



# TOWN OF ADAMS

## SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, May 6, 2015 – 7:00 PM  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM, 1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

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On the above date the **Board of Selectmen** and held a meeting at the **Adams Town Hall** at **7:00 p.m.**

**Chairman Harrington** presided the meeting. Present were **Members Joseph Nowak, Jeffrey Snoonian, John Duval, and Richard Blanchard**. Also in attendance were **Town Administrator Tony Mazzucco** and **Town Counsel, Ed St. John III**.

*The Select Board Meeting was called to order by Chairman Harrington at 7:00 p.m.*

*The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

### SELECT BOARD REORGANIZATION

**Chairman Harrington** opened the Board for nominations.

**Member Nowak** nominated **Richard Blanchard** for the position of **Select Board Chairman**.  
**Member Blanchard** accepted the nomination.

*Motion made by Member Snoonian to accept Richard Blanchard as the new Select Board Chairman*

*Second by Member Duval*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

**Member Nowak** nominated **Jeffrey Snoonian** to the position of **Select Board Vice Chairman**.  
**Member Snoonian** accepted the nomination

*Motion made by Member Nowak to accept Jeffrey Snoonian as the Select Board Vice Chairman*

*Second by Member Duval*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

The gavel was passed to **Chairman Blanchard**.

### READING OF MINUTES

- April 1, 2015
- April 8, 2015
- April 15, 2015
- April 22, 2015



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*Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to waive the reading and approve the minutes for April 1, 2015*

*Second by Member Nowak*

*Abstention by Member Duval*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

*Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to waive the reading and approve the minutes for April 8, 2015*

*Second by Member Duval*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

*Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to approve the regular meeting minutes and Executive Session minutes for April 15, 2015*

*Second by Member Harrington*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

*Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to approve the minutes for April 22, 2015*

*Second by Member Duval*

*Abstention by Member Harrington*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

### CITIZEN'S CONFERENCE

#### *Fire District Voting*

Jeff Lefebvre advised of voting for the *Fire District* to be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Station. The District will then count the vote and hold a meeting immediately thereafter. Only those within the *Fire District* may vote.

#### *Memorial School*

Jeff Lefebvre requested follow up regarding the Memorial School.

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** advised that there was a walk through, and he is showing the building again to another group expressing interest. He advised that there is a plan they are moving forward with, but if an opportunity presents itself for a different path or utilization of the building he is open to it.

#### *Maple Grove Civic Club*

Jeff Lefebvre announced that on May 17, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at the PNA the *Maple Grove Civic Club* will have *State Representative Gail Cariddi* as a speaker and hopes she can address funding for the Town and get a better pulse on the fiscal challenges citizens are facing.





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### ***Waste Dump***

**Sue Bates** of Columbia Street expressed concern to the Board about a growing waste dump behind *Specialty Minerals* behind her house and the scenic impact it has from Mount Greylock. She is hoping to have it addressed.

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** is trying to set up a meeting with the plant manager of *Specialty Minerals* to get more background and see what can be done. Perhaps they could make a public presentation to the community.

### ***Children's Mental Health Week***

**Corinne Case** of East Road announced that tomorrow there will be a rally for the *Children's Mental Health Week* from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on the lawn of North Adams City Hall.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***Conservation Commission Membership Discussion***

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** advised the *Conservation Commission* requested the Board consider a reduction on their commission from 7 to 5 positions as they are having trouble filling the positions. The reduction would come by way of attrition, and would help them to be able to have a quorum.

**Member Nowak** noted he served on the *Conservation Commission* from 1976 until he was elected to the Select Board and expressed disappointment that attempts to get new members on the commission have not succeeded. He pointed out that having 7 members offered more oversight but it is difficult for Commission Members to manage staying within the parameters of constantly changing laws.

Deciding the Conservation Commission size is at the discretion of the Select Board.

