



TOWN OF ADAMS SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

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WEDNESDAY, February 18, 2015 - 7:00 PM

TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

TOWN HALL, MEETING ROOM, 1st FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

CLERK _____

On the Above date the Board of Selectmen held a regular 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 were **Town Counsel, Edmund St. John III and Town Administrator Tony Mazzucco**.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

READING OF MINUTES

- February 4, 2015
- February 11, 2015

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to waive reading the minutes for February 4, 2015 and February 11, 2015 and to approve them as written

Second by member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

Town Budget

Jeff Lefebvre inquired when the Town Budget would be online and asked to personally be given a draft.

The Budget Message and Preliminary Budget will be posted online Tuesday, February 24, 2015. The total proposed increase is in the couple hundred thousand dollar range. This Preliminary Budget is subject to change upon review by the Board.

Soldier On

Jeff Lefebvre reported that Soldier ON is looking for more toiletries for homeless veterans. Specifically needed are briefs and undershirts from size 32 up. He asked for use of the Town Hall for a drop off point.

Chairman Harrington approved the use of Town Hall as a drop-off point.



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Adams Fire District Billing

Gene Baker spoke to the Board about the Adams Fire District request to have the Town bill those outside of fire district and advised this topic has come up numerous times over the last 15 years. Mr. Baker provided the Board with an opinion that Attorney St. John III provided a few years prior for what needed to go forward, and he advised another private attorney gave the same opinion. He referenced Chapter 48 of Mass General Laws regarding how the Fire District is to be governed regarding the expansion of its jurisdiction and advised there needs to be a petition of registered voters outside the district to call a meeting in the Fire District. He suggested the Town look at allowing the Forest Wardens to fight structure fires as a solution since it is their primary legal jurisdiction, but equipment and training would need to be looked at. He expressed concern regarding liability if the Town enters this agreement against Chapter 48 of the Mass General Laws, if money is exchanged back and forth, and if constitutionally equal protection issues are not addressed.

Member Nowak reported that the Board received an opinion from the Fire District at last meeting, is currently fact finding and will look at what was being presented, but no decision has yet been made.

Mike Bassi of West Road, outside the Fire District, addressed the Board to contest a comment previously made by a citizen that those outside of the Fire District don't support the Fire District so they should not be billed. He said the Forest Wardens are under the jurisdiction of the Town of Adams, and those out of district pay for the pumper truck. He referenced Chapter 48 Section 79 of the Mass General Law that allows a petition for those outside of district to impose a fee. He noted that the \$60 fee pays sewer taxes that covers residential and businesses because not all are on a sewer-based system. He recalled that former Town Administrator Leitch had broken it down and part of the cost of taxes was \$300 for a sewer user fee. He said the approximately 130 houses outside of the sewer district are subsidizing the rest, as a comparison, and those outside of the Fire District pay more than their fair share of taxes. He expressed respect for both the firefighters and Chief Goyette.

Chairman Harrington advised that the Board is already discussing sewer fee issue and there has been a comparison of the Adams tax rate with all other communities except the one with no sewer fee and this should probably be considered as well.

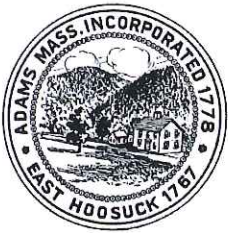
PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing at this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

BART and Soccer League requests to utilize Memorial School Building for games

Chairman Harrington advised that the Building Commissioner has not been able to give Board a maximum number of people in the building yet for events, but agreed to allow occasional activities and use of the gymnasium in consideration of the lack of ventilation and heat. BaRT is already using it for practices, but games would be able to take place provided the bleachers are



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inspected, the shower issue is addressed, and if people do not exceed the number he gives the Board. He requests this topic be tabled. An amended Facility Request Form will be made for this building due to its unique requirements. Larger events may need to provide fire watch and stricter fire regulations. When events become bigger the Board will need to consider having a custodian at the events to lock the building and answer emergency questions. An imposed facility use fee would cover payment of the custodian. Police may also be needed for games and events as well.

