



Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Meeting

December 10, 2014

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

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

Chairman Harrington gave an overview of the agenda items.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Proposed New Sub-Committees

Member Duval requested the Chairman appoint two new committees and give additional responsibilities to a third sub-committee.

Budget Sub-Committee

Individual Department Needs - With the Budget Process approaching, and Department Heads come forward each year with requests for additional staff or new vehicles and frequently the Board Members are not informed of the detail of the requests and needs of the departments. This will allow the Select Board an avenue to get more informed on these types of items before the final budget meetings. The Board can also take the opportunity to assess the Budget Process to see if it is working effectively.

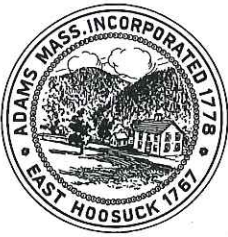
Tax Rates - This sub-committee will allow for an avenue to get more informed about the tax rate, get a breakdown and better understanding including slides, charts, and have a public meeting to explain what citizens are paying for and what services are provided.

Assessments- Assessments that came across the Board 2 years ago really impact the tax rate, and this sub-committee would give the Board the ability to see the process and the legal requirements. It may be an appropriate time to get an outside assessment of the community to see if changes need to be made. This would help the Board to understand the assessments and perhaps provide recommendations.

Board Budget Responsibility – The Select Board is responsible for the Town's Budget, and have not gotten status checks on the overall budget, or. It would be good to get quarterly demonstrations from the Town Administrator and Town Accountant to the Board to show where the Town Budget is at, and keep them apprised of any areas of concern, or recommendations.

Interim Town Administrator Cesan advised that some of the recommendations suggested by Member Duval for this first committee are already in the works. She advised that she had already reached out to the Finance Committee Chairman and the Town Accountant and when the new Town Administrator arrives there are some immediate meetings already planned to discuss the Budget Process. She is specifically hoping to make it more transparent and understandable. She said the

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meetings as they currently are just go over individual line items for each department and don't really show where the money goes. She suggested that the Budget Committee be a "Point Committee" and work more closely with the Town Administrator, Town Accountant, and Chairman of the Finance Committee, but most of this information will come to the full Board anyway. She said the Finance Committee Chair will help to develop the materials and community outreach.

Member Duval clarified that he would like this sub-committee to set up a process to have the Department Heads come into a workshop and talk about their budget plans. In this format the Department Heads can talk about their needs and areas they are lacking so there is an ability to reorganize things to save money. This will inform the Select Board prior to going into the Budget Sessions.

Interim Town Administrator Cesan advised that one thing that is missing is the 5-year Capital Plan, which is currently being finalized. She advised the work was done a year and a half ago and has not been able to be published into a book yet. She said the Committee could use this plan as a guide to ask more detailed questions. A very old Capital Improvement Plan has been used in the past.

A comparison of similar sized communities, amenities and resources would be helpful. Size is not the only factor in creating a tax rate.

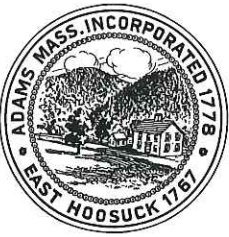
The Budget Process should not go too far forward before the new Town Administrator arrives, as the Town Administrator's job is to meet with the Department Heads, develop a budget, and bring it to the Board. It is important for the Board not to micro-manage the Town Administrator, and the Select Board Members are policy setters. If the Board would like the Town Administrator to do the budget in a different way that is fine, but the Board should not do his job for him.

Additional tasks for this sub-committee are to look at shared services and resources between Adams and other communities to help with the budget. This would involve building good relationships with neighboring communities. Adams currently has a good relationship with at least 3 of the closest communities on a political and personnel basis. This would be critical to addressing the tax rate and budget.

Vice Chairman Blanchard clarified that the sub-committee members will be subject matter experts and would like to see a pre-budget meeting with the Board so they have an idea of what is forthcoming.

Having more information and knowing the top 2 or 3 expenditures in Town would be helpful to the Board, as well as being more closely involved. Having more information would allow the Board to be able to speak intelligently on each topic and each department's needs.

Discussion between Board Members ensued regarding what the current budget process is, and at what points the budget can be revised. Not one person is responsible for the budget, and there are checks and balances throughout the process.



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Interim Town Administrator Cesan advised once the Town Administrator has developed the budget, it is not good practice to have Department Heads go around the Town Administrator and go directly to the Board of Selectmen in the Budget process. She notes this sub-committee is an opportunity for more information to be afforded to the Select Board early in the budget process, which is the key thing. She advised there are opportunities for this committee to work with the Town Administrator, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, and the Town Accountant on developing information for both the full Select Board and for the public at large. She recommends having the committee, and if it doesn't work out well next season it doesn't need to continue.

