

TOWN OF ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS
ADAMS TOWN HALL BUILDING, 1st FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES, JULY 17, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hoyt at 7:00 p.m. Present were Vice Chairman Bush, Members Blanchard, and Nowak. Town Administrator Green and Town Counsel St. John III were also in attendance. Absent was Member Duval.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The June 11, 2019 and June 19, 2019 minutes were presented for approval. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Bush to waive reading and approve the June 11, 2019 and June 19, 2019 meeting minutes as provided, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.*

PUBLIC COMMENT: *No public comments were made at this meeting.*

NEW BUSINESS:

One Day Wine and Malt License Application: Father Steven Montesanti, St. John Paul II Parish, July 28, 2019, 12:00 to 5:00 p.m., Polanka Grounds on Mill Street for the Polish Picnic with Polka Band. Rachel Tomkowicz represented the Parish. *Motion made by Member Bush to approve the One Day Wine & Malt License for St. John Paul II Parish on July 28, 2019 from 12pm to 5pm on the Polanka Grounds on Mill Street for the Polish Picnic, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: Unanimous.*

Facility Use Request, Transfer Station: Alert Hose Company, August 10, 2019, August 17, 2019 and August 24, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for fundraising raffle sales. It was explained that this request is not ready to go forward, as it is awaiting insurance.

Adams Fire District Project Update: Superintendent John Barrett gave a report of upcoming plans. He advised that the Fire District has started flushing hydrants, and is doing this during the daytime to curb overtime costs. He expressed confidence that the water is clean enough to deter dirty water issues. He advised that alterations are taking place to better assess the flow around town. The Fire District completed a \$63,000 mixer upgrade to a tank. He pointed out that last year and again a couple months ago there were e coli readings which happen due to heating within the tanks. He reported that chlorination is taking place now and it will be a full time chlorinated system by a proposed deadline of September 9th. He advised this is the first year chlorinating and assessing chlorination levels especially on hot summer days. The injection rate and residual chlorine maintenance through the entire town was explained and reviewed. He explained that the residual level is expected to drop due to the heat as chlorine is not stable in heat. It was noted that there is still an issue with excessive heating on one tank and the Fire District is dumping 500,000 gallons of water out of the tank because the water is too warm. He explained how warm water is moved out of the tank. He updated the Board that the District received the Water Conservation Plan and it will be correlated with a local plan being submitted to the state in the event of a drought. He summarized that the plan requires monitoring at a certain level and requires the Fire District to enact water conservation protocols as water levels drop, up to an enforceable fine. He advised that the Fire District is creating a new Master Plan which is a twenty-year infrastructure plan to replace the infrastructure of the Town's system as it pertains to the water so the Fire District can successfully manage an amount before it fails and the town does not have outdated equipment. He advised this includes plumbing, hydrants, gates, and valves. He advised that the Fire District is doing an Asset Management Plan as well, which will reveal the assets of the fire district including piping, vehicles, buildings, and pumps. Once the assets are past their useful life they incur more cost and are not worth keeping. He started a Rate Study Plan to assess and take into account the loss of population in town, the rates currently in place, and the proposed rate in accordance with population loss.

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He advised it will inform how to fund the construction plan, which includes a five-year construction, five-year rehabilitation and thereafter. He advised that the Fire District introduced four-year meter plan as the meter stock is well past its useful life and it is mandated by the state to update it as they are not reading accurately. He noted there was \$100,000 to start with in the budget this year and he hopes to replace them in three years to meet the requirements of the state. It was explained that Commercial Street is part of a phased project and is the main and only trunk line that feeds the Town of Adams from Cheshire. He noted that the Fire District upgraded the piping to Aladco but from Aladco to McDonalds is still the old main. He explained this will be a project in the Master Plan and a moratorium on digging there. He pointed out there is not a foreseeability to fund a project there as other projects are higher priority, however if that main goes down the whole town will suffer repercussions. Despite the road being redone in near future he advised there is a seven year moratorium for digging in the road. He noted that there is a great relationship with the new Town Administrator and he will keep in communication with him. Discussion took place regarding the potential of a project being done on the northern section of Route 8 and it was explained that a project of that size has a high price tag and the Fire District will have to team up together with the Town to get grants to handle it. Regarding the Master Plan, he advised that piping has a 100 year useful span and it is approximately 150 years old so it will be in this program and get attention. He noted that the cost to replace and maintain it as well as its useful life will be assessed. The amount of chlorine allowable by was discussed and what is being maintained was reported in daily injection rates averaged out and analyzed for the residual rate throughout the entire town. It was explained this helps to assess an area having a problem. Problem areas in town were identified and being addressed. He explained that during the hot summer days in the sun it will be carefully monitored and treated. Treatments for different issues were reviewed briefly. It was advised that the residents will be kept as safe as possible. Water temperatures and acceptable chlorine levels were discussed. Maintenance of the distribution system was reviewed. Recent rate increases were noted as including the meter program to be in compliance with the state and avoid fines. Being in excess of a 10% water withdrawal permit is a violation and it is noted that some meters are up to eighteen years old and may not be metering properly. A Leak Protection Program is being rolled out this year as well. He noted that the old system shows that 24% of the water is unaccounted for, based on calculations. In the past a company was hired to come in to look at every hydrant and gate to find leaks but the Fire District purchased equipment and does it themselves now to save funds. They now flush hydrants and put devices on them to find leaks, which saves up to \$15,000. Chlorine measurement techniques were explained in detail to Board Members and are programmed through the computer specific to the well identified, to take out the possibility of human error. Water Superintendent Barrett invited Board Members to come see how it operates. He noted the testing is done three times a day and if the public is interested in the plan, it can be provided. Frequently asked questions are answered on the Fire District website. Superintendent Barrett was thanked for his work for the community and for building a communicative and collaborative system, and working with the Building Commissioner for permitting.

