



TOWN OF ADAMS

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

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WEDNESDAY, May 20, 2015 – 7:00 PM

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

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

Chairman Blanchard presided the meeting. Present were Vice Chairman Jeffrey Snoonian, Members Joseph Nowak, John Duval, and Arthur Harrington. 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 Blanchard at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion made by Member Harrington to move the Municipal Aggregation Item up in the agenda sequence due to scheduling issues

Second by Vice Chairman Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Community Choice Power Supply Program – Aggregation Plan

Lynette Bond, Community Development Grants Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the Community Choice Power Supply Aggregation Program plan prepared by Colonial Power and approved to begin the process at Special Town Meeting on April 30, 2015. The Aggregation Plan will be on the Town's website for a minimum of 2 weeks and a notice will be sent to consumers giving both information about the program and opt out procedures. This vote would not lock the Town into anything. The agreement wording states the beginning of the opt-out period is 30 days before it begins, but it does not end in 30 days and continues forever.

Motion made by Member Harrington to accept the Municipal Aggregation Plan for Town of Adams as presented and approved as Article 3 in the Special Town Meeting on April 30, 2015

Second by Vice Chairman Snoonian

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

READING OF MINUTES

- May 6, 2015
- May 13, 2015

Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to waive reading of the minutes and to approve them as written

Second by Member Harrington

Unanimous Vote

Motion passed



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PUBLIC COMMENT

Household Hazardous Waste Day and Bulky Waste Collection

Ed Driscoll of the *Solid Waste District* announced that on Saturday there will be a ***Household Hazardous Waste Day*** at the Adams Highway Garage. He asks residents to call ahead of arrival at 743-8208. Paint, pesticides, shellac and other items are accepted and chemists are able to dispose of these items in the proper manner. Regular paint collections will be on June 6th in Williamstown, June 13th in Hinsdale, and June 17th in Cheshire transfer station.

Bulky Waste Collection

Ed Driscoll announced that June 20th at the Adams Landfill at 8:00 a.m. is the ***Bulky Waste Collection***. Some items have a cost for disposal, and some are free.

Scholarship Fundraiser

Jeff Lefebvre of Precinct 2 announced the reschedule of the *Scholarship Fundraiser*. Originally it was scheduled for Saturday, May 23rd but due to the holiday it will be held on a different date.

20 East Street Property

Jeff Lefebvre inquired when there would be an RFP for 20 East Street.

The RFP is scheduled to be discussed in the next Select Board Workshop, and Community Development Director Donna Cesan finished up the draft today.

Maple Grove Civic Club

Jeff Lefebvre advised at the last *Maple Grove Civic Club* meeting *Representative Gail Cariddi* spoke and advised there is an outlook of a 20% decline in next 20 years for the Town of Adams. She took a census about having the Olympics in Massachusetts and it proved to be very costly.

Board of Health Concerns

Bruce Shepley, representing the *Board of Health*, read a statement regarding elimination of Health Inspector position effective June 30th. He stated the Board of Health met individually with the Town Administrator, and he outlined the plan to combine Board of Health services with the Building Commissioner and also regional shared services. Mr. Shepley noted the Health Inspector position is dependent on training, certification, licensing, and knowledge and that Scott Koczela has 10 years of experience, issues permits and handles complaints. Mr. Shepley asked what the regionalized services would cover, and whether the needs of the Town would be met. He advised that the Town's contact at the *Massachusetts Department of Public Health* will be retiring and his position will not be filled due to state cutbacks. Sue Foster will also be retiring after 13 years of service. He said he felt the retainer utilized for Town Counsel services is unlikely to fill the need that the Board of Health will have. Mr. Shepley stated the 3 elected officials of the Board of Health are performing limited services, not issuing licenses, and do not have adequate training to fulfil an expanding role needed by June 30th.



