



# TOWN OF ADAMS SELECT BOARD AND FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, March 11, 2015 – 6:00 PM

VISITORS CENTER, MEETING ROOM, 1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

On the above date the **Board of Selectmen** and the **Finance Committee** held a joint meeting at the **Visitor's Center** at 6:00 p.m.

**Chairman Arthur Harrington** presided the Select Board Meeting. 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.

**Chairman Tim Burdick** presided the Finance Committee Meeting. Present were members **Craig Corrigan, Brian Johnson, Paul Demastrie, Charlie Foster, Amy Giroux, Sandy Kleiner, David Allen, Leon Parrott,** and **Fred Hobart.** Absent were Rachel Tomkowicz, Matt Pitoniak, John Lawson, Joan Smigel and Greg Tremblay.

The Select Board Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Finance Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

*The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** gave an overview of the agenda for the evening and how the meeting would work to be most efficient.

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BUDGET

**DPW Director Joe Bettis** gave a budget presentation to both boards.

### **What the DPW Does**

The Department of Public Works is responsible for 19 separate budgets. The DPW Crews maintain 59 miles of town roads, sidewalks, parks, cemeteries, and town trees, but does not maintain state roads. There are a chief mechanic and another mechanic to repair all town-owned vehicles including all DPW, Police, Forest Warden vehicles and Wastewater Trucks. The Wastewater Division treats approximately 2 Million Gallons of wastewater, maintains pressure on sewer pumps, and maintains the Wastewater facilities and town-owned buildings.

### **Miscellaneous Budgets under DPW**

**Wastewater Collection** - The Wastewater Collection budget is piping, gravel, stone, manholes and similar items. This is kept separate from the main budget to show the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that a certain amount of these items have been appropriated for a specific project.

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**Public Buildings and Property Maintenance** – includes maintenance personnel, electricity, other miscellaneous items to support the public buildings and their upkeep. This budget is done by the Town Accountant

**Wastewater Treatment Plant** – Manages the processing of wastewater, and the budget is done by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent.

**Cemeteries, Parks, and Grounds** – Budget managed by the Deputy Director of the DPW

**Celebrations/Seasonal** – Budget managed by the Deputy Director of the DPW and covers the holiday decorations for the Town.

### **DPW Labor Costs**

**DPW Administration** - labor costs increased by \$89,403, or 65%. \$81,000 of this is a cost shift of the Deputy Director's labor costs from the Cemeteries, Parks and Grounds budget, where it was in the past, into the DPW Administration budget.

**Highways** – total labor costs decreased by \$119,448 as a result of reducing 1 position in Highways and 1 position in the Wastewater Division, as well as shifting the Deputy Director position to the DPW Administration budget line.

The service impact of reducing staff is of concern. The Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent, Joe Fijal, is retiring and Bob Rumbolt is moving up into that position. Bob's position will not be filled, by attrition. The other reduction is a DPW position, which Director Bettis does not recommend, but would give a savings of \$51,000 between benefits and payroll. Having enough staffing is important, and this past winter with injuries and other factors there was not enough staffing to do the work that needed to be done. Staff was borrowed from the Wastewater Treatment Plant to help out for most of the winter, and reducing a position will be more challenging. Going into the next winter season a plan will need to be formulated to determine what manpower is available in case short staffing occurs again. The DPW is becoming steadily more integrated and less segmented due to cross-training and staffing reduction over the years.

### **Other DPW Budgets**

**Registry of Deeds** – No increase is projected for FY2016.

**Quaker Meeting House/Community Center** – There is no budget on this building, and no projects planned for the Quaker Meeting House. The Community Center is planned to be sold.





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**Adams Memorial School** – An increase is projected in the amount of \$26,400 in FY2016.

- Building Maintenance and Repairs will incur costs
- Electrical and Natural Gas expenses will still be needed, and Natural Gas is expected to increase by 13%.
- Elevator Inspections are required

**Tree Warden** – The budget is level funded at \$19,500 for FY2016.

- Tree Warden takes care of tree removal and planting, and mosquito control.

**DPW Administration Operating Expenses** – An increase of \$300 is projected for FY2016.

- Increase in costs of advertising, office supplies, conferences and postage.

**Highway Department Operating Expenses** – A decrease of \$6,000 is expected for FY2016.

- This budget covers lumber, tools, signs, engineering, concrete, blacktop, and gravel.

**Snow and Ice** – An increase of \$15,000 is projected for FY2016.

- Cost of salt increased 37% this year
- Decrease in sand and rental budgets by \$10,000

The reason for the increase in salt cost this year was due to Morton Salt buying out American Salt and increasing the price by 37%. American Salt had the contract for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A budget increase of \$80,000 would cover the 37% rate hike for the same amount of material, but less is being requested to keep the budget lower. Treated salt and sand to handle lower temperatures comes out of the salt budget and this year salt was cut significantly with sand to get through.