*Motion made to table this topic until first meeting in March by Vice Chairman Blanchard
Second by Member Snoonian
Unanimous vote
Motion passed*

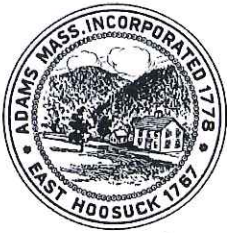
NEW BUSINESS

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests

\$60,000 for Electricity in Public Buildings

Chairman Harrington read a letter from *Town Accountant Mary Beverly* which states the available balance in the account stands at \$18,000. The balance was devastated in January with a \$19,140 electric bill received by the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the next bill due is \$22,636.90. The G3 power used for industrial buildings has increased from 7.5 cents to 23.4 cents. The solar field is generating little power currently due to snow cover on the panels and it being winter. The G3 rate has nearly tripled in cost and though the Town is looking for alternative power purchase agreements it is difficult to find agreements for the G3 rate. The only one found so far has a 20 year agreement, for which the Town is hesitant to contract. The majority of the Town's municipal facility electricity usage is at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is standard. The Town is operating largely flat in usage between last year and this year, and surplus solar energy credits from other buildings have been transferred wherever possible to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Joe Fijal is researching power usage agreements, but the Town is in a tight spot.

The contract for the solar company was thought to buy electricity at a fixed rate and the solar company is supposed to maintain and clean off snow from the panels. There must be a way to connect with them to do so to get the panels generating and creating credits, which are assigned to municipal buildings, and not one big pool. The current credits being generated may not be enough to cover the G3 rate; the G1 and G2 rates did not get hit as hard with the rate increase. The Wastewater Treatment Plant has some of their own solar panels on the roof which generate in the summer for the surplus to be used in the winter. The panels work best when the weather is cold but there is sun. Town Administrator Mazzucco will get a copy of the agreement to give to the Board and will check to see if the maintenance contract will cover clearing the snow from the panels to generate power. The increase in electric costs is being programmed into the budget for next year, and the summer generation of energy is hoping to balance it out.



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Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approve \$60,000 transfer from reserve fund for electricity

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Transfer from reserve fund for COA

Chairman Harrington read a letter from *Council on Aging Director Erica Girgenti* requesting a reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$3,000 to Temporary Services for Per Diem Van Drivers due to an unexpected medical emergency of one van driver. The estimated return of the van driver is uncertain. This request would get the Council on Aging to the end of March and \$5,000 would get them to the end of April. This amount does not account for any vacation time use in summer. The Council on Aging currently provides 453 rides per van each month for an average of 95 community members, which is higher than last year. Not having two vans running would seriously impact these community members.

Motion made to approve \$3,000 transfer from the reserve account for the Council on Aging Temporary Services for Per Diem Van Drivers by Member Duval

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

School Committee

Member Nowak attended the school committee meeting and the Adams/Cheshire public schools were selected for district review under the provisions of Chapter 15, Section 55A by the Center for District and School Accountability at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district review will focus on 6 district standards of effective practice defined in state regulation; leadership and governments, curriculum and instruction assessment, human resources, professional development, student support, and financial and asset management.

Superintendent Kristen Gordon put together a monthly enrollment guide which shows that more are coming in to Hoosac Valley High School and CT Plunkett School than leaving in the last three months, which is encouraging. There were 2 dropouts from Hoosac Valley High School.

The State had awarded a portion of \$1 Million for a school project, but the school must put in \$27,000.

A per-pupil expenditure given out in Western Massachusetts, Adams ranks last for pupil spending. Northern Berkshire schools, which encompass McCann Technical School has the highest expenditure per pupil. He advises the school understands it will be a tight budget and they are looking out of the box to come up with a reasonable budget.



