



TOWN OF ADAMS

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, March 4, 2015 – 7:00 PM

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

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 was **Town Administrator Tony Mazzucco.** Town Counsel Ed St. John III was absent.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

READING OF MINUTES

- February 18, 2015
- February 25, 2015

Motion made by Member Blanchard to waive the reading of the minutes for February 18, 2015 and February 25, 2015 and to accept the minutes as written

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

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CLERK

CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

Homeless Veterans

Jeff Lefebvre announced he is collecting briefs and undershirts for Homeless Veterans for Pittsfield and Leeds if anyone is able to donate them. Call Jeff at (413) 743-5175 or drop them off at Town Hall.

Municipal Aggregation Presentation

Jeff Lefebvre said he appreciated the municipal aggregation presentation and wish it had been presented previously.

Budget Increase

Jeff Lefebvre asked how much the taxpayer increase on the dollar the budget would be if it went through as projected.

The increase would be 75 cents.

Green Communities Initiative

Jeff Lefebvre asked for more information regarding the "Green Communities" initiative, which would be presented later in the meeting.



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OLD BUSINESS

Memorial School Use by BART and Soccer Leagues for Games

Town Administrator Mazzucco requests to have the Memorial School use by BART and the Soccer Leagues taken off the table because the BART and Soccer League use request has passed. The Town is still looking into ways to expand use of the building but it will take more time to get an answer.

Chairman Harrington advised that Building Commissioner Fitzgerald is looking into the portions of the building for use, particularly the gymnasium, but it is taking a lot of time and work to determine what activities can be allowed there legally and safely. This issue will be put back on the table as a topic for further discussion once more information is available. There will probably be specific use limits to the building depending on parameters set by the Building Commissioner, Town officials and State.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to take off the table the request to use Memorial School by BART and Soccer leagues

Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Tourist Signs

Member Nowak inquired about the status of the tourist signs and making them more readable.

Town Administrator Mazzucco advised he looked into it and for bicycle or pedestrian use the font was adequate but the size not designed for vehicular traffic.

Solar Panels Contract

Member Nowak noted that when reviewing the solar contract it was not clear who was responsible to clean the panels.

Town Administrator Mazzucco placed a call to the organization to make an appointment to either get them cleaned off or to show the DPW what to do to carefully clear snow off.

Chairman Harrington requests Town Counsel advise what the Town can do legally on the property where the solar panels are, and if it is not resolved what legal options the Town has to pursue getting the company to care for them, such as putting them on stilts so the snow slides off. For a month or more there will be no solar power generated because of snow. He also inquired if snow falls under the force majeure clause on the contract.

The solar company is responsible for maintenance required to provide solar power generation.



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Letter about Salt Issues

Town Administrator Mazzucco will be sending out the letters to the Lt. Governor and Attorney General later this week regarding issues the Town had getting road salt.

Stormwater Management Letter

Member Nowak inquired if the Select Board would agree to write a letter regarding fiscal challenges faced in order to comply with the Stormwater Management Regulations. It would be advisable to reach out to the delegation so they are aware of the challenge it presents to communities. The letter may indicate that if a waiver is possible the Town may pursue this option due to fiscal barriers.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Fijal raised a question about the validity of the process with his knowledge about the condition of the river.

Town Administrator Mazzucco advised a letter to delegation is in order to raise Superintendent Fijal's concerns. The next step for the Town is to get information about how to apply for a waiver once the plan is filed. Local towns that have already filed a waiver in the past may be good resources for information on what they have done and how.

Railroad Purchase

Member Nowak inquired what the process stands for Scenic Railroad.

Town Administrator Mazzucco advised that the Governor has put a stop on the railroad purchase process to take a look at all of the purchases more in depth. He recommends that the businesses in town be asked to send a letter to the Governor so he is aware of the economic impact this is having, and how important it is to the Town.

The rail purchase is a package of about 30 different communities, which makes it more complex.

