



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

**THURSDAY, March 12, 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, Fred Hobart, Joan Smigel** and **Greg Tremblay**. Absent were **Rachel Tomkowicz, Matt Pitoniak**, and **John Lawson**.

**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.***

## ***Department of Public Works***

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** gave an overview of the agenda for the evening and opened the floor up with follow up from the previous night's questions regarding the **Public Works Fleet Schedule**. The equipment and maintenance schedule was given to both Boards.

## **DPW Fleet Vehicles**

The fleet vehicles are categorized as excellent, very good, good, or poor as assessed by the **Head Mechanic** of the **DPW** who works on the fleet and determines their approximate life expectancy. The 1999 dump truck #28 is the one up for replacement, with a plow.

To be categorized in poor condition, the vehicle frame or body is rotted. Frames rot away significantly with the salt and plowing despite being washed and cleaned in the winter months. The Town vehicles must meet MA State regulations for safety inspections. When the vehicles are 15 to 20 years old they have significant enough issues to need to be replaced. The trucks that still have some life are used by the **Wastewater Treatment Plant**. Leasing a large truck may not be beneficial. The Town would incur a lease payment of \$50,000 for 4 years, but leasing creates a snowball effect and the Town will spend about \$150,000 every year. To get a decent used vehicle the Town would need to write up specifications and go out to bid, but wouldn't really know the quality of the vehicle. Going out to bid requires following the state procurement laws, and the money would need to be appropriated first.

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# **TOWN OF ADAMS**

## **SELECT BOARD AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **JOINT MEETING MINUTES**

#### **DPW Staffing**

There are 13 DPW workers currently, and will be 12 next year. There are a minimum of 3 workers or more operating the big trucks and there are 6 trucks in very good condition.

It was suggested that with reduced manpower it would be better to have the manpower than the truck. The line item will hopefully be level funded to repair current vehicles. There are several vehicles in poor and very poor condition, and another winter like this would be challenging with a cut of another truck and personnel. Without personnel or the truck, it is important to keep the funding for repairs and maintenance. A big truck may be acquired through Chapter 90 funds, but no sanders or plows can be funded this way. The Town uses the one-ton vehicles more, and they cost less.

#### **Chapter 90 Funds**

A citizen expressed concern about Chapter 90 funds being used for equipment instead of just for streets, and said this indicates many streets are not getting appropriate work done. He felt the Town would have a significant number of streets needing work and no Chapter 90 funds to work with.

\$150K to \$160K for an International 4wd Truck is not easily absorbed in the budget, but the Town must make the best choices and tough decisions.

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET OVERVIEW**

**Chief Tarsa** gave a presentation for the Police Department Budget for FY2016.

Overall daily operations were reviewed. Chief Tarsa submitted a FY2016 request to level fund the budget from the previous year and increases and decreases reflected are the recommendation of the Town Administrator.

**Natural Gas** – a Decrease of \$1,000 in FY2016 reflects a fluctuation expected in market costs.

**Custodial Services** – A decrease of \$500 for FY2016 reduction should sustain the department.

- This amount was not less due to contractual obligations and the company must meet specific requirements because of the Police Department having the cell block.

**Police Station** – A decrease by \$1,500 for FY2016 is expected.

**Public Safety** – A decrease of \$1,120.75 is requested for FY2016.

- **Telephone Budget** - covers alarms that come in by phone line that cannot be reduced. This line was reduced by \$2,000 and cannot be reduced any further.





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- **Vehicles (repairs/parts/maintenance)** – reduced by \$1,100.
- **Copier/Scanner/Fax/Printer** – the Police Department will save several hundreds of dollars over the duration of the 3 year lease. There is a slight increase in budget but will show a savings over time.
- **Fuel Budget** – Unleaded fuel costs were decreased by \$2,000 due to market projections.

There isn't a record of how much gas was used by the Police Department for the last fiscal year, or how much was paid. The Town owned its own pump at one time, then joined with the Fire District to reduce the price. Now, the Police Department saves \$.03 per gallon for the fleet price using Gulf fuels. Last year the approximate price of gasoline was \$2,200 per month consumption, which has gone down to about \$1900 per month.