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Greylock Glen Subcommittee

Member Nowak and **Member Snoonian** on the Greylock Glen Subcommittee are communicating with Representative Gail Cariddi's office regarding the Greylock Glen. Representative Cariddi has a request in to meet with Secretary Beaton and Senator Downing regarding several issues including Greylock Glen, but the meeting has not yet been set up. She will update Members Nowak and Snoonian and Community Development Director Donna Cesan once the meeting takes place and to set up a meeting where Secretary Beaton can come to Adams to be part of a meeting with town officials as well.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

Member Snoonian will be attending the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority meeting tomorrow. The budget will be cut significantly but local aid might be alright. Governor Baker appears to be impacting local transit authorities.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Proposed FY2016 Budget

The Proposed FY2016 has been printed, distributed and posted online. Copies are available at Town Hall, the Council on Aging and the Library as well. The joint Budget Meetings with the Finance Committee and the Select Board will be held in the Visitor's Center on March 10th, 11th, 12th at 6:00 p.m. and the schedule will be published on the Town's website. No votes or actions will be taken at those meetings.

Chairman Harrington mentioned he likes the new format of budget presentations for the Board and Finance Committee at the same time, giving the advantage of hearing questions and concerns from both boards at the same time. The change in venue is due to the size of the group that is expected to attend.

Salt Contract

Town Administrator Mazzucco requests the Board allow him to write letters to the Lt. Governor and Attorney General to look into the breach of contract issues with Morton Salt not supplying salt, and whether they will be allowed to bid again for next year. The Town pays a lot for salt and is getting a new answer and excuse each week; the latest is that ships are having trouble getting into Albany to make the salt delivery. Also, the price of salt went up 37% after Morton Salt got the contract. Copies will be distributed to the delegation as well.

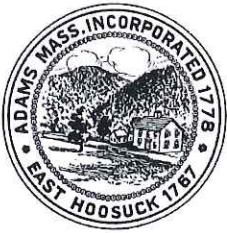
Motion made by Member Snoonian to authorize the Town Administrator to send letters to the Lt. Governor and Attorney General regarding the Salt Contract

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



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There were no items presented by the Public Works Department.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

There were no items presented by the Police Department.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There were no items presented by the Community Development Department.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

There were no items presented by any other department.

TOWN COUNSEL REPORT

Town Counsel St. John III advised he represented the Town in Northern Berkshire Court in a hearing regarding the disclosure of an officer's personnel records, and he included discussions with Town personnel on that topic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Time Warner Cable

Time Warner Cable has sent a communication that in April HBO will offer free viewing. For parental controls there is a number to call.

Municipal Aggregation Information

March 4, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. at the **Visitors' Center** and **3:00 p.m.** at **Town Hall** there will be informational sessions for the public regarding the Municipal Aggregation Program. Everyone is encouraged to attend and ask questions.

APPROVALS

Geocaching by Ultimate Entertainment Adams

Last week a presentation was made for the Select Board by Nathan Samson of Ultimate Entertainment Adams to inform the Board of what geocaching is and to request ongoing approval for educational geocaching to take place in Adams.

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve ongoing geocaching for Adams

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed



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Facility Request for Greylock Glen for Thunderbolt Race

Josh Chittenden requests use of the Greylock Glen by **Thunderbolt Ski Runners** for a race on February 28, 2015

Motion made by Member Snoonian to approve the use of Greylock Glen by the Thunderbolt Ski Runners on February 28, 2015

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Facility Request by Pro Adams for Thunderfest Event

Pro Adams requested use of the Visitors' Center for the **Thunderfest Event** on February 28, 2015.

The Visitors' Center had had a challenge with frost heaves causing issues with opening doors, and at this time there is a 49 person maximum in the building per the Building Commissioner. Chowderfest will be the event happening in the building.

Motion by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approved the use of the Visitors' Center by Pro Adams for Thunderfest on February 28, 2015

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Facility Request by the Berkshire Running Center

Kent Lemme requested use of the Visitors' Center by **Berkshire Running Center** on Sunday May 17, 2015 for the Steel Rail Marathon.