Member Duval will update the Board and Town Administrator if anything new develops.

NEW BUSINESS

Green Communities Initiative

Jim Barry, *Regional Coordinator of Green Communities Division* gave a presentation to the Select Board on the Green Communities Grant Program. Zoning and Stretch Code issues challenged many communities in the past. He listed the criteria that Adams would have to follow in order to participate in the program.

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Right Sighting.** This requires that at some place in Town for some kinds of renewable energy projects, the Town allows permission and permits to be done without the need for special permits. Adams has already accomplished this with the Solar By-Law.



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- **Expedited permitting.** The Town would have to initiate an expedited permitting process including a letter from Town Counsel to indicate they have reviewed current processes and there is nothing known to preclude the decision being made within 12 months.
- **Create an energy use baseline and plan.** The Town would need to supply an energy use baseline and adopt a 5 year plan to reduce it by 20% over 5 years. The Town is not required to fund this plan, but just create a reasonable 5 year plan for how to accomplish it.
- **Purchase only fuel efficient vehicles.** The Town would need to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles for Town use whenever they are commercially available and practicable, but emergency vehicles are exempt.
- **Adoption of Stretch Code.** The final criterion is to have any new construction in town be more energy efficient by adopting the new BBRS Stretch Code. The energy building code changes every 3 years and the Stretch Code is an optional addition which provides for performance testing rather than prescriptive measures and guarantees that the building will be more energy efficient than the 2006 building code. The 2012 code now mirrors the Stretch Code and renovations, rehabilitation and repairs are not impacted. 146 Municipalities in the Commonwealth have passed the Stretch Code.

The grants are not competitive. Mr. Barry will come back for a public information session if the Town is interested, and would hold a special meeting for builders about the Stretch Code. He will help fill out paperwork, and tell how much money the Town is eligible for. An estimate could be given by comparing similar size communities by populations, and the Town can apply for up to \$250,000 per year. A rough estimate with a similar sized town would be approximately \$150,000 to \$160,000. Projects are listed and scored by how well they are performing. Money received would be spent on prioritized 5 year plan items, and the plan can be adjusted in subsequent years when the Town sees how much energy is used, and how much can be saved. Grant money the first year could be used to hire a consultant to help the Town decide how to strategically utilize money.

The Stretch Code standards for the 2015 code are not created yet. The Stretch Code was the biggest challenge for many towns; Orange did not adopt it out of concern for it hampering new growth, but Athol did adopt it and found no difference on new growth. Zoning was a concern for some towns, for special permits. This program helps towns find ways to save taxpayer money. Towns were noted as receiving a 12 percent or more reduction in costs. If the Town adopts the Stretch Code it can start either July 1st or January 1st. If the Town decides not to keep the Stretch Code, the Green Communities Initiative will not take back money previously allotted. This funding comes from regional greenhouse gas initiative funds, not the governor's budget. \$10 Million from legislation must go to this fund and the utility companies are also a part of this program.



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Chairman Harrington asked the Board to consider moving forward to next stage to continue to look into it. Previously, the major concern was increased building costs with the Stretch Code, which is now almost the same in the current code. Community Development Director Donna Cesan did some preliminary work on this in the past, and will have the background. Building Commissioner Don Fitzgerald will be invited to give his insight as well.

Consensus was reached to have a public meeting with further information for the builders and citizens to ask questions and get information.

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORT

School Committee

Members Nowak and Blanchard attended the School Committee meeting and Cheshire residents were also in attendance. There was discussion about merging Kindergarten through Grade 2 together at C.T. Plunkett. Educational points regarding studies on reading were brought up by the school. There are more teachers at CT Plunkett School available for students, and parents felt Cheshire Elementary School is smaller with better attention to students.

Vice Chairman Blanchard emphasized that the consideration would be to split Kindergarten through Grade 2 and Grades 3 through 5 to expand resources.