Officers average between 30 and 40 miles per night, and don't only sit at the Police Station because the Town needs a police presence. The amount of time in the station and on the road varies depending on the number of calls received. Roughly 5.5 gallons of gasoline are used per night. There is a contractual obligation to have 2 officers on per night.

### **Personnel Costs**

Personnel costs are calculated by the Town Accountant due to step increases, shift differentials, and the cost of living. The Police Department is fully staffed for the first time in many years.

**Overtime Budget** – decreased by \$15,000 for FY2016.

- Last year there were 5 officers down for various reasons, and in 2014 there were 3 officers down, and 2 out with injuries, causing an increase in the overtime budget needs. Due to contractual minimal staffing requirements, the overtime budget was high.
- There is no true gauge for what the overtime budget is with full staffing.
- Budget needs could be determined by how busy the department is, court costs, and training. The State mandates training sometimes after the budget has been established. By contract, there is a mandatory 3 hours minimum for things like court.

**Reserve Salaries Budget** – decreased by \$5,000 for FY2016.

**Clothing Allowances** – increased by \$2,000 for FY2016.

- Increase due to new officers bringing the force up to full staffing.

**Insurance increases** – due to contractual obligations of the provider and are not under the control of the Town. The Town Accountant works hard to keep costs low.



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

***Animal Control Budget*** – this budget is split between two part time positions.

- A slight increase is expected due to contractual obligations.  
The budget is level funded but a special request is for a \$200 increase for paint and general maintenance. The Dog Pound needs to be painted and weatherized, and needs materials. Within a couple years it will need thousands of dollars of work, and DPW Director Bettis is looking into getting community service workers from the house of correction to do the work.
- The furnace needed to be rebuilt and cleaned out. It is not efficient and needs to be replaced. The season is almost over and the heat is only turned up when animals in there. It is otherwise kept at a level to prevent freezing. There is a hole in the cinderblock wall where the propane line comes in, causing the water meter to freeze and split. The door also needs to be reinforced or replaced.

MASS Save may be able to help get a thermostat for \$30. It may be possible to get a few people together to see what can be done. Local businesses may be willing to donate paint.

Tenancy fluctuates at the Pound. North Adams has a dog pound that is in terrible shape and needs to be replaced. There is a pound fee charged daily, and a fee for the dog having been picked up, plus license fees. Once vaccinated and licensed the dog can be released. Pound fees go to Town Clerk's office, and put into the general fund by law, so the department cannot retain the money. The Pound doesn't cost that much but the cost of the Animal Control Officers is a larger cost.

***Hazardous Waste Budget*** – This budget may transfer to the DPW budget for FY2017.

***Cruiser/Vehicle Maintenance*** – The Cruiser Replacement Plan was explained by Chief Tarsa. The plan implemented by former Chief Poirot, that was set up showed in a 6 year period one vehicle would be replaced each year in order to keep rolling stock maintained and to save the Town money. The plan has not been adhered to, and 4 less cruisers have been purchased in a 6 year period of time.

Advantages of utilizing the plan would be to reduce overall mileage, accountability, reduce fuel costs, and vehicles would be scheduled to rotate out of service every 5 to 6 years, lowering maintenance costs and saving the Town approximately \$140,000 to \$160,000. The other advantage is the Town would not have to replace two cruisers at once.

The cruisers do not have bullet proof glass due to the cost of \$20,000 to \$40,000 per vehicle, plus the weight of the glass would create lower mileage and incur higher maintenance costs. Adams cannot afford it, and for this community it is not cost effective.





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

### **Grants**

There are currently no grants that cover bullet proof glass, as many of the Police grants are gone. Many grants are now available for Fire Departments and EMS. The Automated External Defibrillator Grant doesn't replace the old ones the Police Department has. The only grant available is for Narcan, an opioid antagonist drug. It is not realistic for the Police Department, because of expiration and temperature regulation requirements. EMS services carry it, and are usually at a medical call when the Police need it.

The Army used to have a vehicle surplus program for armor plated HMMWVs (Humvees) but these vehicles are not realistic for the Police Department due to high repair costs and their weight and low miles per gallon.

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** recommends the fleet be downsized by one cruiser.

DPW Mechanics replace transmissions, air conditioner systems, wheels pads brakes, and do general repairs when possible to save the Town dealership costs. The current cars have gone beyond their shelf life to save the Town money. Transmissions are not all that are failing, but also the bodies are rotting away because they are 2005 or 2008 cars. When floors and frames are rotting away it becomes a safety hazard and lowers their score on the assessment.