Motion made by Member Duval to approve the use of the Visitor's Center by the Berkshire Running Center on May 17, 2015 for the Steel Rail Marathon

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

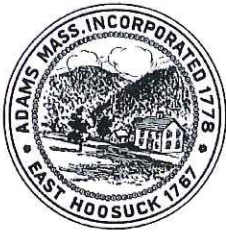
One Day Liquor License Application

Christian Hansen of **Balderdash Cellars** submitted an application for a One Day Wine & Malt License for the Thunderfest Event on **February 28, 2015** from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approve a One Day Wine & Malt license for Balderdash Cellars pending receipt of liquor liability paperwork by February 27, 2015

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote



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Motion passed

One Day Liquor License Application

Chris Post of **Wandering Star Brewing Company** requested a One Day Wine & Malt License for the Thunderfest Event on **February 28, 2015** from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Motion made by Member Nowak to approve the One Day Wine & Malt License for Wandering Star Brewing Company for February 28, 2015 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was presented.

AGENDA ITEMS

The agenda for next week has already been set, and no new agenda items were presented.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Northern Berkshire Coalition NB21

Member Nowak attended the Northern Berkshire Coalition for NB21 and found it informative about the ongoing problem in the area of the use of opiates. A film and slide show were presented and several people are working hard to make people aware of it and to help those get treatment when needed.

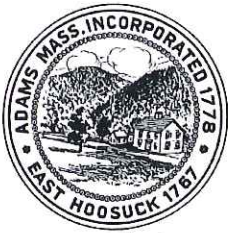
Pope John Paul the Great Charity Center

Member Nowak acknowledged the Pope John Paul the Great Charity Center and read a letter about the Center from July 8, 2009 when they opened their doors for Adams, Cheshire, and Savoy to provide food, clothing and baby products and to reduce hunger. The Charity has provided assistance to 1509 households, 59.4 tons of food has been distributed; 53.4 tons of food has been received from the State Government, and the total cost spent on food, diapers, and support items was \$138,621.63. There are 59 volunteers, and though the Selectmen are doing the people's work and these volunteers are doing God's work. He thanked them for all they are doing for people in need.

Member Snoonian added that many houses rely on the Pope John Paul the Great Charity Center each week for food.

Sidewalk Clearing

Vice Chairman Blanchard reminded everyone to shovel sidewalks as many people are having a hard time maneuvering snow covered and slippery sidewalks. 74 roofs have collapsed so far from the weight of the snow statewide and there may be a need to get someone up on the roof to clean it.



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Chairman Harrington advised everyone to be careful on the slippery surfaces when walking and reminded people that abandoned buildings have nobody to shovel in front of them. He suggests everyone be extra cautious of pedestrians walking in the street and for pedestrians to look carefully both ways before walking in the road because of obstructed views for drivers.

Fire District Billing

Member Snoonian thanked Gene Baker and Mike Bassi for coming to the Board to express their concerns and share information regarding the Fire District suggestions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session at this meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Vice Chairman Blanchard

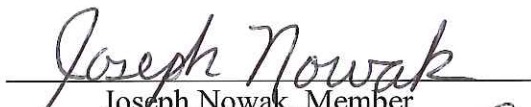
Second by Member Snoonian

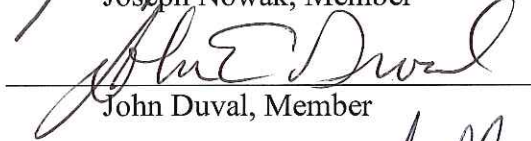
Unanimous vote


Motion passed

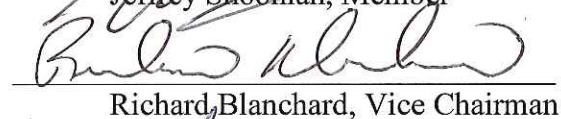
Meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm

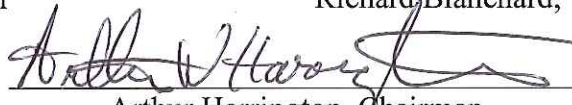
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary.


Joseph Nowak, Member


John Duval, Member


Jeffrey Snoonian, Member


Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman


Arthur Harrington, Chairman