***Motion made by Member Harrington to reduce the Conservation Commission from a 7-Member Commission to a 5-Member Commission by attrition***

***Second by Vice Chairman Snoonian***

***Unanimous vote***

***Motion passed***

### ***Discussion of FY2016 Budget***

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** gave a brief overview of the fiscal challenges faced by the Town, and in adequately funding the school system. He and Superintendent Gordon reached a compromise that he believes would avoid an override and devastating cuts by either the Schools or the Town. There will still be cuts, but this would be the best path forward for the community. Currently the Budget is at a 4% increase over last year for the *Adams Cheshire Regional Schools*. He advised that the compromise would include additional municipal reductions of full time positions to part time, and the layoff of the fulltime *Health Inspector* position plus 2 others being vacated to meet a \$90,000 goal. The Town should be able to get through the next year and potentially have a shared Health Inspection service arrangement. Most communities don't have a full time *Health Inspector*. The current *Board of Health* is available more than they are





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currently being utilized and apartment rental inspections can be done by the *Building Inspector*. Developing a regional service to share costs is also being looked into. Additionally, the Administrative Assistant to the Town Assessor and the Council on Aging Outreach Coordinator position will each be reduced to coverage by part time positions to close the gap without a service impact. Town Administrator Mazzucco advised both the Assessor's Office and the Council on Aging Office are not happy with the reductions but they represented the smallest impact areas for service for the community, and will still be providing the same hours of coverage and salary to be able to recruit good part time people. Retirees may want to take part time positions. The changes wouldn't take place until after July 1, 2015, and moving to part time staff reduces costs and also staff numbers over time while managing services.

**Darlene Rodowicz**, *Chair of the School Committee* advised she can present this compromise to the School Committee as the Town Administrator showed good faith, and it will reduce the significance of the cuts they had anticipated. It will avoid a Proposition 2 ½ Override in Adams but Cheshire may not be in the same fiscal position. The Schools will do everything possible to avoid reducing a level. There are countywide meetings with Chairmen of other school districts to consider sharing the overhead costs and there will be a legislative forum meeting in June to put pressure on the legislative delegation. Every dollar will go back to teachers or aides for direct care of teachers or students. The amount the Town Administrator was able to help with restored some positions but there are still cuts, and that ultimately the schools want it all back. They would also like to see county-wide curriculum. Though they instituted a solid reading program which DESE approved of it will take a few years to know if the schools are on the right track. She said the C.T. Plunkett School has a slate roof in need of repair and the Town and the School Board need to do a complete review together and create a plan for maintenance of the building. The Town Administrator and DPW Director looked at some items already to see they can be done at minimal or no cost. The Town is getting more involved by meeting with Superintendent Gordon and School Business Manager Hinkell to save taxpayers money to reinvest that money somewhere else.

**Superintendent Gordon** reminded the Select Board and the Public that the schools are still not restoring positions they had this year though the Town Administrator has been working on it with them. The compromise would affect the Town of Cheshire because whatever Adams puts in the budget Cheshire has to match. The Town of Cheshire's budget is very lean and will still create a proposition 2½ situation. Superintendent Gordon said she talked with the Cheshire Town Administrator and their Select Board is moving forward with the budget number the School Committee gave them.

**Member Duval** noted that this new amount was increased to 6%, and the school district will need additional funding. He recommended the school show metrics of improvement to measure the progress that is being made to move toward a Level 2, and said communication is the key. He also suggested branding the school or district, for something such as engineering or another specific college preparatory field.

**Superintendent Gordon** advised she and *Town Administrator Mazzucco* discussed creating a certificate program track that would produce a certificate at the end of 4 years.





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**Member Nowak** made note of the transient population coming and going from Hoosac Valley High School and said it is not indicative of MCAS scores but more to do with family settings. He also suggested there be a technology person at the school because there were numerous technology issues unaddressed.

ACRSD brought in the Baystate Reading program and is seeing immediate progress with elementary scores. The school class structure is changing as 2 special subject teachers are being reduced. The schools will now have additional math and reading for students who score low on the MCAS, but the high school scores for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade are pretty comparable.

**Vice Chairman Snoonian** commended the School Committee and the Town and noted these reductions are no reflection of the people in the positions, but the positions are just being downsized. When downsizing, people fight for their positions and to keep their personnel, but the main point is to keep communication open. The Town is working hard to show that it is serious about the children in the community.