Parks Committee

Member Nowak attended the Parks Commission meeting and noted there was money appropriated in the budget for revamping Russell Street Field. He advised that Barb Meczywor will not be running again this year, for anyone interested in running for it.

Town Budget

Member Nowak expressed that he was happy to see how transparent the Town budget is, being online.

Open Elected Positions

Vice Chairman Blanchard advised the *Parks Commission*, *Cemetery Commission*, and *Planning Board* all have openings for anyone who is interested in running.

BRTA

Member Snoonian attended a meeting and anything noteworthy will be brought to the Board.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Budget Meetings

March 10, 2015, March 11, 2015, and March 12, 2015 will be Joint Budget Meetings for the Select Board and the Finance Committee in the Visitor's Center at 6:00 p.m. The Public are invited to attend. March 18, 2015 is the date that is proposed for the Select Board to vote on the budget.



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McCann Technical School Budget Presentation

March 18, 2015 McCann Technical School will present their budget. The Town is still waiting to hear on a final date from the Adams Cheshire Regional School District board and hope to have a date for their presentation by the end of the week.

Thunderfest

Thunderfest was a great success.

Memorial School Bleachers

A quote was received to get the bleachers and shower facilities back on line and functional. Showers may not be able to be brought up to code easily and the Board of Health will be asked what requirements are necessary to be met.

Salt Issue Letters

Letters addressing the issue the Town has been having with Morton Salt will go out this week to the Lieutenant Governor and the Attorney General.

Facility Request Form Addendum

An addendum to the Facility Request Form has not yet been created and those interested in using the Memorial School and Greylock Glen should call the Town Administrator or Community Development Director Donna Cesan. Once approved and a standard is created it will be easier to create a form that fits. After approval by Community Development and the Town Administrator the request will come before the Select Board for final approval.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Ratification of Part Time Recycling Attendant

Chairman Harrington read a letter from the Town Administrator requesting ratification of Keith Worthington to the position of Part-Time Recycling Attendant at the recommendation of DPW Director Bettis. Mr. Worthington will begin at \$10.75 per hour on March 7, 2015.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to ratify the appointment of Keith Worthington to the Recycling Attendant position

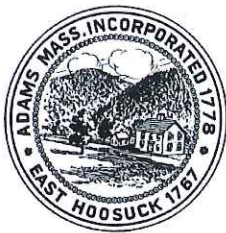
Second by Member Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Ratification of Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent

Chairman Harrington read a letter from the Town Administrator requesting ratification of Robert Rumbolt to the position of Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent after interviews and at the recommendation of DPW Director Bettis. Mr. Rumbolt has served in every position at the Treatment Plant and knows the facility thoroughly. He will begin at Grade 11, Step 6, at \$51,237.



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Member Nowak thanked Joe Fijal for all his hard work, regular reports, and the award received for excellency.

Motion made by Member Duval to ratify the appointment of Robert Rumbolt to the WWTP Superintendent position.

Second by Vice Chairman Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

TOWN COUNSEL REPORT

Ed St. John IV presented the Town Counsel report from Town Counsel St. John III.

Town Counsel St. John III reported via letter that he met with the Town Administrator concerning various issues, responded to questions raised by the Building Inspector regarding the solar array project and he reviewed documents submitted by the developer. He reviewed an inquiry from Town Accountant and provided a response, reviewed an inquiry from the Community Development Office and provided a response, and reviewed an issue raised by the Town Administrator's office and provided a response. He appeared at a hearing before the District Court concerning a limited release of personnel records of a member of the Police Department, and reviewed a proposed agreement with the Fire District and forwarded same to the Town Administrator and Board Chairman for further review and discussion.

Chairman Harrington said he had responded to the letter, and sent it back to Town Counsel. He said he was unhappy with the letter as it was different than what was presented at the workshop.