Mausert Block Update, Holly Stenson, and Stephen Stenson: *Chairman Hoyt* gave background information about Ms. Stenson's request for the Town to write a letter of support for a grant. Stephen Stenson reported that he is wrapping up renovations of apartments on the 3rd floor of the Mausert Block and invited Board Members to see them. Public showings will take place after that. He advised that there will be work done on the restaurant space and that he is co-working on a grant with Mass Development for funding of the project. He noted the plan to have a co-share kitchen for people to use to have access to a commercial kitchen licensed by the state and to provide food services throughout northern county.

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He explained that the idea is to have a shared restaurant as well as a pop-up restaurant for events, weekends, and festivals at 23 Park Street. The facility would be open for people to run their own restaurant as a food and business incubator and his idea is to use the commercial kitchen and then offer it to the public. He explained that on the street there will be a café style environment. He advised he will be working on this with the grant for the next three months to hopefully move forward. He introduced *Heather Cachat Blake*, who is in charge of the "Food Innovation District" portion of the plan. She explained the purpose if the plan is to connect food and agricultural activity. She pointed out a need to connect the agricultural fair and farms which would support and develop the business community to promote healthy and sustainable food systems. She advised the plan has wellness, creative economy, lifestyle and tourism components to give people who want to eat better and are on a budget the resources to do so. She noted this idea brings together farms with suppliers, which they then bring to vendors. She explained that the Hoosac Valley Elementary School practices USDA smart and healthy snacks, which use frozen strawberries. She pointed out the job of the Food Innovation District to put in place systems to promote farm to supplier to vendor to get healthy fresh vegetables and fruits to the school system and the community, create job growth and promote a healthy economy. She included the plan to have food classes and local branding. She expressed a desire to have downtown Adams open for diverse, cultural food. She advised that this idea can spur the economy and growth population of Adams, and reduces the burden of taxes. *Mr. Stenson* advised of taking assets and putting a focus on the four areas of tourism, wellness, creative economy and lifestyle and concentrates them in one location. He explained that the intention is also to promote wellness and health in the growing sectors of health care. He introduced *Howard Rosenberg*, who explained he recently moved to Adams into a space that allows him to live on one side of the building and teach yoga and meditation on the other side. He advised that he wished to promote wellness as opposed to treating sickness, and the solution is to have people learn wellness behavior instead of being treated for sickness. He explained the idea to create a wellness center on a social connection model where groups of up to ten people have exposure to health and wellness practitioners in the area. In the Mausert Block, people would be trained on how to cook properly, and set nutritional and weight reduction targets. He gave an example of a town with a similar initiative where the critical factor was having a buddy system. He noted that in Adams there is a need for a social component with the infrastructure in addition to practitioners to promote the value of healthy behaviors. He pointed out that the business model of pharmaceutical and medical practices benefit financially from people being sick, and this is a way to have a healthier population. *Mr. Stenson* reported that last October he opened the office, and is ramping up progress. He advised he is reinvesting time and effort into the restaurant area as the first step to develop ideas and to create Park Street as an attraction. Concern was expressed about the status of the physical structure on the timeline and that continued dialogue would be needed. Board Members were encouraged to view the apartments and see the progress. *Member Nowak* gave a detailed history of the purchase of the building and plan details for development and renovation of the building over the years, including funds provided for the façade and how the façade is now falling apart. He provided history of financial complications and promises made, and expressed that this premiere downtown building has been held hostage. *Mr. Stenson* noted he has been working on this building for a long time, and is dedicated and invested in this building. It was noted that it was time to look at moving forward and view the apartments. It was clarified that there will be ten apartments, and parking will be available for them in the back of the building. He noted that it will be directly connected to allow for electrical vehicles to make it a green and sustainable building. Board Members thanked them for coming in and sharing the concept for the grant.

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Council on Aging Volunteer Awareness: *Council on Aging Director Erica Girgenti* thanked volunteers for coming to the meeting and advised it was an honor to present a “check” to the Town of Adams for the amount of hours worked by over seventy volunteers registered with the Senior Center. She expressed pride in the volunteers that give back to the community and provide service that cannot be done without them. She noted that they offer a free tax program, extra administration support, classes, committees, transportation, programs and general events, homebound meal shopping, counseling, programming and support groups. She read the names of the volunteers, and noted they come from all communities in the region. Over 4000 hours of volunteerism has been logged in, and though the “check” was not real money provided to the Town it represented the dollar amount of the volunteer roles, which she stated is worth \$157,052.00. She noted there has been a significant increase in participation.

