

Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS, MASS.

November 19, 2014

Board of Selectmen Meeting

On the Above date the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. **Chairman Arthur Harrington** presided. Present were **Members John Duval, Joseph Nowak, Jeffrey Snoonian**, and **Vice Chairman Richard Blanchard**. Also in attendance were **Interim Town Administrator Donna Cesan** and **Town Counsel, Edmund St. John III.**

Call to order – 6:00 p.m., Town Administrator's Office

Open Session

Executive Session

1. #8 - To consider or interview applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening;

6: 01 p.m. Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to enter Executive Session

Second by Member Snoonian

Roll Call Vote: Chairman Harrington, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval, Nowak, and Snoonian.

Motion passed

6:52 p.m. Motion made by Member Snoonian to exit Executive Session

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Roll Call Vote: Chairman Harrington, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval, Nowak, and Snoonian.

Motion passed

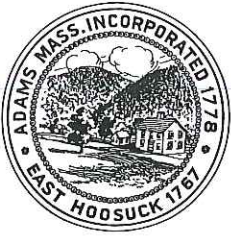
6:52 p.m. Select Board in Recess until 7:00 p.m.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

READING OF THE MINUTES

- November 5, 2014
- November 12, 2014



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Motion made by Member Snoonian to waive the reading of the minutes of November 5, 2014 and November 12, 2014 and approve as written

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

Collection for Homeless Veterans

Jeff Lefebvre will be placing a box at Town Hall and the Registry of Deeds until the middle of January 2015 to collect necessary items for homeless veterans. Accepted are new bedding supplies, sheets, blankets, face cloths, bath and hand towels, toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, shampoo, soaps, shower shoes, disposable razors, and similar personal items. For other information or donation questions call 743-5175. There are 231 homeless veterans according to *Soldier On*.

Proposition 2 ½

Jeff Lefebvre inquired of the Select Board how far the Town of Adams is from proposition 2 ½. He advised he thought it was approximately \$100,000.

Chairman Harrington advised Mr. Lefebvre he didn't have the number available in that moment, but if he gave the Board the request with enough time before the meeting they would be able to provide that information to him.

School Budget Increase

Jeff Lefebvre asked the Select Board if they would be meeting with the School Committee to discuss the proposed budget increase of 4.7%, or approximately \$900,000.

Chairman Harrington advised there is a Sub-Committee that is meeting regularly with the School and if the Sub-Committee recommends the Board meet with the School Committee to discuss a budget increase they would set up a meeting.

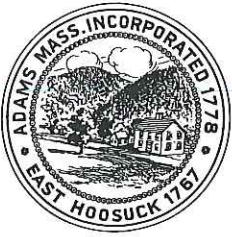
Maple Grove Civic Club

Jeff Lefebvre advised the Civic Club met and Al Dietz and John Cowie are interested in restarting the *Adams Taxpayers' Association*, which was in place 22 years ago. For anyone interested in getting involved please call the Maple Grove Civic Club.

Tourism Department Vacancy

Jeff Lefebvre inquired if the Town planned to fill the open position left by Tourism Director Samantha Talora, or if regionalization was being considered.

Chairman Harrington advised the Personnel Sub-Committee would be meeting to discuss where the Town goes from here.



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School Committee Updates

Kristen Gordon, *Superintendent of Schools for Adams-Cheshire Regional School District* addressed the Select Board with information. The School has been working on the budget and looking at ways they can restructure to solve budget issues. The hope is to have some solid plans in January, after working with representatives of the school and the community.

School retention was discussed, and Ms. Gordon reported the latest numbers were that there were 36 new students enrolled, and 16 left in the Elementary School, from September to May. Hoosac Valley Regional High School reported 26 new students and 26 students departed. The reasons for leaving the schools were noted as being housing issues.

C.T. Plunkett School Building had \$25,000 put into the roof, and screens were put into the windows. There were inspection updates that were made as well.

Adams-Cheshire Regional School District employees are aware of the budget issue and have been doing contract negotiations. All of the employees have made significant sacrifices in health insurance, bringing it to 60/40 over a period of time. This is the lowest arrangement in Berkshire County, and shows the commitment of the employees and their investment in the budget process.

The school district has been able to save quite a bit of money for continuing education for re-certifications. *MCLA* has been an excellent partner and have provided a great deal of professional development, and both have helped each other with substitutes. Northern Berkshire Superintendents met and agreed to also share professional development. Discussion is ongoing about sharing special education services such as Autism, Speech/Language, and Foreign Languages. This is based on the need and the ability to get staff for these areas. The school district is also discussing the possibility of having virtual high school for schools with a small number of students in classes like chemistry.

The *Leo Club* and the staff in the district will be providing Thanksgiving and Christmas meals to approximately 15 families.