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George Haddad echoed Mr. Shepley's concern and suggested calling in State Representatives, the Senator, the Schools, and the Adams and Cheshire Boards of Selectmen to find a solution together and to start planning. He said the issue will not be resolved by making cuts, which is creating a larger problem. He acknowledged the Board of Selectmen is under intense pressure and shared his opinion that in the last 6 or 8 years the Town was going too fast and spending money the citizens were not aware it did not have. He noted the Code Enforcement position is extremely important and pointed out building construction violations reported several times have not been handled. He said he is skeptical they will be handled when the staff is cut back further. He said the Town is losing a lot of employees and supporting and having respect of the employees is important.

Erica Girgenti, *Director of the Council on Aging* said she works closely with the *Code Enforcement Officer* position and is nervous about the cutback. She pointed out that Sue Foster has been a huge asset to the Council on Aging.

Member Duval requested that Bruce Shepley submit a list of his concerns to the Town Administrator to be sure they are addressed.

NB21

Corinne Case and **Wendy Pena** of NB21 gave an overview of their program, and described the work NB21 does to reduce substance abuse and underage drinking. There will be a change on June 30th to the position. Wendy Pena is the current Director and applied for an underage drinking grant that is being received from the *Department of Public Health* with an expanded commitment to include opiates. June 8 – 11, 2015 the NB21 team is going to *Worcester State University* and has funds to send an additional person from the Town to go should there be someone interested. They requested a partner from the Select Board.

Budget Collaboration

Beth Worden, from Precinct 4 appreciated the schools and town working together to handle severe needs and she said she is seeing a working environment as both parties are making time and effort.

Berkshire Vision 20/20

Erica Girgenti, Council on Aging Director, announced the *Berkshire Vision 20/20* event on June 1, 2015 at the ITAM from 10:00 a.m. to Noon with lunch provided. She noted this is an opportunity for the county to be welcomed by the President of *AARP* and the *Tufts Foundation*. She hopes see the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen there and at the *Volunteer Appreciation Dinner*.

OLD BUSINESS

Review and Close Warrant

Town Administrator Mazzucco reviewed two changes that were made to the original warrant. A Citizen's Petition was added, and a reserve fund transfer to the Stabilization Fund change was made as the article had inadvertently been split it up into 2 articles. Regarding money transferred for Town Hall repairs, he noted the desire to keep half for continued repairs and to use the other half to transfer over to the Visitors Center to continue work in that building.



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Member Harrington expressed concern that *Articles 32 and 33* of the Citizen's Petitions dealing with green bylaws and eliminating single use plastic bags are regarding something that has had no discussion with the Town and have not been brought to the Board of Health. He said though he agrees with the intent to make the world cleaner and greener, in *Article 32* there are 23 references to the Board of Health. In *Article 33* pertaining to Styrofoam, there are 31 references to the Board of Health being responsible for identification and enforcement. He noted that reduced enforcement by a full time position and regionalizing someone from out of town being burdened by enforcement could have an extraordinary impact to the community if passed. He pointed out that this puts responsibility on the Board of Health, which will be overburdened and understaffed.

George Haddad suggested the meal tax to go into the Stabilization Fund and be used for the funding of the schools this fiscal year, with Select Board decision every year thereafter on what to do with funds. He encourages the people from the local community to go to local restaurants so the tax money will come back to community where the \$80,000 is needed. He suggested taking the \$14,000 funds for the summer youth program to give to the schools to make the \$94,000 instead of the current cuts.

Mr. Shepley advised he was speaking on behalf of the Board of Health and regarding *Articles 32 and 33* there is good communication between Board of Health Members and they knew nothing about these articles and they will be on their agenda for their June 10th meeting.

Chief Tarsa advised he just read *Article 32, Section 7* regarding enforcement, and on page 17 there is a section for Police Department enforcement. He pointed out that as the Chief of Police he has bigger things to do than enforce and waste resources on a bag bylaw. The article on the surface has a lot of questions that Town Counsel can answer.

