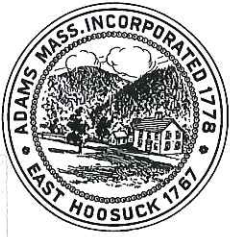
TOWN COUNSELOR'S REPORT

Town Counsel St. John III reports he appeared in the Housing Court concerning a Board of Health matter. He prepared drafts of easements and agreements relative to the Roundabout Project and related correspondence to the attorney for the abutting owner. He researched an issue concerning setting of fees by the Board of Health and provided a reply to the Board, and he also researched and responded to an inquiry by a Board Member.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Town Website

Erin Mucci and **Ray Gargan** of *Pro Adams* gave a visual update to the Select Board regarding the new Adams website, which incorporates economic development, outdoor recreation, and why Adams is a great place to live. Displays included a calendar of events, restaurants and night spots,



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a photo gallery, a feature story and the history of Adams. It will be linked to the Town of Adams website and the Greylock Glen websites. If anyone would like to submit information for the website, please send to *Pro Adams* and they will post it. No Town money was spent to create it.

Thank You Letter

The Select Board received a letter from ***Cheshire Little League President Martin K. Bush***, thanking the Town for installing the sprinkler system at the Beaver Bard Little League Field.

APPROVALS

Holiday Music in Downtown

Martin K. Bush, DDS requested permission to play low volume holiday music from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

Motion made to approve low volume level holiday music played by Martin K. Bush, DDS as outlined by Member Nowak

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Transfer Control of Cable Television

Approval requested for transfer of control of the Cable Television Renewal License held by Time Warner Cable Northeast, LLC from Time Warner Cable, Inc. to Comcast Corporation, as recommended by Attorney Bill Solomon, special counsel and representative of North Adams, Adams, Cheshire and Clarksburg communities. September 17th Attorney Solomon will outline the transfer decision, but currently on the table is a request to approve consent, and for the Board to authorize the Chairman with Attorney Solomon to write to notification.

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve the consent

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

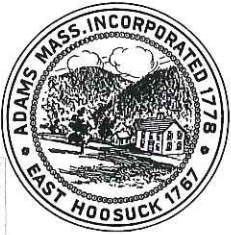
Motion made by Member Snoonian to authorize the Chairman of the Select Board to work with Attorney Solomon on this notification

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OTHER BUSINESS



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Petition

Petition to Support the Constitutional Amendment to Overturn ***Citizens United*** and ***McCutcheon*** as requested by Don Sommer on August 20, 2014. The amendment wording indicates that corporations are people.

Member Nowak made a motion to sign the petition

Second by Member Snoonian

Voted in favor were Members Nowak, Duval, Harrington and Snoonian

Voted in opposition was Member Blanchard

Motion passed

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Member Nowak reminded people to get out and vote on Primary Day, **September 9th** at the Highway Department, and the elderly citizens can call the Council on Aging to send a van to take them to the polling location.

Member Duval commended the Select Board for having information because of meeting with the School Committees which helped them to be able to respond with information and facts when questions came up during Citizens' Conference and the Classification Hearing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session

Motion to Adjourn made by Member Nowak

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Dunlap

Recording Secretary