Member Nowak explained that he has been attending the school meetings, and that the schools have been asked to think out of the box for ways to balance the budget. He said he recognizes they are thinking of many ways to cut the budget and he appreciates all of their efforts.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

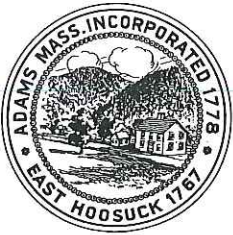
Petition by Verizon for Pole Relocation on West Mountain Road

7:10 p.m. Motion made by Member Duval to go into Public Hearing

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed



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Richard Ladd, representative of *Verizon*, explained that the existing pole is deteriorated and needs to be replaced. The pole is currently under the conductors on the power line. If the pole is moved approximately 4 to 6 feet west of its current location it would be out from under the conductors and safer. The change in distance would be within a normal wire span, and would lower the conductors a little bit, which would be good. Abutters have been notified.

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve the Pole Relocation

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business discussed at this meeting

NEW BUSINESS

Reserve Account Fund Transfer Request

Interim Town Administrator Cesan explained that there have been a series of unexpected circumstances that incurred legal fees that exceeded the \$15,000 Town Administrator budget, which have been exhausted. Special Counsel has been negotiating three separate and distinct drug and alcohol policies, which are being worked on with the Union Representatives now for completion, and there was unexpected litigation involving the Town. Due to these factors, approval of up to \$35,000 is requested from the Reserve Account for this purpose, and only be used as needed. Currently outstanding are approximately \$12,000 in legal fees to be paid, but there are more bills expected going forward. If the funds are not needed, they will not be used. There is currently \$175,000 in the reserve account.

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve the request for the Fund Transfer from the Reserve Account for unanticipated Legal Bills to go forward to the Finance Committee

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Agenda Additions

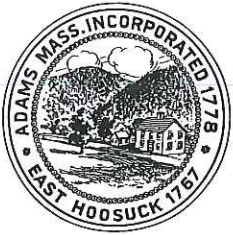
- Request for Use of Public Way for Turkey Trot
- Request for Change of Hours on Liquor License for 7-Eleven

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to add the additional items to the Approvals section of the agenda

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed



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SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

Hampshire Council of Governments

Member Nowak attended the *Hampshire Council of Governments*, and made the contact of Donna Barrett, the Director for Western Massachusetts portion of Massachusetts Broadband Institute, who is the point person for Adams. There is a \$50 Million Bond which is going to be put toward a program called "1, 2, 3" to support 45 communities without cable. Ms. Barrett indicated it would be a very long time before broadband will be brought into homes but communities could offer some money to this program to help it along. This would be tough for a Town like Adams. Member Nowak said he felt it would be an asset for citizens to be able to have a business run out of their homes, especially since Adams has lower housing costs, which would offer a great place for a startup business.

There was a legislative session at this meeting as well, where *Representative Gail Cariddi* and *Stan Rosenberg*, the *Chairman of Ways and Means* attended, which will be advantageous since both are from Western Massachusetts.

School Budget

Member Duval noted that in the Citizens' Conference Mr. Lefebvre indicated that initial discussions had started regarding the school budget. He advised that Mr. Lefebvre's quote of a 4.7% increase of \$900,000 was a very rough assessment but is not the final amount. Everyone is just beginning to put the budget together at this point. He noted that the school is thinking outside of the box, and the health insurance split that was discussed was a sacrifice, and he personally appreciates it. The number for the final budget will likely be different after the budget is worked on more.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

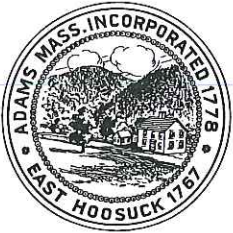
Park Street Improvement Project

The *Park Street Improvement Project* is substantially complete. Work this week has focused on making necessary improvements to individual driveways. Sidewalks and areas of decorative pavement are complete and installation of street furniture is also finalized. Pavement marking is likely to occur next week on Monday or Tuesday, when the weather is warmer. The marking will begin around 11pm or later, and is hoped to be completed in a single evening, but will be temperature dependent.

Crosswalks will not be stamped and stained, because it was cut out of the project, but they will be Abbey Road Striped. The street furniture is too heavy and would cause tripping hazards if brought in for the winter so they will remain in place.

Library Project

Significant progress has been made on the Library. Much of the brick work at the entrance is now complete. The walls in front of the entrance are 90% complete, and the marble capstones are on. The work is focusing on the foundation and tread walls of the lower stairs. The majority of the entrance work except for the railings should be completed by Thanksgiving or shortly thereafter.



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Drug and Alcohol Policies

Town Accountant Mary Beverly and Interim Town Administrator Cesan have been working with the Town's Special Labor Counsel to develop Drug and Alcohol Policies for the two unions. A meeting has already taken place with the Police Union Representatives, and tomorrow the Clerical Union Representatives will meet with Town Staff regarding their policy. The intention is to wrap up these policies so they can be brought to the Board before the end of the calendar year.