APPROVALS

Common Victualer/Inn Holder License

Topia Inn submitted an application for a Common Victualer/Inn Holder License

Motion made by Member Blanchard to approve the Common Victualer/Inn Holder License for Topia Inn

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed



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AGENDA ITEMS

Budget Review

Next week there are workshop meetings to review the Town Budget. These will be joint meetings with both the Select Board and Finance Committee at the Visitor's Center at 6:00 p.m., and are open to the public.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Thunderbolt and Thunderfest

Member Nowak advised the Thunderbolt Race and Thunderfest Event were great.

Vice Chairman Blanchard congratulated organizers of Thunderfest for a job well done.

Member Duval said it was a great event and he is proud of this community.

Member Snoonian said Thunderfest had approximately 2,500 attendees and restaurants were full after Thunderfest was over. He pointed out that the more opportunities the Town has to host events like this the better. He lauded the DPW for coming out to clear out spots for Thunderfest. He commended the private sector for making donations and giving their time, and said this will speed up the process to support businesses in town.

Chairman Harrington noted that Thunderfest was excellent and thanked the many agencies that put hard work into it such as Pro Adams, the Ski Runners, and Chowderfest. He said it was wonderful that restaurant and bar owners were so busy after this event. He commended the volunteers and hopes to expand on it in town in the future. Other groups are invited to help improve things in the community. The Farmers Market has helped to improve things with crafts, frozen meat, vegetables, and talent, and has added to the community to bring people together.

Hoosac Valley Sports Teams

Member Nowak congratulated the Hoosac Valley Girls for winning and wished them luck against Granby for WMASS championship at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. He wished the Hoosac Valley Boys luck against Drury for the chance to go to the finals for Western Mass against Hampshire on Saturday.

Budget Presentation

Member Nowak said he has received favorable comments about how the budget is being presented and encouraged attendance at the budget review meetings.

Social Media Negativity

Member Duval advised there have been many negative comments made on Facebook regarding the Select Board. He said Adams is a great community and people need to talk in a positive manner and discontinue the negative comments. He encouraged those who had issues to come to budget sessions and discuss these issues as discussions and questions are good. Citizens can also make an appointment to see the Town Administrator.



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Member Snoonian agreed and said one of biggest hurdles is passing misinformation. He recommends if there is a question about information to ask the Select Board or Town Administrator to get the facts.

Chairman Harrington asked citizens to clean off sidewalks as the days get warmer to widen them out because too many people are walking in the roads. Absentee owners are not there with their houses and commercial properties so those who are able are asked to please take care of the sidewalk in front of their properties. The Fire Department removed snow from hydrants and a special thanks to all who continue to keep them cleared because the Fire Department shouldn't have to do during an emergency.

Member Duval thanked the Hoosac Valley Teams who helped shovel out fire hydrants.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Vice Chairman Blanchard

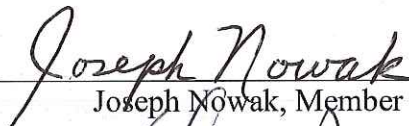
Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

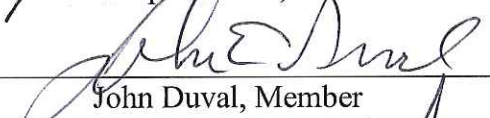
Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

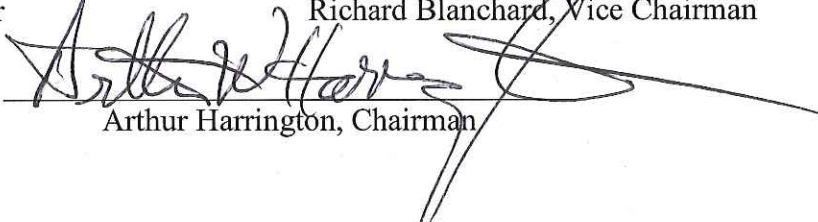
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary.


Joseph Nowak, Member


Jeffrey Snoonian, Member


John Duval, Member


Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman


Arthur Harrington, Chairman