Discussion took place regarding whether the DPW is over budget for salt every year and whether this is because it has been consistently under-budgeted. A suggestion was made to raise the budget instead of asking for more after the budget is depleted.

**Flood Control** – The budget is level funded at \$600 for FY2016.

The Army Corps of Engineers does an inspection every year of flood controls. Last year's report has not been received yet. \$600 covers incidentals regarding this report.

**DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Operating Expenses** – Total budget decrease of 5.55% for FY2016.

- A natural gas increase was offset by diesel and gasoline decreases in costs and an expected decrease in vehicle parts.



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***DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Capital Expenses*** – Increase of \$13,500 expected for FY2016.

- Part of the cost is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 5 payments for the lease of the street sweeper
- \$50,000 is for replacement of a one-ton dump truck, to be funded in full by capital outlay from free cash.

Dump trucks are “rolling stock”, needing to be replaced and kept working and the truck being replaced is 15 years old. \$20,000 from the parking fund was suggested to help fund this. The number of one-ton trucks and pickups was questioned compared with the number of reduced staff to determine if there are more trucks than the staff needs. There are 13 DPW workers, and with fewer people it is important that the equipment is reliable.

Cemetery and Parks staff help plow when needed. Maintenance of the Greylock Glen is added to the workload, and someone will need to mow around the pond and take care of the property and trails once a year.

***Recycling Center*** – Budget increase of 17.41% is projected for FY2016.

- There are increased costs for refuse hauling
- Increased costs are associated for Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management Division
- Additional costs are expected for engineering and the bi-annual monitoring and report

The Town Administrator has recommended a viability evaluation be done for the recycling center for next year. It would take a couple years to get out of the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District, and the Town has more buying power by being in it. Being out of the district would increase charges. There is a Massachusetts state by-law that says there must be a recycling option. The Town does not currently take solid waste, and it is removed for a per-ton cost. The Town currently pays to have recycling hauled away, but if the Town took solid waste again at a per-bag charge, there would be enough money to cover some of the cost for recycling removal charges. Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management costs are expected to increase.

***Wastewater Treatment Plant*** – a total budget decrease of 2.96% is projected for FY2016.

- Natural gas increase is expected.
- Decreases are expected in refuse, sludge, chemicals, and small incidentals and toiletries.

***Wastewater Collection*** – this budget is level funded for FY2016.

***Cemeteries, Parks, Grounds Operating Expenses*** – an increase of 6.49% is projected for FY2016.

- An increase of \$800 is expected for playground woodchips.
- \$5,250 is proposed for grounds and maintenance at the Greylock Glen.





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Playgrounds are required to have 12 to 15 inches of woodchips and currently Adams has 4 inches. If not met, insurance company requirements may cause the Town to close playgrounds.

Greylock Glen funds would cover maintenance of composting toilets and batteries for the solar panels, plus repairs of the gazebo.

With a reduction of staff, seasonal help will still be able to be hired this year. There was a proposal to hire summer help to maintain the Greylock Glen but the Town will have to utilize what it currently has. The Sheriff's Department has been asked to support the Town with help.

***Cemeteries, Parks, Grounds Capital Expenses*** – an increase of 11% is requested for FY2016.

- \$4,000 is requested for continued replacement of mowers, trimmers, and other mobile equipment.
- \$15,000 is requested for the Parks Master Plan, to be funded in full by capital outlay free cash, which will put the Town in a position to receive grant funding from the state.

***Recreation*** – This budget is level funded for FY2016.

- \$14,000 in this budget goes to the Youth Center Summer Recreation Program.

### **Capital Outlay:**

- The Parks Department request \$15,000 for the Parks Master Plan
- The Wastewater Treatment Plant request for \$50,000 for one truck (not recommended)
- The Highway Department proposed \$50,000 for one plow truck.

### ***Department Head Request vs. Town Administrator Recommendations***

#### **DPW Director Bettis requests the following:**

1. The Town deduct no more than one DPW position
2. \$80,000 for salt costs to manage the cost increase
3. No reduction in DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Funds

#### **The Town Administrator recommends**

1. Reducing 2 DPW positions
2. \$25,000 for salt
3. Reduction of \$5,000 in DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Funds

### ***General Discussion***

#### **Vehicle Maintenance**

New vehicle repairs are covered by warranty. Regular oil changes, tires management and other items are on a long term plan for maintenance of vehicles. The Street Sweeper is under warranty and there have been some problems with it.



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If snow was expected within 3 or 4 days the plows were left on the trucks, but were not left on for prolonged amounts of good weather time.

### **Staffing Reduction**

Reduction of two DPW workers is only because the Town doesn't have the resources to fund them.