Holiday Harvest Market

Tourism Director Samantha Talora was acknowledged for the tremendous success of the Adams Holiday Harvest Market at Memorial School. There were 37 vendors and well over 600 people participated. Over half of the vendors indicated they brought in more income that day than they had the whole summer. A special thank you went out to the Select Board for their support of this event.

Using the Memorial School is very important, and though Samantha Talora is resigning her position and will be missed she created a great energy with the Market, which grew under her direction, and a large number of vendors want to return. It will be important to follow up to be sure the Market continues going forward.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

There were no items presented at this meeting

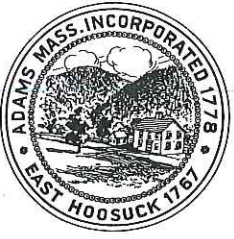
POLICE DEPARTMENT

PAWS Program

Chief Tarsa attended a meeting at the Adams Library with Roy Thompson, an advocate for the Town of Adams regarding an organization called PAWS. Mr. Thompson operates the food pantry for animals at the redemption center on Commercial Street, for those in need of food for their pets. PAWS brings awareness regarding animal abuse and neglect and Kumar and Officer Crane are working in conjunction with Mr. Thompson as the point of contact for the Adams Police Department. They hope to address bringing pets inside during bitter cold temperatures, and having them properly cared for. The Adams Police Department will do what they can to support the program and will put a link on their website and Facebook page. Perhaps the Town could put a link on their site as well to promote PAWS.

Winter Parking Ban

The Adams Winter Parking Ban is already in effect, and a press release was sent out to iBerkshires, the Berkshire Eagle, WNAW. The press release was read aloud, and the public was reminded of the overnight parking ban that began November 15, 2014 in accordance with the Adams Town By-Law Article 6, Subsection 202-42. Vehicles are not to be parked on any public way or Town parking lot between the hours of 12am and 7am. Vehicles found in violation will receive a \$25 fine and could be subject to being towed at the owner's expense. This has been also posted on the Police Department Facebook page. Between November 1st and 15th officers issued over 165 warnings to make people aware of the ban.



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Parking

Adams has inadequate parking due to houses being built and developed in conjunction with the local mills, and not having driveways. Because of this, there has been an increase in curb cut requests recently. Families frequently have two or more cars, causing a significant parking problem, especially in the winter. Renfrew Field area in particular has a notable lack of parking options, causing parking on the street.

The Renfrew Field Parking Lot has 33 spaces on the West Side, and on the field side there are a total of 40 spaces; 37 open parking spaces and 3 designated handicapped parking. Chief Tarsa suggested having a designated permit parking process for the Renfrew Field parking lot to allow overnight parking on the West side of the lot so the DPW can come in and plow, and then the owner must move the vehicles to the East side of the lot by a certain time of day or could potentially be towed. The application process could be a fee of \$50 for the season and can be done as a lottery system if there are an abundance of applicants. This is similar to MCLA's parking plan. The Visitor's Center parking lot and other lots could be other options to help residents find parking.

Town Counsel St. John III advised applicants would sign a release of liability. Vandalism is a superseding act that the Town has no control of, and the Town has insurance.

Businesses that have parking spaces that are open at night may be willing to offer conditional parking on their property during certain hours. They could offer their own permits if they wished.

Thanksgiving

With people traveling for Thanksgiving, have a safe holiday season. The police do house checks if requested, and do not put on Facebook or advertise that you are going to be away to help protect your property from burglary. Keep windows and doors locked while you are gone.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

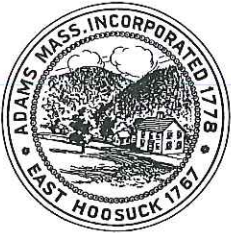
There were no items presented at this meeting

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

There were no items presented at this meeting

TOWN COUNSEL REPORT

Since the last meeting, research was done concerning a private road off of East Hoosac Street and Town Counsel communicated with parties involved. He responded to staff concerning executive sessions and the application of the open meeting law, and answered questions posed by a Town Administrator Search Committee member.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Hall Offices Closed

Town Hall offices will be closed on Friday, November 28, 2014.

Peter Coussoule inquired if the landfill will be open on Saturday, November 29, 2014? There were no arrangements known to close the Landfill.

APPROVALS

Tree Lighting Ceremony

A **Facility Use Request for the Town Common** was submitted by Events Committee for the *Tree Lighting Ceremony* on November 30, 2014 from 2:00 to 5:00pm.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approve the use of Town Common by the Events Committee on November 30, 2014 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Free Parking Request

To encourage shopping, free parking is requested from November 28, 2014 to December 31, 2014 in the Downtown area.