Town Administrator Mazzucco informed that the Articles came about from attorney in Pittsfield and to his knowledge there has been no outreach to the business community and Boards or groundwork done in this community. If someone submitted something in a Citizen's Petition and got the proper signatures it has to appear on the warrant per State Law.

Member Duval noted this has not been vetted, and business owners have not been addressed or given a public hearing. Williamstown passed something similar at their Town Meeting. He recommended Town Meeting Members review it and ask questions.

Member Harrington advises he agrees with George Haddad on earmarking the money from the meals tax and advised everyone look at *Article 26*, which requests a vote to establish an *Economic Development Fund*, which is needed for *Article 27* to earmark that *Local Option Meals Tax*. He noted that there is a need to help promote downtown businesses in Adams, so this fund would be earmarked for them.

Roy Thompson advised the citizens don't hear about the Town pursuing businesses to come to Adams. He said the worst thing to do is cut, but the solution instead is to build growth. He met with Donna Cesan and looked at the plan for the Greylock Glen. He suggested the upper sites for snowmobile sleds going to Canadian Border and for motorcycles in the off season. He said he doesn't hear about the positive work being done, and that it is needed to support morale. He also suggested giving outside businesses a "deal" to bring them to Adams, and for the Board to form a committee to search businesses out.



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Member Duval explained the plan for the tourist train to bring people to the downtown area. He pointed out several people are working hard to bring people here and it will not happen overnight.

Warrant Article 26 shows that Community Development will make it their focus.

Sarah Lang, an Adams resident and teacher of C.T. Plunkett School complimented the Select Board for their work and said that the biggest draw of a community is the school system.

Member Nowak thanked those who spoke for coming forward and expressing their concerns about licensing and workload issues. The Town Administrator had spoken with members of the Board of Health and felt they were underutilized. He noted that Adams needs to change, and will have a higher elderly population and need more regionalization with the schools. He gave an overview of what a business would need to do to have longevity. He advised the Select Board is branding the Town with an Outdoor Recreation theme, and the Greylock Glen has good chance to make this community turn around with year-round cabins, and snow making for cross country skiing. He pointed out we all must work as a team in this community and recommended those that come forward give constructive criticism and suggestions. He expressed he was encourage that if the Topia Arts Center gets up and running it will be a center point for community.

Retirement Fund Reimbursement

Article 23 references a reimbursement to the Retirement Fund. In the last 7 to 10 years the former Town Treasurer made substantial mistakes with the IRS, which were close to \$100,000. The Retirement Board is a separate entity, and the Town has knocked down the amount owed to \$30,000 but the Town still owes this amount to the Retirement Board. The Town is trying to get this solution managed by the end of the year.

Elected Officials

Article 36 is a Citizen's Petition requesting to amend the Town Charter to appoint elected officials to make sure they are adequately screened, have the proper qualifications and have oversight.

Don Sommer advised the petition was submitted because all three elected official positions are very important. He noted the Town Auditor, the DPW and Police Chief jobs are also appointed. He said the time has come to set criteria for the elected positions, to make recommendations, have supervision for them, and appoint these positions. An elected position answers to people, not the Town and this article is not reflective of the people currently in the positions. He recommended when they retire or the term expires, to give the Town the authority to screen people and bring in appropriate talent.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to close the Warrant

Second by Member Duval

Unanimous vote

Motion passed



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NEW BUSINESS

Wastewater Treatment Plant Power Source

Town Administrator Mazzucco found a vendor recommended by the *MMA* to provide energy price stability and has one more item to research. He requests the Select Board authorize him to sign the contract to approve the rate if it is in the best interest of the Town because rates change on a daily basis. He is checking with Town Counsel on some items and is looking at a 36 month contract to reduce rate spikes in the winter. The Town averages 11 cents per kWh with spikes and currently the rates are coming in at about 9 cents. The request is for the Board to give this permission until the end of the Fiscal Year so if it is not utilized the Town Administrator must come back to the Board for permission again.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Snoonian to authorize Town Administrator Mazzucco until June 30, 2015 to sign a Power Purchase Agreement for the Wastewater Treatment Plant
Second by Member Harrington

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Club Alcohol License – Mt. Club

Mt. Club submitted required paperwork to update Officers and Directors per the *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*. The certificate from the Department of Revenue is pending receipt.