**Member Harrington** noted that the path the Town has been taking is setting up the community for reduction, which will be turned around if there is an increase in revenue in the community in the near future. The community is not making enough revenue to support the school and the current community services. Until growing revenues are in place, the Town must cut back on services. Getting kids into the School District will also help, and there needs to be a changed perception of the low student numbers, which is misunderstood in the community. This situation is happening all over the county and state, and he requested the community be patient while the Town is working hard to get to a better place.

**Chairman Blanchard** said this was an opportunity to reestablish the *Task Force* with the Select Boards of Adams, Cheshire, the Finance Committee and School Board of Adams and Cheshire to work together. It is not a fix-all, but will help everyone to move forward.

*Motion made by Member Harrington to amend the Budget by reducing line items 03241, Building Inspector by \$53,000, 02141 Assessor by \$23,000, 05541 Council on Aging by \$16,000, and increase 68701 Adams Cheshire Regional School District by \$92,000*

*Second by Member Duval*

*Abstention by Member Nowak*

*Roll Call Vote: Chairman Blanchard, Vice Chairman Snoonian, Members Duval and Harrington*

*Motion passed*

### SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

#### *School Committee*

**Member Nowak** went to the *School Committee* meeting, where they were still working on the budget. He noted they are a determined group and he is honored to have the people serving on that board.



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### *Parks Commission*

**Member Nowak** attended the *Parks Commission* meeting. New member Jason Sniezek was introduced, and he noted they are doing an excellent job.

### *BART School*

**Vice Chairman Snoonian** is one of the *BART School* liaisons and set up a meeting between himself, Julia Bowen of BART and Superintendent Kristen Gordon of ACRSD to talk about finances.

**Chairman Blanchard** advised at next week's workshop there will be a discussion on subcommittee liaisons, to go over them and reduce some if desired. He encouraged Board Members to review the assignments prior to then.

### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

**Town Administrator Mazzucco** advised he would recommend for next week's agenda to not only go over the subcommittee assignments but also the summer meeting schedule, and will provide more administrative items for the agenda. He would like to initiate a Board goal setting process similar to what he is doing with Department Heads at the start of the fiscal year.

### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

#### *Ratification of Assistant Mechanic for WWTP*

**Chairman Blanchard** read a letter submitted from *Town Administrator Mazzucco* regarding the appointment of **David Jardine** to move from the Highway Department to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The DPW is consolidating and now several divisions are under one head since there is little distinction between the Parks, Highway and DPW Departments. This allows them to work better with the current resources available. Mr. Jardine would transfer from the Highway Operator 1 position to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Assistant Mechanic position. He will begin on July 1, 2015 at Step 1, and a rate of \$16.26 per hour.

*Motion made by Member Harrington to ratify the appointment of David Jardine to the Assistant Mechanic position at the Wastewater Treatment Plant on July 1, 2015*

*Second by Vice Chairman Snoonian*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### *Prescription Medication Roundup*

**Chief Tarsa** advised the Board the Police Department had collected 33 pounds of prescription medications, 18 pounds of non-prescription and additional liquid medications. There were three large boxes of sharps collected as well, and he reminded the public that the Police Station has a kiosk set up where they collect sharps throughout the year. Citizens may turn in sharps in a sealed container such as a soda bottle, with the cap in place and duct taped if desired.





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ACRSD Superintendent Kristen Gordon commended Chief Tarsa and the Adams Police Department for their work with the School District.

### TOWN COUNSEL REPORT

Town Counsel St. John III advised he researched a zoning question and provided a response. He had meetings with Town staff concerning various matters. He prepared for and attended the Special Town Meeting, and reviewed language in the Town Meeting article.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### *Children's Mental Health Awareness Week Proclamation*

Corinne Case gave background information and statistics regarding mental health disorders suffered by adolescents. She noted that between substance abuse, high school dropout rates and suicide, families and individual lives are touched and it affects the entire community. Children's Mental Health Awareness Week is May 3-9, 2015. Those looking for more information can contact the NAMI Group (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) at (413) 443-1666 or [www.NAMIBC.org](http://www.NAMIBC.org)

Chairman Blanchard read a proclamation announcing May 3-9, 2015 as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

*Motion made by Member Duval to proclaim May 3 - 9, 2015 Children's Mental Health Awareness Week*