### **Financial Disclosure**

In the past the Town Administrator reportedly said that the Town in great shape financially. Questions were fielded about how it could have been drastically represented differently between two Town Administrators.

The Town doesn't want to cut positions, but the community is shrinking and tax base is not growing. The current fiscal situation is structural, and the numbers are certified by the state every year so the numbers are and have been correct.

### **Wastewater Treatment Plant Staffing**

An audience member stated the Town has to have to have a certain number of people at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and got fined for not having enough. There was no staff recollection of a fine for understaffing the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

### **Suggestions for Efficiency**

It was suggested the Director Bettis look into the cost of getting a vacuum and shredding leaves to compact them to be more efficient. Additionally it was proposed that if the Town used a boom truck it would be better for working on trees and putting up banners.

Boom trucks are dangerous so work on large trees get subbed out and catch basins are cleaned on a regular basis.

### **Chapter 90 Funds**

The Chapter 90 balance is \$200,000, but most was for Park Street, and additional funds came from a grant. The Town spent \$30,000 for drainage on Park Street. Chapter 90 Funds will be utilized for:

- Engineering for Senecal Terrace behind the Library to repair a retaining wall
- The Rail Trail Extension
- Route 8 to address where sidewalks must be ADA compliant
- The Roundabout Project

All are on the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).





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The sidewalk requirements have changed in last few years by becoming wider and needing wheel chair ramps. The Town is getting into compliance as much as possible, but the southern side of town is in rough shape. ADA compliance requires sidewalks on both sides of the road, and the Town may have to apply for a waiver.

### **Memorial School**

Memorial School received a grant for the roof and the Town won't hear until August whether a grant will be awarded for the HVAC system. Insurance costs are less now than the costs to "mothball" it unused. Last year \$15,000 was budgeted for natural gas for the building, but it would cost \$30,000 to \$40,000 to insure it as an abandoned building. Community Development is working on getting tenants there to make it useful. It would cost \$1 Million to \$2 Million to tear it down. Once a permanent HVAC system is there the Town hopes to start renting it out. Potential tenants are the Youth center, COA, senior housing, and a private vendor to renovate the kitchen.

### **Visitor's Center**

The Visitor's Center building has heating and cooling issues. The Town has been able to put in a filtration system due to a recent allocation approved by the Select Board which gave the opportunity to replace three of the failing units. To completely overhaul the system would be a \$100,000 project. \$20,000 has been spent so far, and there is \$80,000 left needed to complete the project. Currently the units are overworking and stressed. Money able to be carried over will be requested to be put into the Visitor's Center to repair the heating system.

### **COUNCIL ON AGING BUDGET**

**Council on Aging Director, Erica Girgenti** gave a budget presentation for the Boards. She gave an overview of what the Council on Aging does and the services provided.

### ***Grant Funds***

**Director Girgenti** gave an overview of the savings, grant opportunities, and revenue sources the Council on Aging has received. \$17,440 in grant funds were received from EOEA to support with postage, transportation, materials, dues, printing, education, wellness programs and summer help. \$35,572 in additional funds came to the Council on Aging from WB Plunkett Memorial Hospital Trust, Mass in Motion/Mass Council on Aging, Adams Community Bank, Community Health Partners, and the Mass Council on Aging AMP Program.

### ***In Kind Donations***

\$12,160 in In Kind Donations were received to fund dinners, linens, an AED Machine, printing, cable and internet, a flat screen monitor and stand, tents, and the Berkshire Bike Path Council.



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### **Revenue Sources**

Revenue sources include transportation donations and fees, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA), and Neighbor to Neighbor Funds. All revenue sources that the Town does not have to provide amount to \$108,755.

### **Outreach Coordinator**

The allocation for the Outreach Coordinator is \$25,000, but is not met by revenue coming in. Donations came in at \$8,000 from Brien Center, and BRTA gives a stipend, and the Neighbor to Neighbor administrative fee helps fund this position as well. In FY15 so far donations have added to \$14,179 but the Town is not meeting the \$25,000 allocation each year. The Town may need to look at how to meet the \$25,000, and as the department has been restructured it may be necessary to bring the allocation down to \$20,000 and build it back up again. The Outreach Coordinator position has been very successful in reaching those in need.

### **Council on Aging Operations**

Operations costs for FY2016 are decreased by \$2,455 in the Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance and Fuel (Gas) budget lines. Decreases are recommended by the Town Administrator, and Director Girgenti requests the budget be level funded. A new van is in operation from BRTA, which should reflect lower maintenance costs. More mailing is going out to family members, requiring more postage and paper.

### **Council on Aging Personnel**

Personnel costs are expected to increase by approximately \$31,034

- The increase is for step and COLA increases. Two employees are at the top of their pay scale. There are 3 union employees and the Director.
- Long term medical costs went up due to a person utilizing it. Workman's Compensation, insurance and Medicare Match reflect increased costs to the Town.