Member Duval noted that with recent violence at businesses with licenses the businesses must control those coming in with the entertainment. He advises businesses to police their own clubs to prevent problems and if anything happens to call the Police Department right away.

The *Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC)* is requiring this update only for Clubs that have elected officers that run the organization. All Clubs across the Commonwealth were out of compliance, and the ABCC has begun to indefinitely suspend clubs who are not in compliance. The clubs that have not submitted their paperwork are urged to get them in right away to avoid suspension.

Motion made by Member Harrington to approve the Mt. Club License pending receipt of the Department of Revenue Good Standing paperwork

Second by Member Nowak

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

School Committee

Member Nowak attended the School Committee meeting and they changed officers. Paul Butler is now the Chairman. C.T. Plunkett School is now a Level 1 School, allowing them to have breakfast and lunch for youth up to 18 years old throughout the summer. The schools are getting 60 Chromebooks; 30 to C.T. Plunkett School and 30 to Hoosac Valley High School.



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Additional Chromebooks are listed on the Warrant. These will be important in the future if the state goes to PARCC Testing. The School Committee is aware that more cuts need to be done, but things cannot wait for the last minute so a plan is in place.

Woodlands Partnership

Member Nowak attended a meeting in Charlemont for the *Woodlands Partnership* for Northern Berkshire and Franklin Counties to get involved with the federal government with the hope to get some funding. It is a difficult undertaking and there is a representative from every community. As it unfolds he will keep the Board abreast of it.

Zoning Board

Chairman Blanchard went to the Zoning Board meeting and advised his request for chickens was approved.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator's Report

Greylock Glen Attendee

Town Administrator Mazzucco looked into the cost of coverage for one individual at the Greylock Glen. \$8,000 would provide one person 7 hours a day, and this is not in the Budget. If funded, other cuts will need to be made. The DPW can go to the Glen before and after weekends and in time hopefully the situation will improve. For now, an assessment will be done to find an appropriate level of staffing.

Artists

Monday, June 11th there will be a demonstration of tips to artists. Artists are moving into community and spaces artists are looking for are usually unique. There may be a possibility of getting some properties turned over. He advised he would like to look at Zoning changes.

Career Day

Town Administrator Mazzucco attended *Career Day* at *Hoosac Valley High School* to represent Town Government.

Inspections

Town Administrator Mazzucco is in contact with several vendors and groups in the area to get prices and programs for restaurant and septic inspections. He is getting quotes and estimates on necessary services for certification and will bring information back to the Board within the next week or so.

PILOT Agreement

Town Administrator Mazzucco received the Assessor's report on the projected revenues for the Solar Arrangement and the Assessor's estimate is approximately double. It is expected to go up around 50%, which was a conservative number. The PILOT Agreement goes before Town Meeting for approval.



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Town Meeting Member Workshop

Town Administrator Mazzucco will be holding a *Town Meeting Workshop* on June 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the Visitors Center building for new Town Meeting members and residents curious about the Town Meeting process.

Power Outage and Fire

There was a power outage followed by a small fire at the Police Station in the generator room, but not affecting the generator itself. It was caused by the way it was hooked up, and there was slight damage to the building that insurance will cover. Surrounding woodwork was burned, and there was a small amount of flame but piping is being fixed to be code compliant. The Fire Department was commended for doing a great job.

Town Counsel Report

Board of Health Concerns

Town Counsel St. John III responded to Mr. Shepley's remarks about his office and the Board of Health. He advised he has worked with the Board of Health over the past 15 years on many court cases and has been able to successfully steer the Board of Health to the Housing Court to do work needed there. He advises he does not foresee any additional costs to be incurred for this work and it should not involve more than what he already receives for funding.

