

# TOWN OF ADAMS

## SELECT BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, October 28, 2015 – 7:00 PM  
MAHOGANY ROOM, 1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

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

**Chairman Richard Blanchard** presided the meeting. Present were **Vice Chairman Jeffrey Snoonian**, **Members Joseph Nowak, Arthur Harrington, John Duval**, and **Town Administrator, Tony Mazzucco**.

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

### OFFICIAL BUSINESS

ACRSD update- The board was joined by ACRSD superintendent Kristen Gordon and School board chair Paul Butler. Supt Gordon explained forums that the school department would be hosting, the first being in November. Supt. Gordon said the district has 3 options, cut staff, reorganize, or close a school. Supt Gordon said the school deficit could be as high as 700k. TA Mazzucco offered an example of how that works on the town side. Supt Gordon explained her goal is to not have the community fight, just to have open honest discussion about options. Supt. Gordon explained how special education costs can substantially impact a district liked ACRSD and how districts are required to pay special education costs even if a school is out of state as long as the Commonwealth approves it. Selectmen Nowak explained the challenges of funding special education. Selectmen Blanchard questioned if the District could just hire a one on one, the district could but parents have some choice in what education options are best for their children. Selectman Harrington asked how redistricting would work; Supt Gordon explained that combining like grades would see savings in staff costs. Selectman Nowak expressed that just cutting staff may not be a good idea and asked how redistricting saves money. Selectman Duval expressed a desire for a working group to be established to look at the budget and credited the school district for holding a session in November and beginning to address these issues. The board and Supt Gordon and Chairman Butler about possibilities for rearranging schools. Supt. Gordon explained that district administration had a meeting with Senator Downing and Representative Cariddy, both were going to look into what they could do to help in the short term. Selectman Nowak expressed that regionalization is frustrating with all the money the state gives to new buildings, and expressed concern over the Governor's push for charter schools and its impact on public schools, as well as regionalizing with North Adams. Selectman Blanchard stated that these are challenges facing every school district in Berkshire County.

**Berkshire public health alliance information**-Selectman Harrington explained the Berkshire Public Health Alliance and what they do and how they work with the Town and other towns in Berkshire County. Mr. Harrington explained how the last few months have gone working with the BPHA. Selectman Harrington explained the process for working with BPHA to join federal food safety standards and how that would be necessary to join a joint purchasing/grant option for software to do health inspections. The Board of Health is interested in pursuing the process. Skip briefed the board on an option from the Berkshire public health alliance to share in the purchasing of online health inspection software, the town by joining could see some of the cost saved in initial set up but the town must commit to funding; but it would be worth investing in the program whether or not the Town could get into the program in time. Selectman Nowak wanted to know if there would be cost savings to the



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Town. TA Mazzucco replied that there would be savings in paper and staff time and that the Building Commissioner has reported great efficiencies as the online building permit system has come on board.

**MIIA Training Discussion-** TA Mazzucco explained that there are trainings available that would be beneficial for Town hall staff and that it would be beneficial to do annual or semiannual trainings for town hall staff since Town Hall is 8 separate departments but most of them are interconnected and it's difficult to get everyone in one place at one time; and that there are quite a few new employees at town hall over the last few years. TA Mazzucco explained that MIIA, the towns insurance carrier, offers workshops at low or no cost, and he would like to focus on customer service, communication, and dealing with change. Selectman Nowak felt it was a very good idea but wanted to make sure there was plenty of notice to the public about closing town hall for training so citizens would not be inconvenienced. Mazzucco assured the board that plenty of notice would be given and a time would be selected that does not correspond with high volume at town hall. Selectman Duval suggested the board at their next meeting authorize the Town Administrator to close Town Hall for two days or a few half days as needed for training in the next year.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Selectman Duval wants to talk about number of meetings board is having and possibly changing schedules to ensure staff has enough time to properly prepare for meetings.

### ADJOURNMENT

*Motion made to adjourn by Member Duval*

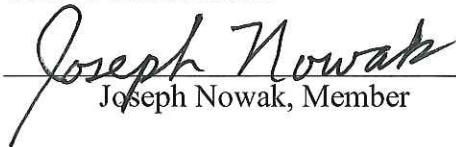
*Second by Member Harrington*

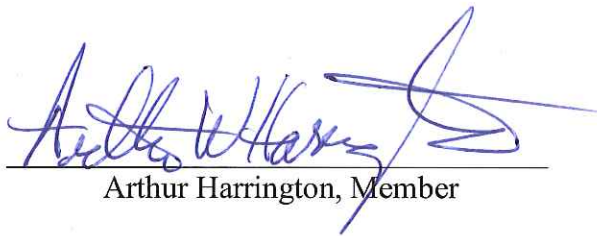
*Unanimous Vote*

*Motion passed*

*Select Board Workshop Meeting Adjourned at 8:17 p.m.*

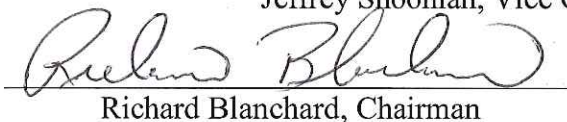
Respectfully Submitted by Tony Mazzucco,  
Town Administrator.

  
Joseph Nowak, Member

  
Arthur Harrington, Member

John Duval, Member

Jeffrey Spoonian, Vice Chairman

  
Richard Blanchard, Chairman