### **Transportation Services**

Transportation service needs have increased and handle approximately 10 people every day.

### **Services Provided**

The Council on Aging has partnered with Hot Spot Fitness on Summer Street to provide spinning, boxing, and chair yoga. The congregate meals program provides the same meals as meals on wheels for those able to get out of the house, for the 60 to 98 age group.

### **Visitor's Center Operations**

There isn't a receptionist or program manager, and without it 25% of people fall through the cracks. The center averages 55 phone calls a day, and the Outreach Coordinator and a part time aide help answer the phones. The Town receives a grant to help with tourism during seasonal months. Repairs and building maintenance are expected to increase. The Education and Travel Costs were taken out of the budget because there is no longer a Tourism Director.





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### **Visitor's Center Personnel**

The most significant savings is due to the loss of the Tourism Director. A small increase in the Temporary budget is because the Council on Aging staff fills in when there are not enough seasonal workers in the Visitor's Center for coverage.

### **Donations for Council on Aging**

Class donations go toward providing events and programs. They go into caregiver resources, books and guides, and are not reflected in the budget because they do not belong to the Town. A yoga instructor receives donations and they go to fund the Youth Center "growing green" garden program that the youth maintain and provide vegetables to the seniors at the center.

### **Volunteer Program**

Volunteers save money, but it is a hard program to manage. Opportunities have increased and there are 30 volunteers, all CORI checked and certified. Volunteers save the Council on Aging over \$40,000 in services. There are 2 to 3 volunteers to help serve meals each day.

Special thanks were given to the Adams Heating and Plumbing for assistance over the winter.

### **General Discussion**

#### **Use of the Visitor's Center Space**

The elderly are well served, and the Town is showing demographic trends. The Visitor's Center is a central location which is more advantageous to getting people involved, including people who walk in from Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. The space can be rented under certain circumstances with the approval from Town hall.

#### **Town-Owned Vehicles**

There was a Select Board request to see a list of all town-owned vehicles, including the year they were bought and the plan for how to replace them. This list will be provided.

### **Budget Deficit**

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** explained he started with \$400,000 deficit, and next year will be starting with a \$200,000 deficit. The Department Heads did not request anything outrageous.

### **Community Center**

The Community Center does not have funding this year or next year.

### **Paper Mill Delinquent Taxes**

A question was fielded about whether the Paper Mill is making payments on their delinquent taxes. The Town is in discussions with them and while they have been delinquent rental income could be coming in for other businesses. The Treasurer/Tax Collector is being very aggressive about going after tax payments. Permits can be refused until taxes are up to date.



# TOWN OF ADAMS

## SELECT BOARD AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

### JOINT MEETING MINUTES

#### ADJOURNMENTS

*Motion made to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting by Member Allen*  
*Second by Member Hobart*  
*Unanimous vote*  
*Motion passed*

*The Finance Committee Adjourned at 7:53 p.m.*

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Leon Parrott, Member

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Craig Corrigan, Member

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Paul Demastrie, Member

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Fred Hobart, Member

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David Allen, Member

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Charles Foster, Member

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Amy Giroux, Member

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Sandra Kleiner, Member

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Joan Smigel, Member

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Brian Johnson, Member

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Greg Tremblay, Member

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Matthew Pitoniak, Member

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Rachel Tomkowicz, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Lawson, Member

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Timothy Burdick, Chairman





# **TOWN OF ADAMS**

## **SELECT BOARD AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **JOINT MEETING MINUTES**

*Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to adjourn the Select Board Meeting*

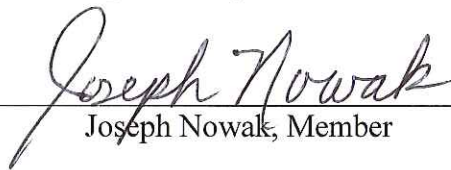
*Second by Member Snoonian*

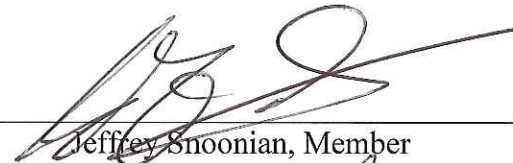
*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*


*Select Board Meeting Adjourned at 7:53 p.m.*

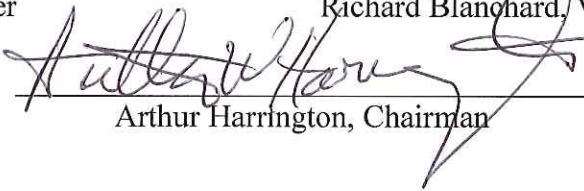
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary.

  
Joseph Nowak, Member

  
Jeffrey Snoonian, Member

  
John Duval, Member

  
Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman

  
Arthur Harrington, Chairman