Town Counsel St. John III advised he investigated potential tax foreclosures, met with Town staff regarding various issues, reviewed the Town Warrant and will submit comments on articles. He reviewed and provided comment regarding the nursing contract, and reviewed a possible conflict of interest issue.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & GOOD OF THE ORDER

American Flags

Member Nowak inquired if the Town would get the American Flags up before Memorial Day.

Town flower planting will be done tomorrow due to a late start from the long winter, and the Town will do their best to get the American Flags up before the weekend.

Select Board Workshop

Next week's workshop will be updates on all projects by Community Development Director Donna Cesan.

Legal Issues

Member Duval reminded the Board to be careful about mentioning legal issues. He informed that the Block Grant was state funded.



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Moving Forward

Member Duval said he has a passion to make Adams a better community, and this is the right Board, and the right Town Administrator to make good things happen but they will take time. He asks the community to have an open mind as they work hard to increase revenues.

Changes

Vice Chairman Snoonian noted that change is coming to every department and he would like to see less finger pointing because public business cannot run like a private business, and demographics are changing. He said he would like to sit with each department head and project out 5 years from now what will be afforded because it is time to try to figure out how to go forward rather than to keep it the way it has been.

Member Duval expressed great respect for Vice Chairman Snoonian and noted that when Town Officials talk about reducing employees, it affects people with lives and families. This was a difficult budget season with difficult decisions that had to be made and he advised he is committed to working on next year's budget and hopefully to have revenue to offset cuts. He recommended the Town Administrator not forecast out because though plans are in place, hopefully revenue will grow and reduce the staff impact.

Crosswalks

Member Harrington noted that people are not using crosswalks and cars are also not stopping for those in crosswalks. Crosswalk painting will be accomplished within the next couple weeks, and he asks everyone to make an effort to be pedestrian friendly. He asks to have correct signage on all crosswalks, and informed that there is no jaywalking bylaw in town.

Roundabout Project

Member Harrington advised the *Roundabout Project* is being surveyed and will begin in a week or two. He warned that things will be worse before it gets better because it is a small area with a lot of construction.

Planning Board Open Position

Chairman Blanchard advised that nobody took out papers to run for the *Planning Board*. The Select Board can appoint someone for the remainder of the term, so anyone interested should send in a letter within 2 weeks to the Town Administrator's office. There are plenty of vacancies on different boards, so check with the Town Hall to find out what is open.

Adams Free Library Open House

Chairman Blanchard announced that the Trustees and Friends of *Adams Free Library* will have an *Open House and Rededication* on Saturday, May 23rd at 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



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ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjournment by Select Board

Motion made by Member Nowak to adjourn the Select Board meeting

Second by Member Duval

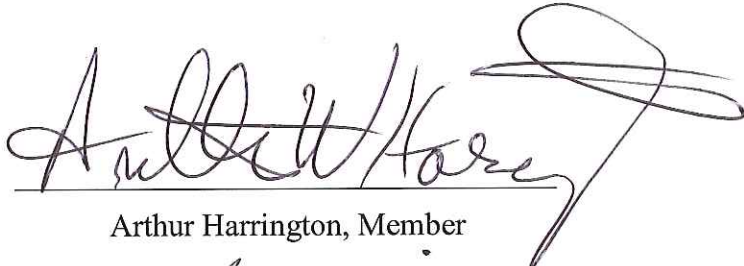
Unanimous vote

Motion passed

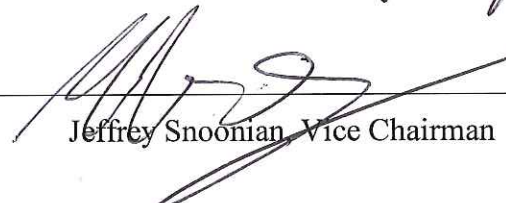
Select Board Meeting Adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary.


Joseph Nowak, Member


Arthur Harrington, Member


John Duval, Member


Jeffrey Snoonian, Vice Chairman


Richard Blanchard, Chairman