Appointment of Council on Aging Board of Directors Member, Barbara Fiske. Council on Aging Director Girgenti advised that there are two vacant positions and invited anyone interested in serving to put in an application. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to appointment Barbara Fiske to the Council on Aging Board of Directors, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

Ratification of Seasonal Laborer, David J. Holt: *Chairman Hoyt read the letter from the Town Administrator recommending the ratification of David Holt, and thanked him for taking the initiative of applying for the position. Motion made by Member Blanchard to ratify appointment of David J. Holt to Seasonal Laborer position, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous.*

Ratification of Library Page, Theresa Flor. *Chairman Hoyt read the letter from the Town Administrator recommending the ratification of the appointment of Theresa Flor. Motion made by Member Blanchard to ratify the appointment of Theresa Flor to the position of Temporary Library Page, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous.*

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Town Administrator's Report: The DPW was able to treat the Town's Ashuwillticook Rail Trail portion for vegetation control and the work is completed. They are moving on to the flood control areas, and addressing constituent complaints that typically have been completed by now. He asked for citizens to have continued patience as these tasks are dependent on weather and other urgent issues that take precedence. Currently crack seal products are being priced out for Park Street, and sidewalk work will continue through the next few months. He asked for residents to help clean out debris from storm water drains, and reported the DPW is replacing and repairing structures. He asked for residents to trim back brush and vegetation interfering with sidewalks and road intersections. He announced the winner of the compost bin drawing. He advised that permits are no longer being sold at the Transfer Station but they are still available during normal business hours at Town Hall. He advised that citizens must have a permit to use the Transfer Station. Code Enforcement has begun nuisance and blight control work and Mr. Romaniak is reviewing locations and asking citizens to be respectful. He gave an update on the Town Hall Roof Project. He noted that the School District is searching for a Superintendent and advised he is representing the Board on this committee. Interviews have been scheduled. *Board Members* inquired how many Transfer Station stickers have been sold, and the information is available with the Tax Collector. It was noted that approval has been given to paint windows at Town Hall while scaffolding is up at Town Hall. An inquiry was made about the status of the Animal Control Officer/Parking Enforcement Officer combined position, and it was noted that the funding has been approved on July 1st but job the description still needs to be approved before it goes forward.

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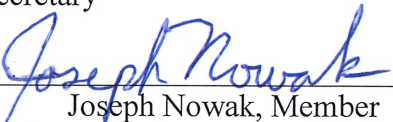
Town Counsel Report: *Town Counsel St. John III* advised since his last report he has prepared three "No Trespass" letters and arranged for service of those letters. He advised he reviewed emails and correspondence concerning a personnel matter. He reviewed and signed the Visiting Nurse Agreement. He reviewed and responded to an inquiry concerning the discipline against the Polish National Alliance. He advised he is currently drafting a tax foreclosure complaint, and he prepared a complaint for judicial review and a Notice of Appeal of a Department of Industrial Accidents decision.


Sub-Committee and Liaison Reports: *Member Nowak* advised he attended the Cemetery Commission meeting. Two individuals were selected to take care of two cemeteries for a \$100 stipend. One of the cemeteries is an old Revolutionary Soldier cemetery. He advised that the Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee meeting took place and work is being done to put together the parade. Fundraising is moving along and will hopefully reach the goal of \$300,000. He gave information about an upcoming reception for the First Ladies Quilt, and the nomination of local women for recognition for what they do for this community. At the reception citizens are able to get more information and meet the ASCCC Members. *Vice Chairman Bush* advised he attended the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District meeting, and there was a change of officers. He noted there was a Northern Berkshire Community Coalition "meet and greet" at the Daily Grind today and another on August 21st.

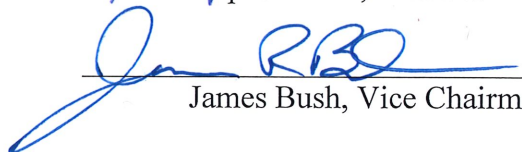
Announcements and Good of the Order: *Chairman Hoyt* announced the new appointments to the Finance Committee. Brian Johnson and Carol Cushenette appointments were renewed, and new members are Sara Klein and Jay Meczywor. She announced that Sunday will be the Hijinx Event at Bowe Field from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and citizens are encouraged to attend. *Member Nowak* announced that the first Movies under the Stars is coming up on July 26th and will run into August at the Visitors Center. *Town Administrator Green* thanked April Varellas for organizing and managing the Movies under the Stars and thanked Greylock Federal Credit Union for making a donation to support it.

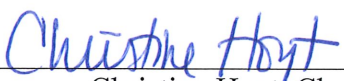
ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Bush. Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary


Joseph Nowak, Member


Richard Blanchard, Member


James Bush, Vice Chairman


Christine Hoyt, Chairman