Reducing the number of frontline vehicles will increase overall costs of maintenance and increase number of cars being bought over a 10 year period. The program has not been followed and for several years no purchases were made due to budget cuts. The Town needs to get back on the program for it to work.

Suggestions were made to auction off used Police Cars to taxi services, and to look into better undercoating for the vehicles to prolong the life from rust. The cruisers are used so much they are not valuable enough to auction off. Most vehicles come with 10 year and 100,000 rust prevention warranty but cruisers are not covered.

Ford explorer interceptor package are now the cars being used because Crown Victoria went out of business in 2013. The Sport Utility Vehicle is bigger and holds more equipment in the back.

### ***FY201616 Capital Outlay Request***

#### **Two Ford Interceptor Utility Vehicles**

The original request was for two 2015 Ford Interceptor Utility Vehicles, including equipment and required equipment transfers. If not used, the money goes back to the general fund. The vehicles to be replaced are a 2005 Crown Victoria and 2008 Crown Victoria.

Regional purchasing by Police Departments would not be ideal because each department has specifications customized for their own departments. The Massachusetts State Police does a



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pricing bid but different setups change the costs. Cages, consoles and other equipment don't transfer in size from the Crown Victoria to the Ford Explorer, but as much equipment as possible is saved and reused from older vehicles to the newer ones to save money.

- Not replacing the cruisers will add a minimum of 20,000 additional miles to each vehicle. Older vehicle requires additional costs to maintain it. Each year adds an additional increase in price for newer vehicles, which is projected to be a 5% increase for 2015.

### **Alternate Solution**

**Chief Tarsa** requests if one cruiser is not a practical purchase for FY16, this request be pursued for FY2017 and FY2018 and an increase of 10% to 15% be added to the line item for tires.

The Town got off of the plan due to budget cuts, and though the Town cut short term budget money by straying from the program, being on the program saved the Town more money overall. Having adequate emergency service vehicles in proper condition is vital to getting to the call. Without replacing cruisers they become a safety hazard, and the mechanics will not be able to fix them.

Staying on the plan is more difficult because boards change every year, and what is agreed upon this year may be different next year.

### **Grants received:**

- **Stanton Foundation** for K-9 Program Implementation in the amount of \$25,000. K-9 Kumar has been called out to local towns and has been a great asset and public relations success. The K-9 program has a mutual aid agreement with almost every town in Berkshire County. Kumar is a great public relations tool and a multi-use dog to track people, objects, and drugs, but not bombs. He is a 2 year old German Shepherd from the Netherlands and many of his commands are in Dutch. This grant amount should sustain the program for 3 years. The cost of dog was \$6,500, and he is kept in the officer's home.
- **Executive Office of Public Safety** gave the Police Department \$4,642.90 for Bullet Resistant Vests. Officers wear vests while on duty.
- **Taconic Foundation** gave 2 grants for DARE, the Bike Patrol and Community Policing in the amount of \$20,000.
- **National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI)** gave a grant of \$4,220.00.
- **VAWA** Grant for domestic violence with Elizabeth Freeman Center for \$18,417.79.
- **E-911** for Dispatching and EMD in the amount of \$22,000.
- **Health New England** gave the department bicycle helmets.

**Total Grants received by the Police Department amount to \$94,280.69**

When Adams had 13,000 residents there were approximately 24 full-time officers. Now there are 15 full-time officers, due to population decrease and the Town is low for staffing averages. Civil Service limits who can be hired as an officer.





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

## **ADAMS FREE LIBRARY BUDGET OVERVIEW FY2016**

**Director of the Adams Free Library, Debbie Bruneau** gave a budget overview for FY2016 for the library.

An overview of library services provided was given. The library provides materials in hard cover and soft cover, music, audio books and mp3s, DVDs and instructional videos, newspapers and magazines, as well as offering free or discounted admission to cultural and recreational areas. There are over 30,000 items in the Adams Free Library collection. The library also offers high speed internet access.

As a member of the Central Western Massachusetts Automated Resource System (C/W MARS). There are an additional 9 million items available in the network. If an order is placed online the item can be delivered to the library and returned with no charge.