Motion made by Member Duval to approve free parking November 28, 2014 to December 31, 2014

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Proposed Assignment of Street Number

A number is requested from a previously unnumbered vacant lot on East Road, from 0 to 227

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approved the new number of 227 to the East Road lot

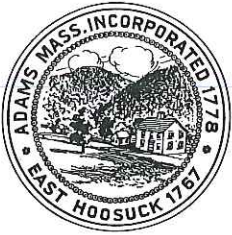
Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Request for Use of Public Way

Richard Alibozek requested use of a public way from 13 Victory Street to the PNA Hall at 9:30 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 25, 2014 for the *Turkey Trot 5K Road Race*. Approximately 250 attendees are expected.



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Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve the use of the public way on November 25th at 9:30 a.m. for the Turkey Trot

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Change of Hours Request

7-Eleven requested a Change of Hours for selling alcohol on Sundays to be open from 10am in the morning instead of 11am. All paperwork filed and in place.

Motion made to approve the Change of Hours Request for 7-Eleven by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items presented at this meeting

AGENDA ITEMS

No meeting will be held next week due to the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Slums and Blight Designation

Interim Town Administrator Cesan will bring to the board the Slums and Blight designation new target area for approval, and a resolution for approval as well. This would then be sent in to DHEC for approval.

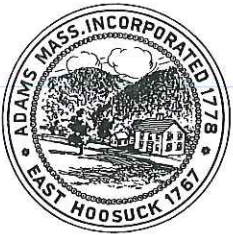
Parking Sticker Process

Interim Town Administrator Cesan will bring to the Board the topic of the Parking Sticker process at Renfrew Field parking lot.

Sub-Committees

Member Duval requests at the next workshop to develop 2-Board Member Sub-Committees. There are liaisons in place now, but he has suggestions to propose to the Board. The Sub-Committees would meet with the Town Administrator and meet for discussion to bring forward ideas. No decisions made at these meetings. Once discussed, the Sub-Committee would bring thoughts forward to the full Board for decision making or further discussion. He noted the school board had a powerful sub-committee that met on a monthly basis. He said he felt the Board needs to be more involved in Town Government, and this would give the Department Heads more input for the Board to have an idea of what their needs are for the budget. He suggested sub-committees in the areas of the Budget, Economic Development, and understanding the Tax Rate.

Member Nowak said he felt the sub-committees were already incorporated in the liaison appointments.



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Chairman Harrington clarified that Member Duval is suggesting sub-committees that are not already in place with the liaison appointments, and that the liaison appointments are areas that the Chairman assigns with the input of the Board Members.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Veterans Day

Member Nowak thanked Vice Chairman Blanchard for his excellent *Veterans Day Ceremony* speech.

Hoosac Valley Hurricanes

Member Nowak gave praise to the Hoosac Valley Hurricanes, as they are hard-working kids and lost a tough game to Pittsfield.

American Flags

Member Nowak asked to have the American Flags taken down for winter when the Christmas Decorations go up.

Thanksgiving

Vice Chairman Blanchard wished all a Happy Thanksgiving and safe holidays.

Town Administrator Selection Committee

Chairman Harrington informed that the Board had just met prior to this meeting with the Town Administrator Selection Committee and wanted to commend them for the fine work they had done in narrowing down from over 40 applicants to 3 good candidates. Specifically recognized was Jeff Grandchamp as chairman, Carol Corrigan as Vice-Chairwoman, Members James Brosnan, Erica Girgenti, Steve Melito, Mike Ouellette, and Rick Tarsa. He noted their hard work was very appreciated.

The names will not be announced beforehand, but public meetings are scheduled for the interviews both Thursday, November 20, 2014 and Saturday, November 22, 2014.

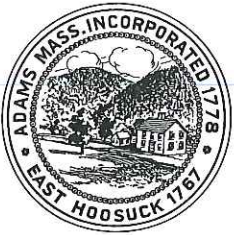
Motion to Adjourn made by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

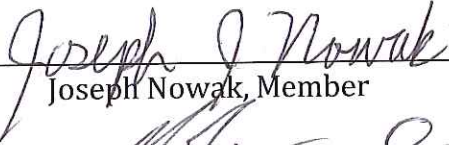
Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.



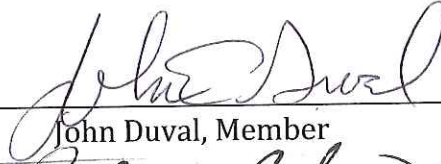
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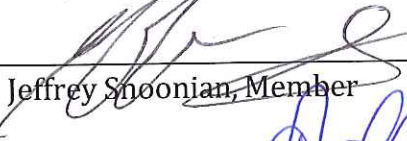
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



Joseph Nowak, Member



John Duval, Member



Jeffrey Shoonian, Member



Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman



Arthur Harrington, Chairman