*Second by Member Harrington*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

#### *Article 97 Designation for the Greylock Glen*

Member Harrington explained that *Article 97 Senate Bill 1631* designates 1000 acres of the Greylock Glen as recreation area. A letter was sent to *Senate Chair Joan Lovely, House Chair Peter Kocut*, and the *Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight* asking to convey strong support for S1631 for Conservation and Public Recreation Services and to release the bill quickly with a favorable report. Copies of this letter were sent to *Senator Downing, State Representative Cariddi* and *Commissioner of the Department of Conservation & Recreation, Carol Sanchez*. This will be a key factor for the Town starting to grow. Fact sheets are available through *Community Development Director, Donna Cesan* and a copy of the letter will be in the Town Administrator office and made available to the public.

The Greylock Glen is focused on outdoor recreation and environmental education, and will be designed to be environmentally and economically sustainable. 94% of entire Greylock Glen site is permanently protected as conservation land, fulfilling the collective vision of the Town and Massachusetts Audubon, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), and MASS MoCA. The first phase of infrastructure improvements is now in place, and the project will benefit both local and regional residents.



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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### *Solid Hazardous Waste Collection*

The Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Hazardous Collection will be Saturday, May 30, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the DPW Garage. Select Board Members and football players from Hoosac Valley have attended in the past to help move the items.

### APPROVALS

#### *One Day Liquor License*

A One Day Liquor License application was submitted by *BART Charter School* for July 10, 2015

*Motion made by Member Harrington to approve the One Day Liquor License for BART Charter School on July 10, 2015 at One Commercial place*

*Second by Vice Chairman Snoonian*

*Unanimous vote*

*Motion passed*

### AGENDA ITEMS

**Vice Chairman Snoonian** advised there would be a Parks Committee Facility Use Request for the Baseball League needing approval at the next WS meeting for timing purposes.

**Member Nowak** said he believes all Select Board Members are duly elected by the citizens of Adams, and he felt there should be a rotating schedule for Select Board leadership.

### GOOD OF THE ORDER

#### *Select Board Reorganization*

**Members Harrington and Duval** were congratulated on their re-elections. **Chairman Blanchard** and **Vice Chairman Snoonian** were congratulated on their new positions. **Member Harrington** was thanked for his service as *Chairman* last year, and for doing a great job in the position.

#### *Time Warner Cable and Comcast Merger*

**Member Harrington** advised he received a letter indicating Time Warner Cable and Comcast were no longer merging.

#### *Thanks to DPW*

**Member Harrington** commended the DPW for the work being done to clean the streets.

#### *State Early Retirement*

**Member Duval** inquired about the early retirement program the Governor passed for state workers and what the financial impact would be for the Town.





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Town Administrator Mazzucco informed that the early retirement was just for certain state employees and not Town employees. He noted that early retirement can be helpful for layoffs but doesn't save the community as much.

### ***Buddy Poppy Veteran Campaign***

Chairman Blanchard read a letter from the *VFW Post* regarding the *Poppy Drive* beginning Wednesday, May 14 - 18, 2015 to support the *Buddy Poppy Veteran Campaign* to preserve the memories of those who served country to ensure the health and wellbeing of veterans.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

***Motion made by Member Nowak to adjourn the Select Board meeting***


***Second by Member Harrington***

***Unanimous vote***

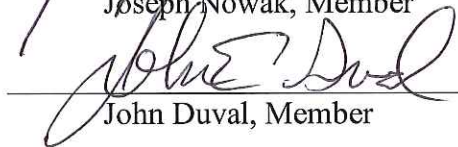
***Motion passed***

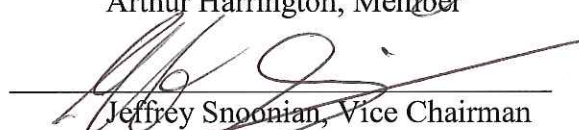
***Select Board Meeting Adjourned at 8:22 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary.

  
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Joseph Nowak, Member

  
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Arthur Harrington, Member

  
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John Duval, Member

  
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Jeffrey Snoonian, Vice Chairman

  
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Richard Blanchard, Chairman