There are monthly book discussion groups run by Library staff, a monthly home-schooled research group, weekly preschool story times, annual children's summer reading incentive programs, as well as a delivery service to the homebound of Adams via the Council on Aging. There is also a meeting room for local civic and non-profit groups available in the Library building.

There is over 51 years of service with the current staff.

### **Revenue and Income:**

- **Fees and fines** of \$4,40560
- **Northern Berkshire Cultural Council Grant** \$1,265
- **State Aid to Public Libraries Award** \$10,114.64

**Total income receipts of \$15,785.24**

**Director Bruneau** hopes to tap into more grant opportunities, and the Town Administrator has suggested some.

### **Building Improvements**

Trustees seem pleased with improvements made to the building, as well as the equipment and services. The Adams Free Library opened in 1899, put on an addition in 1913, and is completing renovations this year to include a new roof, having masonry cleaned, repaired and repointed, and the front landings, walls and steps reconstructed. The main level has had a handicapped access restroom added. Auto door openers were installed, stairwell railings added and thresholds removed to comply with the ADA code. An emergency exit hallway was added from the basement meeting room and door closers and ADA compliant door handles installed.



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The last items are being finalized and the building is expected to be fully approved as ADA compliant shortly. Landscaping should be started next month.

**Total Labor Costs** - increase of 5.3% is expected for FY2016.

- Increase is due to contractual obligations of Step and COLA increases.

**Total Operating Budget Costs** – decrease by \$100 for FY2016.

- 19% of the budget is supposed to be spent on materials, and has been increased by \$3400 to get back up to minimum standards.
- Decrease recommended by Town Administrator

The majority of people utilizing the library have no computer at home. Collections have decreased, but the use of the facility and activity at the library remains constant. There is a need for a library in this community.

Microfilm budget went up 106% since the North Adams Transcript closed. Hopefully the Library will go digital in a few years but it will be very expensive. There are not as many open hours at the library so activity is concentrated and the open hours are very busy.

### ***Conclusion of Budget Review***

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** outlined what the budget challenges are for the Town. The Town is solvent, pays bills without a problem and services will still be here, but people and hours may change. There will be challenges for the next 5 years but the Town will still have core services. There is a pension fund, and a great board that manages that fund. The Town must continue to cut each year or the Town will continue to see a tax increase each year. The emphasis is the need to look at where the Town will be in 5 years. The way it has been going is not sustainable for the community. If the Town wishes to restore all of the cuts presented this year it would need an override. Economic development and tax base growth must be focused on. These are tough choices, but the Town can get there and balance this deficit.

Community members commented on the information and process, and suggested mothballing the Memorial School since there is talk about laying people off.

**Select Board Chairman Harrington** thanked Town Administrator Mazzucco for giving the Town a new way to look at the budget and recommended meeting as a group afterward to evaluate this process and see if good process and whether modifications are necessary. He commended the transparent process.

Consensus reached by both boards that this process has been helpful.





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

## ADJOURNMENTS

*Adjournment by Finance Committee*

*Motion made by Member Foster to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting*

*Second by Member Smigel*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

*Finance Committee meeting adjourned at 8:33 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

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John Lawson, Member

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Timothy Burdick, Chairman



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

## ***Adjournment by Select Board***

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

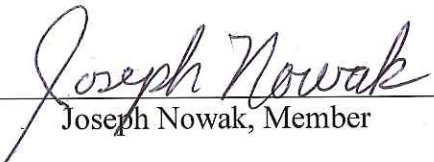
***Second by Member Nowak***

***Unanimous vote***

***Motion passed***

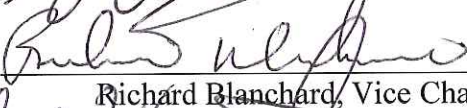
***Select Board Meeting Adjourned at 8:33 p.m.***

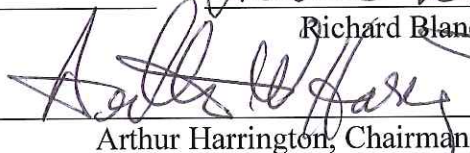
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary.

  
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Joseph Nowak, Member

  
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Jeffrey Shoonian, Member

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John Duval, Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Arthur Harrington, Chairman