Consensus was reached for Chairman Harrington and Vice Chairman Blanchard to serve on the Budget Sub-Committee.

Greylock Glen Project Sub-Committee

The Master Lease was signed, and is beginning the first phase. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be distributed in the near future, and there will be additional work for Town departments and oversight needed from the Board. This sub-committee works with the Community Development Director to gather information to bring back to the full Select Board for recommendations.

Interim Town Administrator Cesan suggested this committee, and asked the Select Board Chair for suggested members to be appointed. The Greylock Glen is a project that is marrying outdoor recreation and environmental protection with economic development, so she felt Member Nowak and Member Snoonian would be best to represent these two areas. The details of working out the RFPs and other parts of the project can be worked out with the committee, and then brought to the full Board when they are ready.

The Town needs to be aggressive to go forward. The Town is at a true milestone in the project, but cannot afford to take its time now that the lease is signed. There are some funds currently available from the state for engineering and design.

Consensus was reached to have Members Nowak and Snoonian serve as the Greylock Glen Sub-Committee members.

Memorial School Sub-Committee

The existing Memorial School Committee is proposed to expand to include the Downtown and Economic Development plans, as the Memorial School is part of both plans. Vice Chairman Blanchard and Member Duval are currently serving as committee members for the Memorial School Sub-Committee and will work with the Town Administrator on this project. The re-use of the Memorial School constitutes new business, housing, and also book-ends the Downtown area.

Consensus was reached to have the Memorial School Sub-Committee expanded to include Downtown and Economic Development.



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Town Priorities for Next 6 Months

Interim Town Administrator Cesan advised she would be meeting with the new Town Administrator when he begins on January 12, 2015 and has put together a list of priorities for the next 6 months for the Town so she can work with Mr. Mazzucco to give him information and background on these items. In her list, the priorities for the remainder of FY2015 included

- FY2016 Budget
- developing new revenue sources
- the DPW Union Contract
- the \$40,000 E911 Grant ending June 2015 to consolidate and build dispatch service efficiencies
- discussions with Town Assessor regarding re-evaluation and having outside expertise with RFPs in Mid-January
- the disposition of 20 East Street, the former Community Center, and RFPs in January or February
- RFPs for the campground component of the Greylock Glen
- HVAC System for Memorial School reuse
- The Strategic Planning Process initial groundwork, including SWAT Analysis
- Annual Town Meeting in May or June

Member Nowak added he would like to add the work on the Bike and Rail Trails.

Interim Town Administrator didn't add it because it is under state control, and there are federal highway requirements. Because the Bike Trail moved over, the consultant for the new tracks for the rail portion is working to meet the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requirements. She advised this could be added.

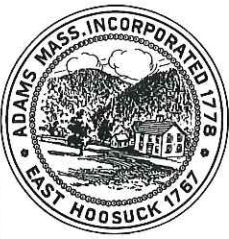
Roundabout bids will be opened January 13, 2015.

No other items were added to the list by Select Board Members.

Seasonal Parking on Town Lots

The Renfrew Park and Kearns Lane have had citizen requests for off-street parking for residents. Renfrew Park is limited to seasonal parking, and would have a \$50 fee. Stickers would be assigned with a different color each year, and would have specific rules. The Police Department would have a list of permitted vehicles. The DPW has agreed to serving these lots and cars would park on one side to allow for the DPW to clean the area. In the Kearns Lot some spaces will be allocated to the hardware store, and there will be 14 total spots.

Vice Chairman Blanchard suggests this could be based on need, for areas in town with no parking. He suggests those with highest need get first priority. The Town staff would not be able to vet the needs of those who apply, but some thought could be given to areas with no parking spaces at all.



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This will be a good starting point, and if issues come up the Board will address them. The parking permits are not transferable and non-refundable. If someone trades or sells their car, they can bring in the old sticker and fill out a form for a new sticker, but they would not be charged for the new sticker in the same season.

Interim Town Administrator Cesan will check to see if the money can go into the Parking Meter system, which would be in place for the maintenance of the lot.

Motion to Adjourn made by Vice Chairman Blanchard
Second by Member Snoonian
Unanimous vote
Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

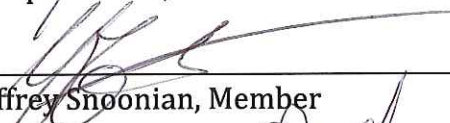
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



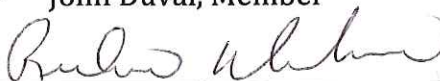
Joseph Nowak, Member




John Duval, Member



Jeffrey Snoonian, Member



Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman



Arthur Harrington, Chairman